Sharon Public Library
community · literacy · technology
1 School Street | Sharon, MA 02067

PHOTOGRAPHY, FILMING, AND RECORDING POLICY

1. Purpose
This policy governs the use of cameras, video equipment, and recording devices on Library property. It balances the public's right to document their experience in a public building with the privacy of patrons and staff, the safety of vulnerable groups, including children, and the orderly operation of Library services.

2. Scope
This policy applies to all Library-owned buildings, grounds, and parking areas, and to all patrons, visitors, members of the media, Library staff, and third parties. It does not apply to the Library's security cameras.

3. Casual and Personal Photography (Permitted Without Prior Approval)
Patrons may take personal photographs or brief video/audio recordings without advance permission when:

- The images are for personal, non-commercial use (*e.g.*, a parent photographing their child at a story time or the building exterior).
- The activity does not use professional equipment (see Section 6) or disrupt other patrons or Library operations.
- Other identifiable patrons are not the primary subject without their consent (see Section 4).

Staff may ask a patron to stop or relocate if photography is disrupting services, blocking walkways, or making patrons uncomfortable.

4. Privacy Protections
The following are not permitted without specific written permission from the Library Director (or designee):

- Photographing or filming other patrons (especially children) in a way that identifies them, without the consent of those patrons or their parents/guardians.
- Filming in restrooms, staff-only workspaces, offices, break rooms, or behind public service desks.
- Photographing patron records, computer screens, hold shelves, or any material that could reveal another patron's identity, reading history, or personal information that would violate MGL Chapter 78, Section 7.
- Recording or photographing Library staff performing routine duties in a way intended to harass or intimidate them, without their consent.

5. Commercial, Professional, and Organized Filming
Prior written approval from the Library Director (or designee) is required for:

- Commercial photography or videography (*e.g.*, product shoots, portrait sessions, wedding/engagement photos, music videos, advertisements).
- Student or independent filmmaking projects involving a crew, actors, or a script.

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- Use of professional equipment, including tripods, lighting rigs, backdrops, drones, gimbals/stabilizers, or multi-person crews.
- Any filming that will use the Library's name, logo, or likeness in the final product.

Requests should be submitted at least 14 days in advance in writing to administration@sharon.ocln.org and include the following information:

- Date, time, and specific location(s) requested.
- Purpose and nature of the production.
- Number of people involved (cast/crew).
- Equipment list.
- Proof of general liability insurance (required for commercial shoots; the Library may require the Library be named as additionally insured).

The Library reserves the right to:

- Charge a facility use fee for commercial shoots.
- Restrict filming to non-operating hours or specific areas.
- Require a staff monitor to be present.
- Deny or revoke permission at its discretion, including if filming disrupts services.

6. Equipment and Conduct Restrictions

- Drones/UAVs are prohibited on Library property without prior written approval and compliance with all FAA regulations.
- Tripods, monopods, and lighting equipment may not block aisles, exits, or accessible pathways.
- Flash photography and supplemental lighting are prohibited in quiet study areas.
- Extension cords, sandbags, C-stands, or other rigging require prior approval and must meet code.
- Filming may not interfere with Library programs, story times, or reserved meeting room use.

7. Consent and Minors

For any photo or video used in Library publications, social media, press releases, or marketing, the Library will use its *Photography and Media Release Form*.

8. News Media

Any patron or member of the media covering a public meeting or public event at the Library may film the event or meeting without advance approval, provided they:

- Check in with the Library Director (or designee) upon arrival.
- Do not disrupt Library operations, interview patrons without consent, or film patron records.
- Secure necessary permissions to record and/or photograph individuals and/or the creative or intellectual property of a speaker/presenter.

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The Library may request media coordination timing for staff interviews.

9. Library-Initiated Photography
Library staff or contracted photographers may photograph programs, events, and facility use for the Library's own archival, promotional, or grant-reporting purposes.

Such use must follow ***Section 7 Consent and Minors***. Further, Library staff will secure necessary permissions to record and/or photograph individuals and/or the creative or intellectual property of a speaker/presenter.

For information regarding the Library's security cameras, see the ***Security Camera Policy***.

10. Prohibited Conduct (All Photography/Filming)

- Photographing or filming for the purpose of harassment, stalking, or intimidation.
- Circumventing this policy by using a phone or small camera to covertly film another patron or staff.
- Photography that violates any local, state, or federal law, including voyeurism statutes.
- Filming inside restrooms or family/lactation rooms under any circumstance.
- Photographing archival materials, due to preservation concerns.

11. Enforcement
The violation of this policy may result in:

- A request to stop and/or delete the images/recording.
- Removal from Library premises.
- Suspension of Library privileges, per the ***Patron Conduct Policy.***
- Referral to law enforcement, where applicable (*e.g.*, suspected voyeurism, harassment, or recording of confidential records).

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APPENDIX A: PHOTOGRAPHY & MEDIA RELEASE FORM

The Sharon Public Library ("the Library") occasionally photographs, videotapes, or audio records patrons, visitors, and program participants during events, classes, and everyday Library use. By signing below, you give the Library permission to use your (or your child's) image, likeness, and/or voice as described in this form.

1. EVENT / PROGRAM INFORMATION

Event or Program Name _____ Date(s) _____

2. PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

☐ Adult (age 18 years or older)

☐ Minor (under age 18) — to be completed by parent or legal guardian

Participant Full Name _____ Age (if minor) _____

Parent/Guardian Name (if applicable) _____ Relationship to Participant _____

Phone Number _____ Email Address _____

3. GRANT OF PERMISSION

I grant the Library and its staff, agents, and representatives permission to photograph, film, video, and/or audio record me (or the minor named above) and to use, reproduce, publish, and distribute those images and recordings, in whole or in part, in any of the following formats (check all that apply):

☐ Library website and social media (*e.g.*, Facebook, Instagram)

☐ Newsletters, flyers, brochures, and/or annual reports

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☐ Local press releases and media coverage

☐ Displays and exhibits within the Library

☐ Grant applications and funding/donor materials

4. TERMS

I understand that:

☐ No compensation will be paid for the use of these images or recordings. Images and recordings become the property of the Library and may be used for the purposes in *Section 3: Grant of Permission* without further notice or approval.

☐ I may request that a specific image or recording be removed from future use by contacting the Library; the Library will make reasonable efforts to honor such requests but cannot guarantee removal from materials already distributed or published.

☐ I may revoke this consent at any time for future use by submitting a written request to the Library.

☐ This release applies only to the event/program named in *Section 1: Event/Program Information* unless this box is checked.

5. SIGNATURE

By signing below, I confirm that I am the participant named above, or the parent/legal guardian of the minor named above, and that I have read and agree to the terms of this release.

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____ _____

For Library Use Only

Received By (Staff Name) _____ Date Filed _____

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