

W.H. Walters Free Public Library

Photography, Filming, and Recording Policy

Purpose

The W.H. Walters Free Public Library (“Library”) is dedicated to providing free and open access to information while ensuring a safe, welcoming, and private environment for all patrons and staff.

This policy establishes reasonable regulations governing photography, videotaping, filming, recording, livestreaming, and other recording activities conducted on Library property.

Authority

This policy is adopted pursuant to:

- N.J.S.A. 18A:73-1 et seq. (Authority of Free Public Library Boards of Trustees)
- N.J.S.A. 18A:73-43.2 (Confidentiality of Library Records)
- The First Amendment to the United States Constitution
- Article I, Paragraph 6 of the New Jersey Constitution

The Library is considered a limited public forum for purposes consistent with its mission.

Definitions

Recording includes photography, filming, videotaping, livestreaming, audio recording, or any other method of capturing visual or audio content.

Library Property includes interior and exterior areas owned, leased, or operated by the Library.

Commercial Recording includes recording for marketing, advertising, revenue generation, or media production purposes.

General Principles

1. Recording activities must not interfere with library operations or services.
2. Restrictions imposed under this policy are reasonable time, place, and manner regulations.
3. Regulations are content-neutral and viewpoint-neutral.

4. Patron privacy and confidentiality shall be protected at all times.

Casual and Personal Recording

Casual photography or recording is permitted in public areas of the Library provided that:

- It does not disrupt services or programs.
- It does not block aisles, exits, entrances, or service desks.
- No patron or staff member is recorded without their consent.
- No confidential information (including computer screens or circulation records) is captured.
- Equipment such as tripods, lighting, extension cords, or microphones is not used without prior approval.

Commercial, Media, or Organized Recording

Commercial photography, media production/interviews, or organized filming requires advance written approval from the Library Director or designee.

Permission may be subject to conditions regarding:

- Scheduling
- Location
- Equipment use
- Insurance or liability coverage

The Library reserves the right to deny or revoke permission if recording interferes with library operations, safety, or patron privacy.

Library-Sponsored Recording

The Library may photograph or record library-sponsored programs, events, or activities for documentation and promotional purposes, including:

- Website
- Social media
- Print publications
- News media

Reasonable notice will be provided when recording is taking place. Individuals may notify staff if they prefer not to be photographed or recorded.

Special care will be taken when minors are present, consistent with applicable laws and best practices.

Restricted Areas

Recording is prohibited in:

- Restrooms
- Staff-only areas
- Private offices
- Study or meeting rooms when in use (if applicable)
- Any location where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Patron Privacy and Confidentiality

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:73-42.2, library records that identify patron use of materials or services are confidential.

Recording that intentionally captures confidential patron information or library usage data is prohibited.

Enforcement

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- A request to cease recording
- Revocation of permission
- Removal from Library property
- Suspension of library privileges
- Referral to law enforcement if warranted.

The Library Director or designee is authorized to interpret and enforce this policy.

Effective Date: May 18, 2026.

Approved by: Library Board of Trustees on May 18, 2026.