

Policy for Photography and Filming

The priority of the Washington County Free Library is to provide library services to the Washington County community. The photography and/or filming described below is allowed only if it does not interfere with the provision of library services and is consistent with the WCFL's mission statement and rules.

Photography or Filming in the Library

The Washington County Free Library allows for photography and filming of Library buildings, programs, or collections that does not invade the privacy of Library patrons or restrict their access to information and materials.

While the Library is a public place, it is considered a "limited public forum" under federal law. Public libraries may reasonably restrict the exercise of free speech rights in their buildings, particularly when the conduct would be disruptive to, or interfere with, other patrons or be inconsistent with the Library's mission.

All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. In order to protect the rights of individual patrons and to prevent disruptions, or interference, with their receipt of information, access to materials and/or programming, or to prevent conduct inconsistent with the Library's mission, photographing and video or audio recording on library property are restricted as follows:

- Any persons filming in the Library must not harass, interrogate, question, or confront other library users, or invade a library patron's privacy by filming or recording their reading or browsing activities in the process of the filming.
- Media are subject to the provisions of the *Policy for Patron Use of Space* and may not disturb the normal operations of the library.
- Photography or filming is prohibited in restrooms and all non-public areas (i.e., behind service desks, in staff offices and workrooms, and other staff-only areas), and no photographs or recordings shall be taken of a library staff member's computer screen due to patron right to privacy.
- Any consent granted pursuant to this Policy to permit photography or filming may be revoked at any time upon failure to comply with terms of the Policy or other rules and regulations of the Library.
- Requests will be evaluated in terms of their impact on Library operations and services.
- In the event of a critical incident or emergency requiring police or fire response, public and media access may be limited to allow emergency personnel to ensure safety and security.

The terms above apply to the media as well as to amateur photographers and audio/video creators.

Amateur or Student Photography

Casual amateur photography and filming (i.e., patrons or visitors wanting a memento of their visit) is permitted in Library facilities as long as the rules and restrictions listed above are followed.

Added equipment, including tripods and lighting, are not permitted unless prior authorization has been obtained.

Classes, or groups of over 10 people, must obtain prior authorization; please contact Library Administration.

Wedding Photography

Requests for wedding photography must be submitted at least 2-3 weeks prior to the shoot date. The Executive Director or the Director of Operations must authorize permission, and a member of Library Administration or their designee must serve as an escort at the location. A fee may apply.

To request permission, please contact Library Administration.

Commercial Photography

- Requests must be submitted 2-3 weeks prior to a shoot date.
- Library locations may not be used as settings for commercial film or video shoots, advertisements, fashion shoots or any other photography for commercial purposes without the prior approval of the Executive Director, or designee.
- A fee may apply.
- Filming may not be related to political campaigns or partisan issues.
- Shoots require an escort from a member of Library Administration or their designee at the location.
- Insurance may be required for commercial shoots.
- Filming after-hours will result in the production company compensating the Library for staffing expenses at overtime rates to open, secure, and monitor library premises.

News Media and Documentaries

The Library welcomes news media photographers and reporters who are doing stories or projects that directly involve the Washington County Free Library and its programs, history, or position in Hagerstown or Washington County. News media or documentary filmmakers looking to take photographs or film at any of WCFL's branches must have prior authorization and be escorted by a member of Library Administration or their designee. Please contact Library Administration; we will attempt to accommodate deadlines.

If there is any question about filming, recording or photography, staff should contact the Executive Director, the Director of Public Services, or the Director of Operations.

Research Photography

WCFL permits research photography of its materials and resources within certain limitations. Researchers and journalists are responsible for obtaining their own permissions when photographing copyrighted material in the Library.

Additional permissions must be obtained from the John C. Frye Western Maryland Room to photograph materials or items in special collections because of complex copyright issues in these areas. Because of these issues, permission to reproduce materials from these divisions may in some cases be denied or involve a fee. Please contact the Head of Adult Services before planning your project to obtain prior authorization.

Movie Industry

WCFL will permit the use of its facilities by the movie or music industry for filming major entertainment projects where a library setting is called for, if:

1. The project does not interfere with the mission of the Washington County Free Library.
2. Is in accordance with the rest of this policy and does not advertise or promote commercial products.
3. Does not relate to political campaigns or to partisan issues.

Such filming may take place only during hours when the Library is closed, and all equipment must be removed during the Library's operating hours. Filming after-hours will result in the production company compensating the Library for staffing expenses at overtime rates to open, secure, and monitor library premises.

Photography in Meeting Rooms

Groups using WCFL meeting rooms for non-library events may arrange for photographers during their event. Photography is restricted to the space reserved by the group and may not take place in any other areas of the library. Groups may not book meeting rooms for the purposes of shooting promotional, informational, or commercial videos without prior approval of the Executive Director or the Librarian for Community Partnerships.

Photography by Library Staff

The Washington County Free Library frequently employs photographs of patrons for promotional use. As such, the Washington County Free Library reserves the right to utilize

photographs or video taken at the Library for publicity purposes in printed materials and online. Participation in a Library program signifies permission to use any photographs or video taken at the event unless an individual specifically informs Library staff of an objection to such use. No names will be utilized in conjunction with photos without express written consent from the photographed subject, parent, or legal guardian.

The following statement will be posted in all meeting rooms and other areas used for programming: *Your participation in library programs signifies your permission for the Washington County Free Library to use any photographs taken for promotional purposes. Please speak to a library representative at the event if you prefer that your photograph, or that of your child, not be taken.*

Photos, images, and videos submitted to WCFL by users for online galleries or contests may also be used by the Library for promotional purposes. To ensure the privacy of all individuals, including children, images will not be identified using full names or personal identifying information without written approval from the photographed subject, parent, or legal guardian.