



Colorado Springs Police Department General Order

1082 Public Safety Camera System (PSCS)

Section 1000 – Patrol Functions

Effective Date: 4/19/2022

Supersedes Date: 12/17/2012

.01 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for the Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) in the responsible and effective use of semi-covert cameras in public areas for safety and security.

.02 Cross-Reference

[GO 101 First Amendment Rights](#)

[GO 121 Fair and Impartial Policing](#)

[GO 210 Volunteers: Security Clearance](#)

[GO 402 Orders and Discretionary Judgment](#)

[GO 831 Collection of Physical Evidence](#)

[GO 1047 Reporting of Suspicious Activity or Terrorist Information](#)

.03 Discussion

This program is established as the Public Safety Camera System (PSCS) and governs the use of PSCS only. Other cameras used by CSPD are not included in this project.

The department recognizes utilizing technology as essential law enforcement and public safety tool. The PSCS crime prevention and detection strategy include the use of video surveillance to target:

- Public areas of high crime and disorder
- Areas where there is a large concentration of government facilities
- Areas where the safety and security of our citizens can be significantly enhanced with camera technology (e.g., large downtown areas, etc.).

Justification for camera deployment will be accomplished through a comprehensive assessment of the totality of circumstances that support the uses of this limited resource. The needs assessment

may include the evaluation of criminal justice records, public information, crime data, officer observations, and community input and concerns.

.04 Policy

Cameras will be used within accepted legal concepts regarding privacy, and professionally and ethically.

Personnel who use PSCS will be appropriately trained and supervised in using this technology.

Violations of this policy will result in appropriate corrective action, may result in disciplinary action, and could subject those involved to civil or criminal liability under state and federal laws.

.05 Definitions

Public Safety Camera System (PSCS): A program designed to enhance public safety using semi-covert video cameras. The system is comprised of video cameras that are positioned in various locations in the Gold Hill Division of Colorado Springs (primarily the downtown area and Nevada Avenue corridor). The system does have the ability to expand. The cameras combine Pan/Tilt/Zoom (PTZ) and Fixed View cameras.

Pan/Tilt/Zoom (PTZ) Cameras: Video cameras that can move left, right, up, and down, as well as zoom in on objects in the field of view. PTZ cameras can be manually manipulated or programmed with a touring sequence that pans the camera periodically and zooms in and out as it is recording.

Fixed View Cameras: Video cameras that do not have the capability to pan or tilt. They are set on a particular viewshed, but they do have the capability to zoom in the fixed field of view.

.10 Civil Rights

CSPD restricts the use of cameras in public places consistent with privacy rights. Except in investigating a crime committed by a person(s) whose description is known, camera use must not be based on individual characteristics or classifications, including race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, or disability. Signs advising the public of the presence of the cameras will be displayed in the area where the cameras are utilized.

The use of cameras to observe a location consisting of residential or commercial housing is limited to the view available to the unaided vision of the general public in the absence of a warrant or court order.

PSCS may *not* be used to try to identify individuals who are lawfully exercising their First Amendment Rights. The camera system may be used to identify persons engaged in unlawful activity.

.20 Appropriate Camera Usages

As with other aspects of law enforcement, not every possible situation that PSCS operators will encounter can be anticipated. Proper discretion is essential to operating the cameras professionally and ethically. In the absence of specific orders, department personnel must continually exercise discretionary judgment to ensure that the safety and security of the public are adequately protected. Department personnel will exercise discretionary judgment in a reasonable manner and remain within the limits of their authority as defined by law, judicial interpretation, and departmental directives.

Cameras and the information obtained from camera use will be used exclusively for public safety and law enforcement purposes. Consistent with the CSPD mission and values, the principal objectives of the camera program include:

- Enhancing public safety in areas where the safety and security of citizens are at higher risk (e.g., large downtown area, concentrated population venues such as stadium areas, etc.)
- Preventing and deterring crime
- Reducing the fear of crime
- Identifying criminal activity
- Identifying criminal suspects
- Gathering evidence
- Documenting police actions to safeguard citizen and police officer rights
- Reducing the cost and impact of crime on the community
- Improving the allocation and deployment of law enforcement resources

.30 Initial and Ongoing Program Assessments

Initial and ongoing needs assessments will be conducted as part of this camera program. Needs assessments will consider that cameras are only one of many tools and methods available to enhance public safety and that other alternatives may be more appropriate or cost-effective. The design and implementation of the camera program and its periodic enhancement must recognize legal parameters that govern the use of cameras in the public space. Evaluation of policy, staffing, training, and budget issues are essential and will be conducted.

.40 Tampering and Duplication Prohibited

Operators of PSCS are prohibited from tampering with or duplicating recorded information, except as allowed for video preservation, legitimate law enforcement purposes (e.g., training, debriefs, etc.), or to safeguard the department from liability.

Information, in any form obtained using camera technology, will be handled according to accepted departmental procedures and legal rules governing the handling of evidence and criminal justice records. Such information should be disseminated by applicable departmental policies, state, and federal laws. Unusable or non-case-specific video or digital image data will not be retained. They will be purged from data storage within the established time periods and conform to state and federal, city, and department legal and policy requirements.

.42 Video Retention and Access

All footage obtained from the use of PSCS video cameras must be deleted or recorded over after the expiration of thirty (30) days from when the images are recorded, except when retained under the allowable circumstances described in this policy. This thirty (30) day retention period has been established after consulting with the Division of State Archives and Public Records.

.50 Requests for PSCS Video and Images

Requests for the retention of, or search for, specific video images must be submitted in writing using a PSCS video search/retrieval request form. The PSCS program commander will review this request for approval. In situations that require the urgent retrieval of video images, the duty lieutenant or appropriate investigations division lieutenant may approve the retrieval.

Attachment

[Video Search Retrieval Form](#)