

Closed-Circuit Television Cameras

Seattle Police Department

What is the technology?

The Seattle Police Department (SPD) proposes closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera systems to help deter and detect criminal activity. The CCTV camera systems are proposed to be installed at specific locations where gun violence, human trafficking, and persistent felony crime is concentrated. The cameras will face toward the street, sidewalk, and other public areas and signs will be posted identifying their presence. Privately-owned security systems can also share video streams of public areas with SPD.

Why will we use the technology?

CCTV camera systems will assist investigators in collecting evidence related to serious and violent crimes, including homicides, assaults and other felony offenses. The CCTV system can aid investigators in identifying suspects, clearing the innocent, and removing deadly weapons from the street, thereby reducing the risk of harm to the public.



The open comment period for this technology is currently underway. You can provide comments to [Seattle.gov/Surveillance](https://seattle.gov/surveillance).

All comments will be included in the Surveillance Impact Report on this technology and submitted to the City Council.

If you would like to provide feedback outside of the open comment period, please submit them directly to the City Council using the emails at <https://seattle.gov/council>.

Collection

CCTV data is temporarily stored in the system for a maximum of 30 days unless it includes evidence of a crime and it is then stored in SPD's secure electronic evidence storage. [SPD Policy 7.010](#) governs the submission of evidence and requires that all collected evidence be documented in a General Offense Report.

Use

The purpose of the CCTV pilot program is to mitigate unprecedented patrol and investigations staffing shortages by leveraging evidence-based and industry-standard technologies to deter and detect persistent felony criminal behavior, gun violence, and human trafficking at specific places where crime is concentrated. The possible initial pilot areas under consideration are on Aurora Avenue North, Belltown, Chinatown-International District, and the Downtown Commercial Core.

Protections

In order to minimize inadvertent collection of data, the CCTV cameras will be placed to capture events in plain view in public areas where as a matter of law no reasonable expectation of privacy exists.

CCTV video recordings are automatically purged after 30 days unless the footage is collected as evidence in a criminal investigation. Additionally, the CCTV camera systems will maintain a complete audit log of activities which can be viewed at any time by the Office of the Inspector General for Public Safety.