

Bucks County Free Library

Management

Photography, Filming and Video/Audio Recording in the Library

Policy Statement

The primary focus of the Bucks County Free Library (BCFL) is to deliver library resources and services to the community. This policy aims to protect the library's ability to support its mission and strategic priorities while permitting the public, media representatives, and BCFL staff to photograph, film, and video/audio record in BCFL spaces according to the terms and conditions of this policy.

While the BCFL is open to the public, its branches are limited public forums which are subject to reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions. These restrictions are enforced to protect the privacy rights of library users and to ensure that there will be no disruption to normal operations or staff ability to conduct regular library work.

Importantly, library users have the right to access the library freely and confidentially without scrutiny, harassment, intimidation, or distraction by others. Photography, filming, and video recording that interfere with an individual's privacy or library privacy policies are prohibited.

All library staff are authorized to enforce this policy, and all visitors must follow the library's Behavior Policy and other publicly available policies, posted at <https://buckslib.org/policies/>. Failure to comply with this or other library policies, rules, and regulations or engaging in related activities inconsistent with public safety may result in withdrawal of any granted permission. Depending on the seriousness of the violation, non-compliance may result in banning from the library or a call to 911 without warning.

General

Photography, filming, and video/audio recording are prohibited in library restrooms, office areas, and work rooms.

Individuals taking photographs, filming, or video/audio recording on library premises may not interfere with the operations, programs and activities of the library.

Individuals capturing audio through filming or video recording are subject to the prohibitions of and are solely responsible for following the requirements of Pennsylvania's Wiretapping and Electronic Surveillance Control Act, 18 Pa. C.S. §§ 5701-5782, as well as any other applicable laws.

Individuals taking photographs, filming, or video/audio recording on library premises are: solely responsible for obtaining all necessary permissions from library users being photographed, filmed, or recorded.

Individuals taking photographs, filming or recording copyrighted material are solely responsible for obtaining authorization or permission from the owner.

Furniture, equipment, and other library property must not be rearranged or moved beyond what is typical for regular day-to-day library operations and usage.

Publicly available power outlets may be used, but outlet covers must not be removed. Power cords and equipment must not impede access to working areas of the library, including entryways and walkways.

BCFL spaces are not available after hours, except for library-initiated projects.

Personal and Private Use Photography, Filming, and Video or Audio Recording

No authorization is required from the library for personal and private use photography, filming, and video/audio recording by individual visitors or groups as long as these activities are limited to themselves or their group and are in compliance with the law.

Permission is required for photography, filming, and video/audio recording outside of oneself or one's group from an adult library user being photographed, filmed or video/audio recorded. For any minor being photographed, filmed, or video/audio recorded, permission must also be obtained from the minor's parent or legal guardian.

Commercial Use and Media Photography, Filming, and Video/Audio Recording Intended for Publication, Sales or Profit

Commercial photography, filming and video/audio recording involves the use of an image or images, via film, video, digital or other technology, that have been created with the primary intention or are directed toward commercial advantage or monetary compensation, including advertising, promotion, marketing, or product demonstration.

Media photography, filming, and video/audio recording includes traditional print and electronic media, such as newspapers, magazines, and social media sites, including those which may be supported in whole or in part through subscriptions, contributions, sponsorships, or pay-per-click revenue.

Advance permission from BCFL is required for any non-private use professional, commercial, or media photography, filming, and video/audio recording that is intended for publication, sales, or profit. Separate permission also must be obtained from any library user, and the

parent or guardian of any minor, who is subject to such photographing, filming, or video/audio recording.

Requests for Commercial or Media Photography, Filming, and Video/Audio Recording

Media representatives or those engaging in commercial use photography, filming, and video/audio recording on BCFL premises must request advance permission by e-mailing media@buckslib.org.

All requests should include:

- The representative's name, contact information, and organization or media outlet
- The purpose and context of the request, including coverage of specific topics or events;
- The proposed dates, times, and duration of access to library facilities and staff or a staff representative if applicable; and
- Anticipated deadlines and publication dates, where applicable.

If approved, the library will respond by providing specific terms of approval and facilitating activities with library staff, where applicable.

Non-commercial media requests for photography, filming, and video/audio recording may be made on a walk-in basis to the library manager responsible for that facility. Staff that receive walk-in media requests must refer the media representative to the library manager, or, if unavailable, to media@buckslib.org.

A library manager, generally and without prior administrative approval, may:

- Provide factual information regarding current library operations and activities;
- Approve short video, photo, and audio capture and sharing of library facilities, events, and activities for short periods, such as less than 30 minutes; and
- Offer access to and provide factual information about library policies, FAQs, press releases, and other publicly available information.

A library manager, generally and without prior administrative approval, cannot:

- Approve the taking and sharing of photographs, filming, and video/audio recording of library facilities, scheduled library events, and library activities for extended periods, such as more than 30 minutes;
- Engage in extended interviews or information gathering such as a period of more than 15 minutes;
- Provide legal advice, explain or advocate the law or legal principles, or divulge privacy and security issues or information;
- Handle crisis communication; or
- Resolve disputes or complaints from the Media representative.

Photography, Filming, and Video/Audio Recording by Library Staff

BCFL frequently engages in photography, filming, and video/audio recording for its own publicity and promotional purposes. BCFL will comply with all aspects of the provisions of the Wiretap Act.

Library staff will make every effort to notify library users when photography or filming are taking place in its facilities. Library users will be advised verbally or through signage that their presence in the library or participation in an event includes consent to being photographed, filmed, or recorded and use of their images unless they indicate otherwise to library staff.

Any images used by BCFL will not be identified using full names or personally identifying information without a written release from the subject or, if a minor, from their parent or legal guardian.

Photography, Filming, and Audio Recording of Library Staff

BCFL requests that those engaged in photography, filming, and video/audio recording on library premises, as outlined in this policy, exercise discretion, respect, and common courtesy toward library staff. BCFL encourages, but does not require, voluntary permission of staff before engaging in such photography, filming, and video/audio recording.

Photography, filming, and video/audio recording may not disrupt staff members' work.

Any requests to interview BCFL staff must be directed to a library manager, as addressed in this policy.

Library users may comment on this policy or appeal any actions taken by library staff to enforce this policy by submitting their concern in writing to the Bucks County Free Library Board of Directors, 150 South Pine Street, Doylestown, PA 18901-4932 or via the comment form at <https://buckslib.org/contact-board>.

Adopted by Board of Directors September 19, 2023

Revised July ??, 2025

Next Review 2028