

WICHITA POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICY NO. 806

SUBJECT: PUBLIC SAFETY CAMERAS	
Effective Date:	Distribution: All Personnel
Reviewed/Approved Date:	Next Review Date:
Approved By:	Amends/Rescinds:
<i>This Policy is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This Policy should not be construed as creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this Policy will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting</i>	

I. PURPOSE

This policy is intended to define acceptable and unacceptable uses of camera surveillance viewing and storage practices including public safety and non-public safety systems. Its application is to ensure video surveillance system usage is consistent with the best interest of the City to create a safer environment for all those who live, work and visit the City of Wichita. This policy will be implemented to prevent improper use or abuse of captured video and to ensure city employees exercise the highest standards when handling and managing recordings. All references in this policy to the Police Chief will stand to mean the Police Chief or their designee.

II. POLICY

Based on assessed needs including public information, crime data, officer observations, community input and concerns, risk assessments and other relevant data, the Police Chief will determine strategic public safety camera placement throughout the City of Wichita. These cameras can be used for detecting and deterring crime, to help safeguard against potential threats to the public, to help manage emergency response situations during natural and man-made disasters and to assist City of Wichita officials in providing services to the community and safeguard City assets.

Images from cameras may be recorded on a 24-hour basis every day of the week. These images will be accessible based on granted security permissions when activity warranting further investigation is reported or detected at any camera location. Trained video viewing personnel are authorized to adjust the cameras to more effectively view a particular area when warranted.

Recorded images may be used for a variety of purposes, including criminal investigations and monitoring of activity around high value or high threat areas. In addition, the camera systems may be useful for the following purposes:

- To assist in identifying, apprehending and prosecuting offenders.
- To assist in gathering evidence for criminal and civil court actions.

- To help emergency services personnel maintain public order.
- To monitor pedestrian and vehicle traffic activity.
- To help improve the general environment in public areas.
- To assist in providing effective public services.
- To protect City of Wichita building perimeters, entrances and exits, lobbies, corridors, storage areas, data centers, property, cashier locations, and personnel.
- To augment efforts already in place to prevent and deter crime.
- Traffic Enforcement with the written approval from the Chief of Police.

III. DEFINITIONS

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Training

1. Personnel involved in video monitoring will be trained in the parameters of appropriate camera use.
2. Camera control operators and viewers will receive a copy of this policy and provide written acknowledgement that they have read and understood its contents and possible department sanctions resulting from the misuse of the public safety camera system.

B. Prohibited Activity

1. Video monitoring will be conducted in a professional, ethical and legal manner. The public safety camera system will not be used in manners contained in the following:
 - a. Video surveillance operators will limit camera positions and views of residential housing. Any view given to the housing will be no greater than what is available with unaided vision unless authorized pursuant to Kansas law.
 - b. Video viewing personnel are restricted from appending data, tampering with or duplicating any recorded video information unless explicitly authorized for legitimate City purposes.
 - c. Camera control operators will not view private rooms or areas through windows except pursuant to a court order or with written authorization from the Wichita Police Chief.
 - d. Camera control operators will not spot and continuously view people in a manner that can reasonably be considered an invasion of personal privacy except for legitimate law enforcement or public safety purposes.

- e. Camera control operators will not monitor individuals based on characteristics of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or other means of discrimination unless pursuant to a specific criminal or public safety investigation.
- f. Video monitoring shall not be used to harass, intimidate or discriminate against any individual or group.
- g. Personnel not authorized by the Wichita Police Department are strictly prohibited from retrieving or releasing images from the public safety camera system.
- h. Operators shall not allow use or view privileges to any persons not authorized to use the camera system.

C. Camera Markings

1. Except in the case of covert operations or confidential investigations, it is the intent to have public areas that are monitored by surveillance cameras marked with signs to inform the public that the area is under surveillance. Signage will state:

“Footage recorded by the Wichita Police Crime Center.”

D. Media Storage

1. All media will be stored in a secure location with access restricted only to authorized persons.
2. All recorded video images will be stored for a period not to exceed 30 days and will then be destroyed or erased unless retained as part of a criminal investigation, court proceedings (criminal or civil), or authorized City Administrative purposes.
3. Recorded video data to be held for evidentiary purposes in a criminal investigation, shall be stored and/or copied to a legally acceptable medium and maintained in accordance with Wichita Police Department policies and procedures for evidence retention.

E. Public and Other Agency Video Requests

1. Video images captured by public safety cameras that are requested by the public or media will be made available only to the extent of the law, and applicable Wichita Police Department policies. Except as required by statute, court order, or another lawful process consistent with the provisions of the Kansas Open Records Statute, video files will generally not be disclosed to the public when such video images are evidence in an ongoing criminal investigation in which a court disposition has not been reached unless the Chief of Police deems the video(s) of sufficient public interest as to warrant an immediate release.

F. Maintenance and Review

1. The Public Safety Camera System maintenance will be conducted in accordance with City of Wichita Administrative Regulation.
2. An audit of personnel monitoring operations including video storage could occur at any time without prior notice by department heads or supervisory staff.

G. Misuse Procedures

1. It is the objective of the Wichita Police Department to prevent and correct any abuse or misuse of the camera system through the application of this policy. Officers, Civilian Employees, or volunteers who abuse or misuse the system may be subject to disciplinary action under the personnel policy or a collective bargaining agreement up to and including termination. Any violations of this policy shall be immediately reported to the Police Chief.