



Filming and Photography Guidelines

Introduction

The Buffalo & Erie County Public Library ("The Library") provides library services to the Western New York community. Fulfilling the Library's mission is the first priority of the Library, and the filming and photography described below is permitted so long as it is consistent with the Library's Mission Statement and Rules of Conduct.

News Media Photography

The Library has an open door policy for news media photographers and reporters who are doing stories or projects that directly involve the Library and its programs. Advance authorization for such photography may be obtained from the Library's Development & Communications Department at 716-858-7182. Media outlets filming or photographing on Library premises have sole responsibility for gaining all necessary releases and permissions from persons who are filmed or photographed. The Library undertakes no responsibility in obtaining these releases.

News media may use Library facilities for stories or projects directly related to the Library or when the Library is used as a resource to support a story or project; however, research photography of the Library's materials and resources are permitted within certain limitations (see "Research Photography" section below). Using Library facilities as interview venues for unrelated stories, opinion polls or "man on the street" interviews within its facilities is not permitted.

Documentary-Type Photography For Publication Or Broadcast

The Library permits photography of its premises and activities when the use of the photographs involves the Library directly, ie. books, articles, or videos about the Library, the Library's position in Erie County as a tourist or learning destination, or as part of a piece used to describe our county's environs. Advance authorization must be obtained from the Library's Development & Communications Department at 716-858-7182.

Commercial Photography

The Library does not permit commercial photography on or in its facilities. This includes, but is not limited to, using Library buildings, grounds or interiors as a stageset for portraiture, model photography, product photography, or photography or filming used to advertise goods or services unrelated to the Library for commercial sale or promotion.

Research Photography

The Library 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 Central Library's Grosvenor Room to photograph materials or items in its special collections because of proprietary rights and preservation issues in these areas. Permission is required to reproduce materials and, in some cases, a fee may be charged. Please discuss your needs with a Grosvenor Room staff member before planning your project to obtain advance authorization. These limitations may also apply to some materials in other departments of the Central Library.

Amateur Photography

Casual amateur photography and videotaping is permitted in the Library. A permission slip must be obtained from the Development & Communications Department or designee prior to taking photos. The name and contact information of the photographer will be kept on file in the Library's Development & Communications Office.

Photos/videos are limited to the Library buildings and/or inanimate objects for personal use. Photography of materials in Library collections*, taking photos of other patrons or the use of additional equipment such as lighting is not permitted.

*Permission to photograph individual book pages, maps and other items in the Library collection for artistic or educational purposes may be granted. In some cases, this may involve a fee.

Movie Industry

The Library will permit use of its facilities by the movie or music industry for filming major entertainment projects where a Library setting is called for, if the project is in accordance with the rest of these guidelines. Filming cannot create a link between the Library and political campaigns, religious affiliation or partisan issues. Projects such as these must be approved in advance through the Library's Development & Communications Department and are subject to legal review, with logistics planned in advance with the Library. Filming done outside of the Library's normal operating hours and involving Library personnel such as are necessary to open, secure, and remain on the premises during a shoot must be paid at overtime rates by the production company.

Photography for Groups and/or Non-Library Events in the Library Meeting Rooms or Auditorium

Groups arranging meetings in the Library meeting facilities may arrange for photographers and news media during the event. Photography for such events is restricted to the space reserved by the group and may not take place in other areas of the Library.

Photography by library staff for internal and promotional purposes

Library staff must have the consent of each individual photographed. Permission forms will be kept on file in the Development & Communications Office.

Contact info: 716-858-7182, communications@buffalolib.org

[Click this link to download Photography and Filming Approval Form.](#)

Posted: 5/14/12

Rev. 1/8/2026