Town of Hartsville
Town Hall and Highway Department
Security Camera Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use of security cameras within Town-owned facilities and property to:

- Protect public buildings, grounds, equipment, and infrastructure.
- Improve the safety and security of employees, elected officials, residents, and visitors.
- Deter theft, vandalism, harassment, violence, and unauthorized access.
- Assist in the investigation of accidents, complaints, criminal activity, or property damage; and
- Ensure that the use of security cameras is balanced with employee privacy, fairness, and reasonable workplace expectations.

This policy is intended to prevent the misuse of surveillance systems and to ensure that employees, including Highway Department employees, are not subjected to constant or unreasonable monitoring for disciplinary purposes.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Town-owned buildings and grounds, including the Town Hall, Highway Department garage, storage facilities, and parking areas.
- All Town employees, elected officials, contractors, volunteers, and visitors.
- All video surveillance equipment owned, leased, or operated by the Town.

Policy Statement

The Town recognizes the importance of maintaining safe municipal facilities while also respecting employee dignity and privacy.

Security cameras are intended primarily for:

- Building and property security.
- Public safety.
- Protection of Town assets.

- Investigation of incidents after they occur.

Security cameras shall not be used for:

- Constant live monitoring of employees during routine work activities.
- Micromanagement or productivity tracking.
- Harassment, intimidation, or retaliation.
- Selective targeting specific employees without legitimate cause.
- Monitoring employees during lawful breaks or union-protected activities.

No employee shall be disciplined solely based on casual or continuous observation through live camera feeds absent a legitimate safety concerns, misconduct investigation, policy violation, or documented complaint.

Camera Placement

Permitted Areas

Cameras may be installed in:

- Building entrances and exits.
- Hallways and common areas.
- Parking lots and exterior grounds.
- Garages, equipment bays, and fuel storage areas.
- Public meeting rooms.
- Areas containing valuable equipment, records, or supplies.

Prohibited Areas

Cameras shall not be installed in areas where employees or the public have a reasonable expectation of privacy, including:

- Restrooms.
- Designated employee break rooms intended for private meals or rest periods.
- Private offices unless justified by documented security concerns and approved by the Town Board.

Audio recording shall not be utilized unless specifically authorized by the Town Board and permitted by law. Cameras in use will not be continuously feed. Camera’s will catch 60 second movement / audio clips.

Employee Protections

To prevent inappropriate surveillance and maintain a fair workplace environment, the following protections apply:

Limited Monitoring

Live camera feeds shall not be continuously monitored during normal work operations except when:

- Responding to an active incident.
- Addressing a legitimate security concern.
- Monitoring public meetings or public service encounters.
- Investigating reported misconduct, theft, vandalism, safety violations, or accidents.

No Constant Observation

Town officials, supervisors, or superintendents shall not use cameras to constantly watch Highway Department employees or other staff during routine daily duties.

Routine observation for the purpose of catching minor infractions, evaluating work pace, or creating a hostile work environment is prohibited.

Fair Use in Discipline

Video footage may be reviewed as part of an investigation; however:

- Employees shall not be subjected to arbitrary or selective enforcement.
- Footage should be reviewed in context.
- Employees may be provided with an opportunity to respond to allegations when appropriate.
- Camera footage should support, not replace, fair supervisory practices.

Non-Retaliation

Employees who raise concerns regarding camera misuse, privacy, harassment, or retaliation shall not suffer retaliation for making a good-faith complaint.

Access to Camera Systems

Access to live feeds and recorded footage shall be limited to authorized personnel designated by the Town Board.

Authorized individuals may include:

- Town Supervisor.
- Highway Superintendent.
- Designated IT or security personnel.
- Law enforcement when legally authorized.

All access should be limited to legitimate governmental or security purposes.

The Town may maintain access to log documenting:

- Date and time of access.
- Individuals accessing the system.
- Reason for access.
- Footage reviewed or exported.

Retention of Footage

Unless needed for an investigation, litigation hold, insurance claim, or law enforcement request, recorded footage should generally be retained for a limited period, such as:

- 30 days depending on storage capacity and operational needs.

After the retention period, footage may be automatically deleted or overwritten.

Public Records and Confidentiality

Video recordings may constitute public records subject to the New York Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), but portions may be exempt from disclosure when release would:

- Interfere with law enforcement investigations.
- Unreasonably invades personal privacy.
- Endanger public safety or security.
- Reveal confidential or protected information.

The Town shall review requests for footage in accordance with applicable law.

Notice of Surveillance

The Town shall post signage at building entrances or other appropriate locations informing employees and the public that video surveillance is in use.

Employees shall receive a copy of this policy.

Complaints and Review

Employees who believe camera systems are being misused may submit concerns to:

- The Town Supervisor.
- The Highway Superintendent.
- The Town Board.
- Legal Counsel. If applicable.

The Town Board reserves the right to periodically review camera usage and ensure compliance with this policy.

Policy Violations

Any misuse of surveillance systems, including unauthorized viewing, sharing, or retaliatory use of footage, may result in disciplinary action, removal of access privileges, or referral to law enforcement when appropriate.

Adoption

This policy shall take effect upon adoption by resolution of the Town Board.

Adopted by the Town Board of the Town of _____ on _____.