**DUBLIN POLICE DEPARTMENT**

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

# SECTION: M-022 BODY-WORN CAMERA POLICY

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 7 DEC 2015 NUMBER OF PAGES: 4**

**REVISED DATE: 14 FEB 2023 DISTRIBUTION AUTHORIZATION**

STANDARD COVERED: N/A *CHIEF KEITH MOON*

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**I. PURPOSE:**

This policy is intended to provide Dublin Police Department Officers with instructions on when and how to use Body Worn Cameras (BWC’s) so that officers may reliably record their contacts with the public. The use of a Body Worn Camera provides an unbiased audio/video recording of events that officers encounter. These recordings can be useful for the documentation of evidence, the preparation of incident reports, and providing audio/video evidence during criminal and administrative investigations, and future court testimony. These recordings can also protect officers from false allegations of misconduct and are used when debriefing incidents or evaluating performance.

**II. SCOPE:**

This procedure is applicable to **all** sworn Officers assigned to the Dublin Police Department.

**III. Definitions Related to the Body Worn Cameras:**

**Audio Recording** – The electronic recording of conversations, spoken words, or other sounds

**Body-Worn-Camera (“BWC”)** – Equipment worn by the Dublin Police Department Personnel that captures audio/video and audio signals and includes at a minimum a camera, microphone, and recorder.

**Controller Switch** – Master on/off power

**Event Record Button** – Push-button activation switch located in the center of the BWC device.

**Evidence Transfer Manager (“ETM”)** – a router with built-in docking stations physically installed at the Department work site. The ETM simultaneously recharges the device while uploading all digitally encrypted data to the storage unit.

**Master System Administrator (“MSA”)** – Supervisor(S) authorized by the Chief of Police with full access to user rights; assigns and tracks master inventory of equipment; controls passwords and end-user security access rights; is responsible for quality checks of video, audio, and sound quality; coordinates with System Administrators; and serves as liaison to the BWC manufacturer’s representatives on operational and equipment-related matters.

**Media or Data** – For the purpose of this procedure, references to media or data include photographs, audio recordings, video, and audio footage captured by the BWC device. The media is stored digitally and encrypted.

**System Administrator (“SA”)** – Supervisor responsible for inventory, control, and operational maintenance of the BWC system equipment

**IV: Training**

All members of the Dublin Police Department who are authorized to use BWC equipment shall complete mandatory training provided by the Department to familiarize themselves with the recording system and Departmental procedures prior to use.

**V. Required Activation of the Body Worn Camera:**

This Policy identifies those situations in which activation of the BWC is required, an officer has the discretion to manually activate the system any time the officer believes it would be appropriate or valuable to document an incident. The BWC shall only be activated for legitimate law enforcement purposes:

1. All field contacts involving actual or potential criminal conduct within video and audio or audio range to include **all police contacts with the public concerning a police matter, calls for service, consensual citizen contacts, etc.**
2. Any other contact that becomes adversarial after the initial contact in a situation that would not otherwise require recording.

1. Any other legitimate law enforcement contacts where the officer believes that a recording of an incident would be appropriate. In exercising this discretion, officers should be aware of and sensitive to civilians’ reasonable privacy expectations. Officers must know the law concerning recording in someone’s home. **The basic rule is that if you have a right to be there you need to record audio and video.**
2. The BWC may not be used for the purpose of intimidating an individual or to discourage an individual from observing police activity, making appropriate inquiries of an officer, or making a complaint.
3. Officers may happen upon a situation requiring immediate action to prevent injury, destruction of evidence, or escape. In these situations, officers should activate the recorder if doing so does not place them or others in danger, otherwise, they shall activate the camera at the first available opportunity when the immediate threat has been addressed. The officer will document the reasons for the delayed activation in a supplement or after-action report.
4. There are many situations where the use of the BWC is appropriate. This Policy is not intended to describe every possible circumstance. Personnel may activate the system anytime they feel its use would be appropriate and/or valuable to document events.

**VI. Officer Responsibilities:**

At the start of each shift, officers shall properly equip themselves with a BWC to record video and audio in the field. Commanders/Supervisors shall ensure that each officer has adequate recording media for the entire duty assignment. Officers assigned a BWC shall test the equipment prior to use according to manufacturer guidelines and testing procedures. Officers shall immediately report insufficient recording media or malfunctioning BWC systems to an immediate supervisor.

**VII: Supervisor Responsibilities**:

Commanders/Supervisors shall inspect BWC equipment assigned to personnel. Non-functioning BWC systems shall not be placed into service and the equipment shall be immediately reported in writing to the System Administrator.

**VIII: Cessation of Recording:**

Once the BWC system is activated it shall remain on and shall not be turned off until an investigative, enforcement contact, or incident has concluded. For purposes of this section, the conclusion of an incident has occurred when an officer has terminated contact with an individual, cleared the scene or a reported incident, or has completed the transport of a civilian or an arrestee. In any instance in which cessation of the recording prior to the conclusion of the incident is permitted, the officer shall obtain supervisory approval prior to the deactivation of the BWC whenever possible. The cessation will be documented in the incident report.

**IX: Prohibited Audio/Video Recordings by Employees in the workplace**

The BWC **shall not** be used to record non-work-related personal activity. The BWC shall not be activated in places where an employee has a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as locker rooms, dressing rooms, or restrooms. If a criminal offense has occurred in these locations, the BWC may be activated and every precaution shall be taken to respect the dignity of the victim by avoiding recording video and audio of persons who are nude or when sensitive areas are exposed. The BWC **shall not** be intentionally activated to record conversations of fellow employees, or supervisors during routine, non-enforcement-related activities without their knowledge, or during rest or break periods, or in designated break areas unless an active pre-existing investigation is underway and authorized by law.

**X: Operational Protocols**

1. The BWC shall be worn at all times while on duty when assigned this device.

2. The BWC shall be utilized by any Dublin Police Department member assigned this device

during all investigative or enforcement contacts. However, there may be limited

circumstances where the respect for an individual’s privacy or dignity outweighs the need to

record an event. Where an officer believes such circumstances exist, or the use of a BWC

would impede or limit the cooperation of a victim or witness during an investigative contact,

an officer may deactivate the BWC after receiving authorization from a supervisor. Dublin

Police Department personnel have discretion on whether to activate a BWC during consensual

contacts of a non-criminal nature.

3. If an officer fails to activate the BWC, fails to record the entire contact, or interrupts the

recordings, the officer shall document why a recording was not made, was interrupted, or was

terminated in the incident report.

1. BWC videos may be used for training purposes, not to be used to ridicule or embarrass the officer.
2. Officers are prohibited from using recording devices for personal use and are prohibited from making personal copies of recordings created while on duty or while acting in their official capacity. Officers are also prohibited from retaining recordings of activities or information obtained while on duty. Officers shall not duplicate or distribute such recordings, except for authorized legitimate agency business purposes. All such recordings shall be retained at the Dublin Police Department.
3. Dublin Police Department personnel will not under any circumstance download videos/audio to any social media site or app; this includes but is not limited to Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. Officers will not make copies of the video for personal use.
4. Officers shall indicate in all reports if a video recording was captured via the BWC.

**XI. Storage and Review Procedures**

1. The System Administrator and Evidence Custodian will retain recordings in accordance with the classification and retention in accordance with Georgia State Laws.
2. When a recording is requested for official use by authorized court personnel or per an Open Records Request, designated administrative personnel will fulfill the request per policy and lawful regulations.
3. BWC Recordings may be viewed in any of the following situations:
4. By an officer viewing recording for his/her assigned recorder
5. By a Supervisor investigating a specific act of misconduct
6. By an assigned Investigator conducting a follow-up investigation of the incident to which the recording is related
7. By officer of the Court
8. By Internal Affairs Investigators
9. The Chief of Police reserves the right to limit or restrict an officer from viewing a recording.

4. Recordings are subject to the Georgia Opens Records Act.