



ISSUED: 09-23-2014  
RETAIN UNTIL: Indefinite

## Special Order 14-09

### TOPIC: Body Worn Cameras

---

**General Order 12.2** *Written Directives* under 12.2.1 and 12.2.2 defines **Special Orders**. A Special Order provides special instructions to personnel governing a particular activity or situation. These orders may be of a temporary or self-canceling nature, or involve only specific segments of activity which may, on occasion, supersede a General Order.

---

This Special Order implements a new directive (41.3.10) governing Body Worn Cameras. This addition will be incorporated into the 2014 revision of the General Orders. The change is effective immediately.

Additionally, this Special Order revises the last paragraph in Order 83.2.2 making it consistent with the new BWC policy.

---

#### **41.3.10 Body-Worn Cameras**

##### **Purpose**

This policy is intended to provide officers with instructions on when and how to use body-worn cameras (BWCs) so that officers may reliably record their contacts with the public in accordance with the law. Guidance is given for situations where activation is required, permissible, and prohibited

##### **Policy**

It is the policy of The Ohio State University Police Division that officers assigned a BWC shall activate the device when such use is appropriate to the proper performance of their official duties, where the recordings are consistent with this policy and law. This policy does not govern the use of surreptitious recording devices used in undercover operations.

##### **Procedures**

###### **Administration**

This agency has adopted the use of the BWC to accomplish several objectives. The primary objectives are as follows:

1. BWCs allow for accurate documentation of police-public contacts, arrests, and critical incidents. They also serve to enhance the accuracy of officer reports and testimony in court.

2. Audio and video recordings enhance our ability to review probable cause for arrest, officer and suspect interaction, and evidence for investigative and prosecutorial purposes and to provide additional information for officer evaluation and training.
3. The BWC may also be useful in documenting crime and accident scenes or other events that include the confiscation and documentation of evidence or contraband.

### **When and How to Use the BWC**

Mandatory, permissive, and prohibited activations of the BWC are described in this section. Whenever possible, officers recording interactions should inform individuals that they are being recorded. In locations where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as a residence, they may decline to be recorded unless the recording is required under mandatory BWC activation guidelines. The BWC shall remain activated until the event is completed in order to ensure the integrity of the recording unless the contact moves into an area restricted by this policy.

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, was interrupted, or was terminated.

Civilians shall not be allowed to review recordings at the scene.

### **Mandatory BWC Activation**

Officers shall activate the BWC as soon as safe and practical to record any of the following scenarios

1. Traffic enforcement activity
2. Interactions when subject is known or suspected to have committed a violation
3. Arrests and suspect interviews (BWC activation is not required during prisoner processing when officer is not interacting with arrestee)
4. Contacts with citizens that involve inter-personal conflict
5. Encounters that change from consensual to custodial
6. As ordered by Division supervisor

### **Permissive BWC Activation**

Officers are permitted, but not required, to activate the BWC to record any of the following scenarios:

1. Dispatched calls – when officer feels that video documentation is important but activation is not required above
2. Any citizen contact that assists in accomplishing primary objectives of the BWC program
3. Crisis assessment interviews

## **Prohibited Activations**

Officers are not permitted to record under the following circumstances:

1. Patient care areas where patient care is occurring and could be captured
2. Areas where privacy expectations are high (e.g., locker rooms, rest room)
3. As ordered by Division supervisor
4. Private or operational interactions within the Police Division without the permission of the Chief
5. Encounters with undercover officers or confidential informants
6. When on break or otherwise engaged in personal activities

## **Procedures for BWC Use**

BWC equipment is issued primarily to select uniformed personnel. Officers who are assigned BWC equipment must use the equipment unless otherwise authorized by supervisory personnel. Data images, video, and metadata captured, recorded, or otherwise produced by BWC is the sole property of the Ohio State University Police Division.

Officers assigned a BWC will be provided training to ensure proper use and operation of the device. BWC equipment is the responsibility of individual officers and will be used with reasonable care to ensure proper functioning. Equipment malfunctions shall be brought to the attention of the officer's supervisor as soon as possible so that repairs can be arranged.

BWC equipment shall be inspected and tested at the beginning of each shift to verify proper functioning.

## **Evidence storage**

All files shall be securely uploaded to [www.evidence.com](http://www.evidence.com) periodically and no later than the end of each shift. Each file shall contain information related to the date, BWC identifier, and assigned officer. Files that contain criminal evidence should be saved on storage media (CD/DVD/Portable Memory) and submitted to the property room as evidence.

All images and sounds recorded by the BWC are the exclusive property of The Ohio State University Police Division. Accessing, copying, or releasing files for non-law enforcement purposes is strictly prohibited.

All access to BWC files must be specifically authorized by the Chief of Police or their designee, and an audit trail will be created to verify that only authorized users are accessing the data for legitimate and authorized purposes.

Files will be securely stored in accordance with University and state records retention laws or policies and no longer than useful for purposes of training or for use in investigation or prosecution. For storage beyond routine record retention timelines, officers are responsible for downloading files, saving them on storage media and submitting them to the Records Section or Property Room as appropriate. Files captured as part of the Crisis Assessment Team process will be copied to storage media and stored in accordance with Crisis Assessment Team record retention practices unless part of an ongoing criminal

investigation. In capital punishment prosecutions, recordings shall be kept until the offender is no longer under control of a criminal justice agency.

### **Supervisor Responsibilities**

Supervisory personnel shall ensure that officers equipped with BWC devices utilize them in accordance with policy and procedures defined herein.

At least on a monthly basis, supervisors will randomly review BWC recordings to ensure that the equipment is operating properly and that officers are using the devices appropriately and in accordance with policy and to identify any areas in which additional training or guidance is required.

---

### **83.2.2 (Last Paragraph)**

Video cameras are available for documenting ~~large events for the purpose of capturing video evidence of crimes in progress,~~ **documenting citizen contacts, capturing evidence of crimes, traffic crash reporting, and enhancing the accuracy of officer reports.** In the event that a ~~crime~~ **criminal activity** is ~~captured~~**recorded**, the video evidence should be submitted to the property room **or preserved per the body worn camera evidence procedures in General Order 41.3.10.** ~~Video of events where crimes in progress are not captured are not typically maintained. Video recording is not currently authorized for other crime scene investigation applications.~~ **Video footage that does not show criminal activity or has not otherwise been deemed useful for investigative or other Division purposes will not be maintained or saved.**

Paul S. Denton, #201  
Chief of Police