# Operations Policies and Procedures

**Department of Public Safety**
**Police Division**

**Title**  
Body Worn Camera Digital Recording System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>SOP Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body Worn Camera Digital Recording System</td>
<td>9.1.700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Approval Signature**
Chief Maris Herold

**Reviewed/Revised by**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reviewed/Revised by</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Last Revision Date**
January 17, 2018

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May 6, 2015
Body Worn Camera Digital Recording System

I. PURPOSE

The University of Cincinnati Police Division (UCPD) deploys the “Body Worn Camera” (BWC) in an effort to fulfill its commitment to professionalism, accountability and transparency. The BWC is a video and audio recording system assigned to an officer, which is worn on their person. The BWC is deployed by uniformed University Law Enforcement Officers UCPD; however, non-uniformed officers may be directed to wear the BWC. The BWC is meant to supplement the officer’s visual perspective of an incident, thus allowing the officer a greater opportunity to capture details otherwise missed during times his/her attention might be focused elsewhere.

The BWC captures unbiased video and audio recordings of interactions with the public, crime scene investigations, and general patrol operations. The BWC provides an accurate account and review of an incident and may be used to corroborate subsequent trial preparation practices, procedures, and evidence collection.

II. Policy

The BWC shall be used for legitimate law enforcement purposes only; as described by statute and departmental policy. All data shall be captured, maintained, stored, viewed, and disclosed in accordance with the prescribed policy.

III. Definitions

Categorized Incident: Video footage that is automatically assigned a title/category by the Computer Aided dispatch (CAD) system. Such titles include Court, Domestic Dispute, and Traffic Stops.

Mandatory Review Video: UCPD video of incidents that must be reviewed by the approving or investigating supervisor. These incidents include all Arrests, Citations, Uses of Force, Vehicle Pursuits, Vehicle Accidents, and Off-campus Traffic/Pedestrian Stops.

Non-Mandatory Review Video: UCPD video that is not automatically subject to supervisor review as described above, but may be randomly selected for review and include any uncategorized incidents.

Uncategorized Incident: Video footage that is not automatically assigned a title/category by the Computer Aided dispatch (CAD) integration system due to a lapse in time of video activation.

IV. Procedures

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

DEPARTMENT ISSUED BODY WORN DIGITAL RECORDING
SYSTEM

1. All officers will be trained in the use of and issued a BWC system. BWC equipment will be used in accordance with BWC training and this procedure.

2. All officers will wear their issued BWC while on duty.
   a. Officers will wear the BWC on the left side of their uniformed shirt, at chest level, if wearing the pocket clip mount.
   b. If the officer is wearing the magnet mount for the BWC the magnet will be mounted in the center of the uniform shirt, between the second and third button from the top.
   c. The magnet mount should be used when wearing a bike jacket or winter coat, the BWC will be mounted over the zipper, in the center of the jacket, level with the second button from the top of the uniform shirt.

3. Special assignment and plainclothes officers will wear their BWC when engaged in activities where the use is reasonably foreseeable, or as directed by a supervisor.

4. Officers will not use any personally owned recording equipment or devices while on duty without approval from the Chief of Police.
   a. Data images, video, and metadata captured, recorded, or otherwise produced by the BWC is the sole property of the UCPD.
   b. Requests for BWC images of footage shall be made through a Public Records request.

5. Only a BWC with a fully charged indicator will be used or taken at the beginning of a tour of duty.

6. Officers will create a “pre-test” video prior to leaving the station to ensure their BWC is working properly.

7. Officers who discover an operational defect with the BWC system will attempt to correct the problem according to the training provided (I.E.: reseating cables, cycling the power, etc.).
   a. If the BWC is found to have a physical defect or malfunction, the officer will immediately notify their supervisor, remove the device from service, and complete a BWC/Dash Cam Request for Service form describing the events leading up to failure.
b. The supervisor will issue the officer a spare BWC and document the issuance in the equipment log.

8. Officers shall not:
   a. Bypass or attempt to override the BWC equipment.
   b. Erase, alter, or delete any recording produced by the BWC.

B. WHEN DEPARTMENT ISSUED BWC SYSTEM USE IS REQUIRED

1. This section is not intended to describe every possible situation where the system may be used. In general, the BWC should be used to record activities where law enforcement action is about to occur, occurring, or has occurred, or where other circumstances could result in an officer/citizen contact.
   a. In some circumstances it may not be possible to capture images of an incident due to position of the BWC.
   b. In all instances, the audio portion can be valuable evidence and therefore, the BWC activation is still a requirement.

2. Officers responding to the following scenes shall activate their BWC,
   a. When dispatched to or self-initiate a call for service; or
   b. Detention or arrest of an individual(s), or when such action is likely to occur; or
   c. Interacting with a detained or arrested person; or
   d. Confronting disorderly or hostile subjects; or
   e. Searching for or collecting evidence; or
   f. Traffic stops, from the initiation to the completion of the enforcement action; or
   g. OVI investigations, including field sobriety tests; or
   h. Warrant service; or
   i. Investigatory or reasonable suspicion detentions; or
   j. Any contact that becomes adversarial in an incident that would not otherwise require recording. In those situations, it may be impractical or unreasonable for officers to activate their BWC system before taking police action. In that
Body Worn Camera Digital Recording System

case, officers will activate their BWC as soon as practical to record the remainder of the incident; or

k. When approached by any person wishing to complain about services provided by or employees of the Department of Public Safety; or

l. As directed by a supervisor

3. While always secondary to the performance of official law enforcement actions as described above, officers should be aware of locations that could compromise an individual’s reasonable expectation of privacy. Examples include residence halls, restrooms and locker rooms, or areas with sensitive materials. In these areas, officer(s) should continue to activate the camera as required in the above (B 1. and 2. a-l), but would not normally activate during routine patrol and/or routine conversation as described below (E.1. and 2.).

a. In situations where the camera was activated as required, but an individual’s privacy could be a concern, officers may briefly cover the lens, leaving the audio to capture the portion of excluded video. However, in no circumstances should officers risk their safety, the safety of others, or jeopardize the evidentiary value of the video for privacy’s sake.

4. In addition to the required situations, officers shall activate the system anytime they believe its use would be appropriate and/or valuable to document an incident

5. There may be instances in which an officer is required to take immediate action to an event that occurs directly in front of them which may not allow time to activate their BWC. In these circumstances, the officer shall activate their BWC as soon as practical.

6. Failure to activate the BWC as required by this policy will be reviewed and will result in corrective action up to and including coaching, counseling, reprimand, suspension or termination.

C. UPLOADING VIDEO, STORAGE and CHARGING

1. Officers will upload all video/recordings captured during their shift(s) by automatic Wi-Fi upload. In absence of automatic Wi-Fi, all officers will upload, charge and store their BWC in the docking stations located in the squad room before securing for the day.

D. DEACTIVATION OF THE BWC SYSTEM IS AUTHORIZED WHEN;

1. Once the incident has concluded
Body Worn Camera Digital Recording System

a. For purposes of this section, conclusion of an incident has occurred when:

1) An arrested suspect has been processed and released from custody
2) All witnesses and victims have been interviewed

b. No further law enforcement action is likely to occur (e.g., after an encounter has concluded and the subject is sent on their way)

E. WHEN DEPARTMENT ISSUED BWC SYSTEM USE IS NOT REQUIRED

1. Activation of the BWC systems is not required during routine patrol.

2. While the officer is engaged in non-enforcement activity; such as meal breaks or routine conversation with the general public.

F. BODY WORN DIGITAL RECORDINGS AS EVIDENCE

1. In all Critical Use of Force incidents, once the scene is secure, the OIC will direct a supervisor to secure the involved officer(s)’ BWC and vehicle cameras’ video. The supervisor will document date, time, location, and from which officer(s) the BWC or vehicle camera video was obtained.

2. Recordings will be manually erased only by the system administrator in accordance with Ohio Public Records Law (149.43), University records retention schedule, and approval by the Chief of Police, unless preserved for:

   a. Court proceedings and subsequent to any appellant process(es)
   b. Ongoing criminal or internal investigation

G. SUPERVISORY REVIEW OF BWC SYSTEM RECORDINGS

1. Supervisors shall ensure that if there are multiple officers at an incident, all videos are labeled consistently and correctly.

   a. Videos/recordings will be reviewed to ensure they met with Division policies and procedures.

   b. Supervisors will utilize the following process to access videos:

      1) Open Windows Explorer – Address bar – evidence.com
      2) Enter your email address and click “GO”
      3) Select “uofcincinnatipd.evidence.com”
      4) Enter USERNAME and PASSWORD
      5) Select “SIGN IN”
      6) Select “EVIDENCE” in the tool bar
7) Enter Officer’s last name in the “OWNER” section – A drop down box with users will appear. Select the correct user name and then select “SEARCH”.
8) Select the video to review from the list and double click to activate the video.
9) Press the play button and review the video.
10) Ensure that every video is labeled and the ID field reflects the officer’s name (examplesLt. J. Doe, Sgt. W. Smith, PO Z. Jones).
11) Ensure that the proper category type is selected.
12) Once you have reviewed the video, select “CATEGORIES” and then select the appropriate “Supervisor Review” option and then select “ADD”.
13) After adding a “Category” you will be asked to answer your security questions to ensure an accurate audit trail.
14) Once the “Title” field and “ID” field are correct and the type of “Supervisor Review” has been added to the “CATEGORIES” field.
15) The last step in completing the review is the “NOTES” section located at the bottom of the screen. Scroll down and click in the “Notes” section and add your notes.
16) The NOTES section must be completed by a supervisor to complete the video review.

c. The approving or investigating supervisor shall review the associated BWC video/recordings for the following incidents (Mandatory Review Video):

1) Arrests 
2) Citations 
3) Uses of Force 
4) Vehicle Pursuits 
5) Vehicle Accidents 
6) Off-campus Traffic/Pedstrian Stops

d. On a weekly basis, each patrol Lieutenant will review 1 random non-mandatory IVRS or BWC video/recordings for at least one officer assigned to their shift.

e. On a weekly basis, each patrol Sergeant will review 3 random non-mandatory IVRS or BWC video/recordings for all officers assigned to their shift.

f. Weekly reviews will be conducted in a manner that ensures each officer assigned to the shift, has at least one video reviewed, each month.

g. All BWC videos/recordings reviewed will be placed into either the ‘Supervisor Reviewed – Action Taken’ or the ‘Supervisor Reviewed – No Action Taken’ categories.
Body Worn Camera Digital Recording System

h. Appropriate action will be immediately taken to address any discrepant issues that arise as a result of the review.

1) If issues are detected that are not serious misconduct, the reviewing supervisor will document such finding on a Complaint Form-15(A).

2) If issues of serious misconduct are observed, the reviewing supervisor will immediately notify his/her supervisor and document the finding on a Complaint Form-15(A).

i. Members of the Standards and Strategic Development Bureau will review the following specified videos/recordings, at a minimum;

1) Arrests
2) Uses of Force
3) Citizen Complaints
4) Vehicle Pursuits

j. On a monthly basis, a member of the Standards and Strategic Development Bureau will conduct an audit of the BWC video logs to ensure supervisory reviews are being conducted in accordance with this policy. The results of the audit will be submitted to the Police Chief through the chain of command.

3. Review of Body Worn Camera (BWC) recordings are authorized by the Chief of Police for the following reasons:

a. To ensure the BWC system is working.
b. To assist with the writing of a report, supplement, or memorandum.
c. For evidentiary review and case preparation.
d. Supervisory review of employee conduct and performance.

4. In the below situations, officers may not review video footage unless explicit authorization is given by the Police Chief:

a. Any Citizen’s Complaint
b. Any Internal Investigation
c. Any Criminal or Civil investigation of a member of the UCPD
d. Any Use of Force
e. Training/development issues related to a member of the UCPD

5. Recordings will not be used or shown with the intent to ridicule or embarrass any employee.
Body Worn Camera Digital Recording System

6. Employees shall not (attempt to) obtain or convert for their personal use or for the unauthorized use of another person, any information obtained by a BWC system.

7. Employees shall not make personal copies or attempt to upload recordings to social networking sites (e.g., Snapchat, Yik Yak, YouTube, Facebook, etc.).

8. Recordings may be released to the Prosecutor through the normal evidentiary process.

   a. All other video releases must be submitted through the normal Division records request process.

H. BWC CATEGORIZING PROCESS

1. The Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system will generate a predetermined title for video. In the absence of a CAD generated title, the supervisor responsible for the incident disposition will title the video.

   a. The responsible supervisor shall also title any other officer whose BWC captured the incident with the same verbiage.

      1) Open Windows Explorer – Address bar – evidence.com
      2) Enter your email address and click “GO”
      3) Select “uofcincinnatipd.evidence.com”
      4) Enter USERNAME and PASSWORD
      5) Select “SIGN IN”
      6) Select “EVIDENCE” in the tool bar
      7) Select the video to review from the list and double click to activate the video.
      8) Press the play button and review the video.
      9) Ensure that every video is labeled and the ID field reflects the officer’s name (examples Lt. J. Doe, Sgt. W. Smith, PO Z. Jones).
     10) Ensure that the proper category type is selected.
     11) Once you have reviewed the video, select “CATEGORIES” and then select the appropriate option and then select “ADD”.
     12) After adding a “Category” you will be asked to answer your security questions to ensure an accurate audit trail.
     13) Once the “Title” field and “ID” field are correct and the type of “Supervisor Review” has been added to the “CATEGORIES” field;
     14) The last step in completing the review is the “NOTES” section located at the bottom of the screen. Scroll down and click in the “Notes” section and add your notes.
     15) The NOTES section must be completed by a supervisor to complete the video review.
Body Worn Camera Digital Recording System

I. Approved Notes Format

1. Reviewed by (your title and name), followed by **one** of the following three options:

   a. “No Action Taken”

   b. “Informal Action Taken” (include what action was taken, example “Coaching”)

   c. “Formal Action Taken” (include what action was taken, ex. IA, Guardian Tracking)

2. Select “Post Note” to complete your entry.

J. Command Staff Audit Review

1. The following will be the procedure the Command Staff will use to generate an audit report to ensure supervisors are reviewing officer’s videos:

   a. Select “ADMIN” from the toolbar
   b. Select “All Users”
   c. Select the “USER NAME” to go to the “VIEW AUDIT TRAIL” page
   d. Select the “VIEW AUDIT TRAIL”
   e. Enter the Date Range and select File Type “PDF” then select “SUBMIT”
   f. Enter the Date Range and select File Type “PDF” then select “SUBMIT”

References

UCPD Policy 97.701 In-Car Video Recording System (IVRS)