

HIDALGO COUNTY, TEXAS
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY MANUAL

Procedure: SCP.1
Page: 1 of 3
Date Authorized: XX/XX/2019
Supersedes:

SECURITY CAMERA POLICY

PURPOSE

- 1.1 The County of Hidalgo ("County") operates a security camera and monitoring system ("security cameras") at locations owned and/or leased by the County for the purposes indicated below. This policy provides guidelines regarding the use of security cameras at the County, including both Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) and internet-enabled cameras (Web cams). The policy outlines when and how security cameras are to be installed, how images are to be stored and recorded, the appropriate use security cameras, confidentiality of information and requests for records.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- 2.1 This policy is adopted in an effort to assist County operations, including but not limited to protecting employee and visitor health and safety; protecting County and visitor property; and maintaining efficient and effective service. The primary use of security cameras is to assist in the investigation of security and safety incidents, including, but not limited to, after-the-fact investigation of activities committed against the County and certain types of occupational health and safety violations. Security cameras may also be used for law and County policy enforcement, including employee discipline, or other work related matters. There will be no audio associated with any camera.
- a. Security cameras may be installed in locations where the security of Hidalgo County property or people would be enhanced. This includes all locations that engage in cash or credit card transactions. Installation of security cameras does not infer or ensure continuous monitoring by County personnel.
 - b. Only authorized personnel are allowed to operate and monitor security cameras. The Executive Officer shall determine such authorization. Authorized personnel include the Executive Officer, the Infrastructure Operations Administrator or designee. ("Authorized Personnel")
 - c. Appropriate signage will be installed by the Hidalgo County Facilities and Management Department to provide notice of the cameras and enhance the crime prevention value of the camera. These signs should, at a minimum, be displayed at main public and employee entrances to buildings.
 - d. Security cameras will not be used or installed in areas where employees would have a reasonable expectation of privacy as defined by law such as restrooms or locker rooms.
 - e. The County's Executive Officer will function as the security camera coordinator.

2.2 **Installation:**

- a. Under the supervision of the Executive Officer, the Infrastructure Operations Administrator is responsible for the installation and management of all security video systems used throughout the County.
- b. All requests for installing security cameras on Hidalgo County property must be routed to the Executive Office. The Executive Office will then conduct a security assessment forwarding the results for camera location and other security recommendations to the requesting department.
- c. Purchase, installation, and maintenance of camera equipment shall require the approval from the Infrastructure Operations Admin. All security camera equipment must comply with current Hidalgo County standards for the equipment.
- d. Once approved, new surveillance cameras must connect to the Hidalgo County's centralized surveillance system.

2.3. **Appropriate Use and Confidentiality:**

- a. All security camera operation, monitoring and recording will be conducted in a professional, ethical, and legal manner consistent with County policies, state and federal laws. Monitoring individuals based on characteristics or race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or other protected classification is prohibited.
- b. Information acquired from the security cameras shall be used and disseminated for official purposes only. All information and/or observations made in the use of security cameras are considered confidential to the extent allowed by law and are to only be used for official County and law enforcement purposes as described herein.
- c. Unauthorized use, duplication, alteration, tampering or destruction of the security camera system or recordings by any individual may be a violation of County policies, state and/or federal laws and may subject the individual to applicable civil or criminal penalties and/or potential disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

2.4. **Recording and Archiving:**

- a. All security cameras are capable of recording continuously by a digital video recording system. Recorded video will be stored in a secure manner/location accessible only by Authorized Personnel, and shall automatically erase after a period of forty-five (45) calendar days.
- b. Recorded images will not be routinely checked and will only be reviewed in the event of an incident, request or as otherwise directed by the Executive Officer. Recorded information will be stored in a secure location with access by Authorized Personnel only.
- c. Information obtained through video monitoring of the security camera system will be used exclusively for safety, security, compliance with Hidalgo County's policy, law enforcement purposes, court proceeding (civil or criminal), disciplinary action or proceeding or other bona fide use as approved by the Executive Officer. Any video obtained for these reasons shall be retained in a secure manner until no longer needed and in accordance with Texas retention requirements.

- b. Should monitoring reveal activity that violates laws or policy, an investigation will be initiated. Hidalgo County Law Enforcement, or other appropriate agency taking part in an investigation, will have access to all security camera data through the Authorized Personnel. This policy does not preclude individuals from reporting alleged criminal activity to a law enforcement agency.

2.5. **Requests for Records:**

- a. All requests for video recordings shall be coordinated through the Hidalgo County Public Affairs Office and may be subject to the protections and procedures of the Texas Public Information Act and/or other applicable confidentiality provisions and/or law.