
Public Safety Video Monitoring System

335.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidance for the placement and monitoring of department public safety video cameras, as well as the storage and release of the captured video data.

This policy only applies to overt, marked public safety video monitoring systems operated by the Department. It does not apply to mobile audio/video systems, covert audio/video systems or any other image-capturing devices used by the Department.

335.2 POLICY

The Fresno State Police Department operates a public safety video monitoring system to complement its anti-crime strategy, to effectively allocate and deploy personnel, and to enhance public safety and security in public areas. Cameras may be placed in strategic locations throughout the University at the direction or with the approval of the Chief of Police. 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 State officials in providing services to the community.

Video monitoring in public areas will be conducted in a legal and ethical manner while recognizing and protecting constitutional standards of privacy.

335.3 OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Only department-approved video monitoring equipment shall be utilized. Members authorized to monitor video equipment should only monitor public areas and public activities where no reasonable expectation of privacy exists. The Chief of Police or the authorized designee shall approve all proposed locations for the use of video monitoring technology.

335.3.1 MONITORING

Images from each camera will be recorded on a 24-hour basis every day of the week. These images will be transmitted to monitors installed in Dispatch. When activity warranting further investigation is reported or detected at any camera location, the dispatcher or camera technician may selectively view the appropriate camera and relay any available information to responding units. Dispatch or camera technician personnel are authorized to adjust the cameras to more effectively view a particular area for any legitimate public safety purpose.

The Chief of Police may authorize video feeds from the public safety camera system to be set up at a location other than Dispatch for monitoring by other than police personnel when the provision of such access is in furtherance of this policy.

The cameras only record images and do not record sound. 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 public safety camera system may be useful for the following purposes:

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- (a) To assist in identifying, apprehending and prosecuting offenders.
- (b) To assist in gathering evidence for criminal and civil court actions.
- (c) To help emergency services personnel maintain public order.
- (d) To monitor pedestrian and vehicle traffic activity.
- (e) To help improve the general environment on the public streets.
- (f) To assist in providing effective public services.

335.3.2 TRAINING

Personnel involved in video monitoring will be appropriately trained and supervised.

335.3.3 INTEGRATION WITH OTHER TECHNOLOGY

The Department may elect to integrate its public safety video monitoring system with other technology to enhance available information. Systems such as gunshot detection, incident mapping, crime analysis, license plate recognition, facial recognition and other video-based analytical systems may be considered based upon availability and the nature of department strategy.

The Department should evaluate the availability and propriety of networking or otherwise collaborating with appropriate private sector entities and should evaluate whether the use of certain camera systems, such as pan-tilt-zoom systems and video enhancement or other analytical technology, requires additional safeguards.

335.3.4 VIDEO SYSTEM TESTING

Camera operators should test the video system during the normal course of their monitoring duties. Any malfunctions/concerns with the system shall be promptly reported to a supervisor via the camera maintenance log.

Additionally, on a weekly basis, all cameras are checked for operability, the camera maintenance log updated and turned into a supervisor for coordination of any necessary repairs.

335.4 VIDEO SUPERVISION

Supervisors should oversee video monitoring access and usage to ensure members are within department policy and applicable laws. Supervisors should ensure such use and access is appropriately documented.

335.4.1 PROHIBITED ACTIVITY

Public safety video monitoring systems will not intentionally be used to invade the privacy of individuals or observe areas where a reasonable expectation of privacy exists.

Public video monitoring equipment shall not be used in an unequal or discriminatory manner and shall not target protected individual characteristics including, but not limited to race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation.

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Video monitoring equipment shall not be used to harass, intimidate or discriminate against any individual or group.

335.5 STORAGE AND RETENTION OF MEDIA

All downloaded media shall be stored in a secure area with access restricted to authorized persons. A recording needed as evidence shall be copied to a suitable medium and booked into evidence in accordance with established evidence procedures. All actions taken with respect to retention of media shall be appropriately documented.

The type of video monitoring technology employed and the manner in which recordings are used and stored will affect retention periods. Exported recordings should be stored and retained in accordance with the established records retention schedule.

335.5.1 PUBLIC AND OTHER AGENCY REQUESTS

All requests for recorded video images from other government agencies or by the submission of a court order or subpoena shall be promptly submitted to a dispatcher, who will promptly research the request and submit the results. Every reasonable effort should be made to preserve the data requested until the request has been fully processed by the District Attorney's office.

All video images captured by public safety cameras that are requested by the public or media will be made available only to the extent required by law. Except as required by a valid court order or other lawful process, video images requested under the Public Records Act will generally not be disclosed to the public when such video images are evidence in an ongoing criminal investigation in which a disposition has not been reached.

335.6 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY CAMERA SYSTEM

The Chief of Police or his/her designee will conduct an annual review of the public safety camera system. The annual review will include an inventory of video monitoring installations, date of installation, summary of the purpose, adherence to this policy and any proposed policy changes. The results of each review will be documented and maintained by the Chief of Police or his/her designee and other applicable advisory bodies. Any concerns or deviations from this policy will be addressed promptly and effectively.