

BLACKSTONE POLICE DEPARTMENT		GENERAL ORDERS	
SUBJECT: Audio-Visual Body Worn Camcorders		NUMBER: 3-48	
EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/01/2015		REVIEW DATE:	
AMENDS/SUPERSEDES:		APPROVED: Nicholas C. Kuzmiak Chief of Police	
CALEA STANDARDS:		VLEPSC STANDARDS:	

I. Purpose

- A. To establish policy and guidelines for electronic data collection generated from the use of **Body Worn** audio/visual **Camcorders** (BWC).
- B. To direct officers and supervisors in the proper use and maintenance of the BWC.
- C. To provide an accurate unbiased audio/visual record of enforcement activities, police-public contacts and critical incidents.

II. Policy

Officers of the Blackstone Police Department shall activate the BWC to record all contacts with citizens in the performance of official duties where the recordings are consistent with this policy and the law.

III. Procedure

- A. The objective of the BWC is to:
 - 1. Supplement reports and investigations and ultimately aid in:
 - a. Prosecuting traffic and criminal offenses,
 - b. Identifying areas of remedial training,
 - c. Promoting officer safety, and
 - d. Improving officer performance.
 - 2. Document events, actions, or statements made during arrests, interviews, and critical incidents in order to enhance report preparation and investigation.
 - 3. Enhance the Department's ability to review probable cause for arrests, searches and seizures, arrest procedures, officer and suspect interaction, and evidence for investigative purposes.

4. Assist with officer evaluation and training.
 5. Document crime and accident scenes and other events that include the confiscation and documentation of evidence or contraband.
- B. The BWC shall not be deactivated until the enforcement action or investigation is completed. If an officer fails to activate the BWC, fails to record the entire contact, or interrupts the recording, the officer shall document why a recording was not made, interrupted or was terminated.
 - C. The BWC equipment and all data, images and video captured and recorded is the sole property of the department. Officers shall not edit, alter, erase, duplicate, copy, share or otherwise distribute in any manner, any audio and/or video on the BWC without approval from a department supervisor.
 - D. Officers shall only use BWC's issued by the department.
 - E. Officers shall receive training and instruction in the proper use and operation of the BWC.
 - F. Officers shall inspect and test the BWC prior to each shift in order to verify proper functioning. The BWC equipment is the responsibility of each officer and shall be used with reasonable care. Equipment malfunctions shall be brought to the attention of a supervisor as soon as possible.
 - G. Civilians shall not be allowed to review the recordings at the scene.

IV. **Prohibitions**

- A. Any use of the BWC for any purpose other than official law enforcement duties is a violation of this policy. Non-law enforcement examples may include, but is not limited to:
 1. Covertly recording other law enforcement personnel;
 2. Recording a conversation with a supervisor, council member, or other government employee;
 3. Personal use of the BWC; and
 4. Recording a conversation that the officer is not party to, unless the officer is handling a law enforcement incident and is in a lawful position when the taping occurs.

- B. Officers shall not use the BWC to record a particular person based solely on the person's race, color, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin or physical disability.

V. **Data Management**

- A. BWC recordings shall only be downloaded to computers operated and maintained by the Town of Blackstone Police Department.
- B. Before going off-duty, officers will download all recordings to a designated secure server/computer.
 - 1. Data that is deemed to be of evidentiary value will be downloaded on a media storage device (i.e. CD-Rom, flash drive, etc.) and entered into evidence. The media storage device shall be retained for 3 years or until the case is resolved or evidence is released, whichever is longer, as specified in the Records Retention and Disposition Schedule - General Schedule- # 17 Section 100797. The media storage device may be destroyed or its contents shall be erased at the end of the retention period.
 - 2. Officers will document in the incident, arrest and related reports when video/audio recordings were made during the incident in question.
 - 3. Other data not copied to disc will remain on the secure server/computer for 60 days as specified in the Records Retention and Disposition Schedule - General Schedule - # 17 Section 100796. The data shall be erased at the end of the retention period.
- C. Data will not be released to another criminal justice agency for trial or other reasons without having a duplicate copy made and returned to safe storage.
- D. Data will not be released to any outside non-criminal justice entity, regardless of the content, without explicit authority from the Chief of Police or their designee.
- E. Digital copies for purposes not associated with the investigation or prosecution of a violation of law will only be made and or created subject to one of the following:
 - 1. Permission from the Chief of Police or his designee; or
 - 2. Required by court order.

VI. Supervisor Responsibilities:

- A. Supervisory personnel shall ensure that officers are deploying the BWC's in accordance with department policy and procedures.
- B. Supervisors shall, on a monthly basis, randomly review BWC recordings to ensure that the equipment is working properly, the officers are using the devices appropriately and to identify any areas in which additional training or guidance is required.