



Supreme Court

Rhode Island Judiciary

Policy Regarding Use of Facial Recognition Technology in Judicial Facilities

Issued March 13, 2026

I. Authority

Pursuant to G.L. 1956 §§ 8-15-4(b), (c) and (e), the State Court Administrator, under the direction of the Chief Justice, is tasked with the duty to “perform all other necessary functions relating to the administration of the courts,” “to act upon all administrative matters affecting the operation of the judiciary,” and “assume control of and supervise the maintenance and repair of all buildings housing the supreme and several inferior courts of justice throughout the State of Rhode Island.” The responsibility for carrying out the terms of this Policy, under the direction of the State Court Administrator, is vested in the Judicial Security Personnel, as defined herein.

II. Purpose

The Judiciary is charged with the constitutional duty to administer justice in a fair, orderly, and impartial manner, which includes maintaining a healthful, safe, and secure environment for all who utilize Judiciary facilities and to ensure that the administration of justice occurs without disruption, influence, impediment, or interference. To this end, the Judiciary operates a comprehensive security system that includes, in part, video surveillance and Facial Recognition Technology. This Policy provides guidelines and principles for the use of Facial Recognition Technology in a manner that is consistent with the Judiciary’s constitutional duties and obligations while preserving the privacy and constitutional rights of all individuals present in Judicial Facilities.

III. Definitions

- A. Courthouse. Any courthouse within the State of Rhode Island that is under the operation and control of the Judiciary: the Frank J. Licht Judicial Complex (250 Benefit Street, Providence), J. Joseph Garrahy Judicial Complex (1 Dorrance Plaza, Providence), Philip W. Noel Judicial Complex (222 Quaker Lane, Warwick), Florence K. Murray Judicial Complex (45 Washington Square, Newport), J. Howard McGrath Judicial Complex (4800 Tower Hill Road, Wakefield), and the Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal (670 New London Turnpike, Cranston).
- B. Facial Recognition Technology (FRT or FRT software). Software that can be utilized in conjunction with the Judiciary’s video surveillance system to identify or verify the identity of an individual present within a courthouse from a digital, photographic, or video image.

- C. FRT Image Database. Confidential database maintained by the Judiciary's Security and Safety Office containing all photographs and/or videos uploaded by Judicial Security Personnel into the FRT software database.
- D. Judiciary. The unified judicial system as set forth in G.L. 1956 § 8-15-1.
- E. Judicial Facility. Includes every Courthouse, as well as the Judicial Records Center (5 Hill Street, Pawtucket) and the Fogarty Judicial Annex (24 Weybosset Street, Providence), and the surrounding perimeters thereto.
- F. Judicial Security Personnel. Employees of the Judiciary's Safety and Security Office including the Director of Security or a designee(s) but does not include the Rhode Island Capitol Police or the Rhode Island Division of Sheriffs.
- G. Judiciary Security Surveillance System. The surveillance system including, but not limited to, video cameras and FRT software, owned, operated, and maintained by the Judiciary for the purpose of protecting judicial property and maintaining a safe and secure environment for Judiciary employees, users, and visitors.
- H. Monitored Attendee. An individual so designated by Judicial Security Personnel based upon their personal knowledge, training, and experience to warrant designating the individual as a Monitored Attendee.

An individual shall only be designated as a Monitored Attendee if the individual has displayed verbal, written, physical, or other conduct which is threatening, disruptive, suspicious and/or may have a deleterious effect on the public health, security, safety, and/or welfare within a Judiciary Facility and/or may disrupt, impede, influence, or otherwise interfere with the fair, orderly, safe and impartial administration of justice within a Judiciary Facility, or are under investigation for such conduct. In reaching this determination, Judicial Security Personnel shall not consider an individual's race, religion, gender, ethnicity, national origin, or any other protected trait.

The Director of Security shall conduct a quarterly review of all Monitored Attendee designations and, if such designation is no longer applicable to an individual, immediately remove such designation.

The listing of Monitored Attendees shall be maintained confidentially by Judicial Security Personnel and shall not be shared, disclosed, or otherwise disseminated.

IV. Use

FRT may be used for monitoring purposes in a Judiciary Facility to enhance security. The FRT software automatically compares data from the Judiciary's Security Surveillance System with data from the FRT Image Database to identify individuals designated as Monitored Attendee(s) upon entry or exit from any Judiciary Facility. All identifications registered by the FRT software are quantified by percentages of likelihood of a match.

