

Sea Girt Library Filming/First Amendment Audit Response Policy

This policy will be used by the Sea Girt Public Library (“the Library”) to address concerns related to non-employees photographing, recording and/or broadcasting/streaming images on Library property (whether or not those conducting the stream or making the recording refer to it as a “First Amendment Audit”).

The Library is obligated to ensure information access, patron privacy, and Library service.

To help fulfill those obligations, it is the policy of the Library to honor state and federal law with respect to photographing, recording, broadcasting, and streaming images of the premises, patrons, and employees while on Library property (for the sake of clarity, all such activity is referred to in this document as “recording”).

The Library will allow all recording consistent with its obligations and mission. The Library reserves the right at all times to refuse any recording that will negatively impact safety, patron privacy, employee work conditions, and/or routine Library operations.

1. Protocol

Whenever possible, individuals or media outlets who wish to engage in recording should contact the Director to arrange, at least two business days in advance, how such recording can be done without risking a breach of Library ethics, its obligation to safeguard patron privacy, and to ensure a respectful environment for Library employees. This may be done by calling 732-449-1099 or emailing seagirtlibrary@gmail.org.

When contacting the Library with this request, please be ready to discuss what content is needed, and how to adapt that need to the Library’s ethical and operational priorities, if necessary.

Individuals or media outlets who wish to engage in recording on a more immediate basis should contact the Director, or their designee working at the time, as soon as possible. Just like recording with more notice, those with urgent requests should be ready to discuss what access will meet your needs, and to adapt your needs to the Library’s ethical and operational priorities, including not being able to grant a same-day request.

Individuals or media outlets who engage in recording without notifying the Library in advance should understand that any recording activity that risks negatively impacting safety, patron privacy, employee work conditions, and/or routine Library operations, or recording activity that is a violation of the Library’s Safety Policy or Code of Conduct, will result in a requirement to cease recording.

As with any other ongoing potential violation of Library policy, any individuals or media outlets who do not cease recording after being asked to stop will be told to leave Library property, pending further action under any applicable policy.

2. Non-Commercial Recording with Permission in the Library

Requests to record in the Library for non-commercial purposes, including journalism from credentialed journalists, will be confirmed with this permission response script whenever time allows:

Thank you for working with the Library to explore recording / streaming / broadcasting in our space ("recording"). As you know, any recording in the Library must be conducted safely, without jeopardizing patron privacy, and in a way that respects our employees and doesn't disrupt routine operations. To ensure these safeguards, we met on [DATE], and agreed that you could record in [AREA] during the hours of [TIMESPAN]. You confirmed that the end project will be a non-commercial recording (commercial recordings are subject to additional requirements, including insurance). Thank you for your cooperation.

3. Commercial Recording with Permission in the Library

Requests to record in the Library for commercial purposes (movies, advertisements, documentaries) will be confirmed by a contract, based on the project, and may include insurance requirements and indemnification.

4. "First Amendment Audits," Harassing Behavior, and Other Unannounced Recording

The Library recognizes and honors that the public has a right to access information about the Library. This includes being subject to the Open Public Records Act ("OPRA") and the Open Public Meeting Act ("OPMA"). To that end, the Library's website includes policies and Board of Trustees ("the Board") meeting materials. The public may attend Board meetings and may address the Board during the provided time for public comment.

Further, the Library recognizes and honors that not all journalists are credentialed by formal media outlets, and the public has the right to know about the operations of the Library.

However, the Board also has the right to set the hours and conditions needed to operate the Library. This includes barring any activity that would impact safety, patron privacy, employee work conditions, and/or routine Library operations, or a violation of Library policy. To that end, this policy will be used to promote requests for access to record on the premises, and to address any unauthorized recording on the premises that risks the Library's mission and obligations.