

Video Surveillance

Subject: Physical Plant

Policy: Video Surveillance Policy

Revised: N/A

Effective Date: November 14, 2012

Review Date: November 14, 2015

Responsible Party: Administration & Finance

Introduction and Purpose

To aid in protecting public safety and institutional property and as a deterrent to crime, the use of security cameras has increased at colleges and universities nationally. Montana State University is committed to enhancing the quality of life of the campus community by integrating the best practices for public safety including the use of evolving technologies. Because Montana State University respects the privacy of all members of the university community, this policy is intended to regulate the use and the manner in which video surveillance devices are authorized and used. MSU desires to balance the institution's duty to promote a safe environment with the individual right to be free from unwarranted intrusion by ensuring that all video surveillance devices are used appropriately and judiciously.

Exceptions

The following types of video systems are exempt from this policy:

1. Video cameras used for legitimate instructional, research or creative purposes that are governed by other policies.
2. Non-affixed, portable video cameras used for news gathering or promotional purposes.
3. MSU Police use of video surveillance systems, either overtly or covertly, on a short-term basis for legitimate law enforcement purposes including but not limited to, the gathering of evidence for a criminal investigation.
4. MSU Police audio/video recording equipment in the department offices and patrol vehicles.

5. Video cameras, including webcams, may be used overtly for viewing and/or recording public images in public spaces for university purposes, including marketing and recruitment, employee training, athletic coaching, or public observation, e.g., construction sites. Images of activities in public spaces may be distributed electronically without notice to participants. Notification signage is not required for these purposes.

Policy

1. This policy applies to all university personnel and to the use of video surveillance equipment and systems employed to monitor and record activities over time on any university premises.
2. All requests to install video surveillance equipment and recording systems must be submitted to the Video Surveillance Review Committee. The committee will determine the appropriateness of requests, based on a security review, and will approve or deny the request as appropriate. The committee will include representatives from MSU Police, Facilities Services and Information Technology.
3. Video surveillance of areas for security purposes shall be limited to public areas and will not be used in bathrooms, changing rooms, individual dormitory rooms or other areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.
4. Information obtained through video surveillance may be used for security and law enforcement purposes and for compliance with university policy. The use or dissemination of any information or images recorded by video surveillance may be authorized if approved by MSU Police or MSU Legal Counsel.
5. Installation of video surveillance in public areas for routine security enhancement must be accompanied by appropriate notification signage.
6. Video surveillance for security purposes will be conducted in a manner consistent with all existing university policies including the university's non-discrimination policy, sexual harassment policy and other relevant policies.
7. Video surveillance systems are not required nor intended to be actively monitored in real time and are not intended to serve as a way to request or attract police assistance. Persons needing police assistance should dial 911 or 994-2121.

Procedures

For consistency in the installation and use of this type of equipment, the Video Surveillance Review Committee will consider the following when making a determination regarding any request for installation of any video surveillance camera:

1. Is the location and the installation necessary and appropriate to protect public safety and detect, deter and/or assist in the investigation of criminal activity?
2. Security of the video surveillance system equipment and identification of those authorized to operate the system and access the storage device.
3. Obligations with respect to the notice, access, use, disclosure, retention, security and eventual disposal of video records.
4. Consistency of installation to mitigate impacts, costs and disruption to the facilities in which video surveillance equipment is installed and used.
5. The Committee may also require the following:
 - a. A written agreement with the requesting organization regarding the appropriate use, operation and maintenance of the video surveillance system.
 - b. Training for system supervisors on the effective and appropriate use of the video surveillance equipment.
 - c. Periodic reporting requirements.
 - d. Other pertinent requirements necessary to ensure consistency and to safe guard the public trust.

Internal Control Considerations

1. Video surveillance systems that were installed prior to the effective date of this policy shall be reviewed and assessed for continuance under this policy by the MSU Police Department within one (1) year of the date of adoption.
2. Video surveillance equipment, devices or systems that are installed without appropriate authorization under this policy will be immediately disabled upon notice and, if not reauthorized under this policy, will be removed at the expense of the department found to be responsible.

3. Any persons who tamper with, damage or destroy video surveillance equipment will be subject to criminal proceedings and/or disciplinary action under the student or employee disciplinary proceedings.
4. Concerns about possible violations of this policy related to inappropriate use of video surveillance systems should be directed to MSU Police and MSU Legal Counsel.
5. Unauthorized, unethical or illegal use or installation of a video surveillance in violation of this policy may subject an employee or student to disciplinary action and/or criminal proceedings.