




Clayton County Police Department PROCEDURES

Subject BODY-WORN & IN-CAR CAMERAS		Procedure # B13	
Authorizing Signature 	Effective 04-13-2026	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amended <input type="checkbox"/> Rescinds	Total Pages 8

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to provide guidelines and procedures for the use and activation of body-worn cameras (BWCs) and in-car cameras (ICCs) authorized by the Clayton County Police Department (CCPD). This includes maintenance and equipment care, digital media evidence (DME) storage and retention, legal guidance for documenting public interactions, and ensuring compliance with the Georgia Open Records Act (O.C.G.A. § 50-18-70 through 50-18-77). This directive aims to promote officer accountability and transparency, protect officers from false accusations, enhance community trust, and provide clear procedures for sworn personnel to follow. [CALEA 41.3.8 (a)]

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Clayton County Police Department (CCPD) to provide sworn personnel working in a uniform capacity and/or performing field activities with body-worn cameras (BWCs) and/or in-car cameras (ICCs) to document law enforcement and citizen interactions, collect evidence for use in the prosecution of law violators, and aid in personnel evaluation and training. Sworn personnel issued BWCs or assigned a vehicle equipped with ICCs shall adhere to the procedures outlined herein, to maximize equipment effectiveness and maintain the integrity of evidence and related video documentation. This directive does not govern the use of covert recording devices approved for use in undercover operations.

III. DEFINITIONS

Active Scene: Any scene, regardless of priority level, where any officer has responded or self-initiated, and they are having continuous direct or indirect contact with any party (e.g., citizens, complainants, officers, witnesses, victims, offenders, suspects, persons of interest, etc.) on scene, and the officer has not returned to service and/or cleared the location.

Administrative Communications: Any communication between a departmental employee and an internal affairs investigator, or designated supervisor, that takes place in a private setting and away from public view or earshot, and the employees Garrity Rights are implied or have been formally applied, for the purpose of investigating an internal or external complaint.

Body-Worn Camera (BWC): A camera, approved by the Chief of Police, worn on an individual police officer's person that records and stores audio and video.

Digital Multimedia Evidence (DME): Consists of all digital recordings, to include but not limited to audio, video, photographs, and their associated metadata.

In-Car Camera (ICC): A camera, approved by the Chief of Police, installed on the front windshield and rear partition of some police vehicles that records and stores audio and video.

Metadata: Any digital identifiers captured as part of an actual recording, such as date/time, global positioning system (GPS) coordinates, labeling, etc.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Responsibilities

1. Officers who are issued a BWC and/or ICC are responsible for understanding and following all regulations for their use, including when to wear, activate, and deactivate them.
2. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all subordinates comply with this directive and shall take immediate corrective action for any misuse or non-compliance.
3. The Logistic & Operations Unit Commander, or authorized designee, shall be responsible for the use, maintenance, and operation of the BWC system, the issuance of BWCs, and coordinating all BWC training with the Training Unit Commander, or authorized designee.
4. A member of the Fleet Maintenance Unit shall be responsible for ensuring that ICCs are installed in designated police vehicles.
5. The Central Records and Permits Unit staff are responsible for handling all requests for BWC and ICC recordings, including open records requests, subpoenas for evidence, and court orders.
6. The Chief of Police, or authorized designee (hereinafter referred to as the Chief of Police), shall be the final approving authority regarding the release of BWC/ICC recordings and data as it relates to the media/press or general public.
7. Any violation of this directive, as it pertains to applicable law, shall be documented and submitted to the Office of Professional Standards (OPS) Division for further review in accordance with CCPD SOP: *E1: Internal Affairs Investigations*.

B. Training [CALEA 41.3.8 (f)]

1. Sworn personnel who are issued BWCs and/or assigned police vehicles equipped with ICCs must successfully complete a Department-approved training program to ensure proper use and operation.
2. Additional training may be required at periodic intervals to ensure the continued effective use and operation of the equipment, proper calibration and performance, and to incorporate changes, updates, or other revisions in policy and equipment.

C. Issuance

1. BWCs and ICCs shall be issued to sworn personnel based on operational needs of the Department as determined by the Chief of Police.
2. All Department-owned BWCs and ICCs shall be issued by the Logistics & Operations Unit Commander, or authorized designee. All ICCs shall be installed in police vehicles by the Department of Information Technology (DoIT/Radio Shop) or the County-approved third-party vendor, and assigned at the discretion of Division/Unit Commanders.

D. Inspection, Maintenance, and Repairs [CALEA 41.3.8 (e)]

1. Officers are responsible for the reasonable care and maintenance of their issued BWC/ICC.

2. Officers are responsible for conducting a visual inspection and functional test of their issued BWC and ICC equipment prior to the beginning of each shift to ensure there is no visible damage and to confirm operability.
3. Officers equipped with a BWC shall ensure that the battery is fully charged, in accordance with departmental training, prior to the beginning of their tour of duty, such as a shift or off-duty employment.
4. Officers shall immediately notify their supervisor of any malfunction, damage, low battery level, or deviation in operating conditions of a BWC or ICC.
5. All BWCs and ICCs shall be maintained and repaired by the Department of Information Technology (DoIT/Radio Shop). The exception to this is equipment under warranty/contract that is scheduled for repair elsewhere.
6. Officers must immediately notify a supervisor and complete a detailed *Incident Report* if a BWC/ICC is lost, stolen, or damaged. In the event of theft, the officer shall provide a copy of the *Incident Report* from the appropriate jurisdiction.

E. Operation and Use

1. Law enforcement officers are authorized by O.C.G.A. § 16-11-62(2)(D) to use their BWC/ICC in the lawful performance of their official duties to observe, photograph, videotape, or record the activities of persons occurring in the presence of such officers or their agents.

This means that law enforcement officers can use their BWC/ICC in a person's home or any other private place so long as they are in the lawful performance of their official duties. Any audio or video recording using a BWC/ICC in a person's home or any other private place is confidential according to O.C.G.A. § 50-18-72 (a) (26.2).

O.C.G.A. § 16-11-60(3) defines a "private place" as a place where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

2. Only officers trained in the proper use of the BWC and ICC shall use them.
3. Only Department-issued or approved BWCs and ICCs shall be used. The use of personal recording devices for the same purpose is prohibited without the express permission of the Chief of Police.
4. Officers shall wear their BWC above the midline of their torso on their outermost garment, in the cradle facing forward and unobstructed.

Officers shall ensure the viewing field of their BWC and ICC is not obstructed and is positioned to produce an effective recording while on an active scene.

5. Every officer issued a BWC or ICC as part of their daily assignment shall use the device(s) when performing patrol duties, operating a police vehicle for enforcement, working designated special details, or performing law enforcement duties during off-duty employment.
6. The Department recognizes that officer safety and the safety of the public are paramount and understands that events can take place without notice. Officers shall activate their BWC and/or ICC when responding to calls for service and during a wide range of law enforcement-related activities. These activities include, but are not limited to: vehicle and pedestrian stops, arrest and detainment of a suspect, searches, interrogations, vehicle or foot pursuits, field interviews, engaging a subject whom the officer has reasonable suspicion of involvement in criminal activity, high-risk situations (including search warrants), and situations that the officer believes will enhance the probability of evidence-based prosecution.
7. Officers shall only use the BWC assigned to them, unless otherwise authorized by their immediate supervisor.

8. Officers shall not remove from the cradle, dismantle, tamper with, cover, hinder, obstruct, or intentionally interfere with the audio/video recording of a BWC/ICC while on an active scene. However, the BWC may be temporarily removed from the cradle solely for the purpose of capturing images or video directly related to the scene (e.g., recording footage from a CCTV screen, etc.).
 9. Officers may charge their BWC battery while on duty but not actively engaged in law enforcement duties (e.g., responding to calls, making contacts, providing backup, etc.).
 10. Officers are prohibited from managing their BWC's battery life through discretionary use (turning it off during an event).
- F. Activation of the Body-Worn Camera (BWC) and In-Car Camera (ICC) [CALEA 41.3.8 (b)]
1. All officers (rank of Lieutenant and below) who are assigned a BWC and/or ICC shall activate their equipment when acting in an official law enforcement capacity, unless their job duties or environment prevent its use as outlined in this directive. Official law enforcement capacity includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Upon dispatch to a call-for-service.
 - b. At the beginning of any self-initiated activity.
 - c. During interviews or follow-ups regarding a case.
 - d. When engaging with the public in an official law-enforcement capacity.
 2. When a BWC/ICC is activated, commercial or non-police radios in the patrol vehicle shall be turned off to prevent interference.
 3. Officers shall not interrupt, mute, or intentionally stop BWC/ICC recordings while on the scene of an incident.
 4. The BWC/ICC shall stay activated for the duration of the call. If extenuating circumstances require the equipment to be turned off, the reason must be documented in the officer's report. Activation and deactivation of a BWC/ICC must follow the guidelines in this directive, not officer discretion.
 5. Officers are prohibited from starting or stopping a BWC/ICC recording solely at the request of a citizen, suspect, or another officer.
 6. When a citizen asks an officer if they are being recorded by a BWC/ICC, the officer shall inform them.
 7. Body-Worn Camera (BWC)
 - a. If an officer is dispatched to a call, they shall manually activate the BWC just before arriving on scene. Officers shall do the same for self-initiated activity, law enforcement-related contacts, and when serving as a back-up officer.
 - b. The BWC can also be triggered to activate automatically. This can occur when the camera is shaken vigorously (e.g., during a foot pursuit or struggle), detects sounds similar to gunfire, or when the vehicle's emergency lights are activated while the camera is paired with the ICC system.
 8. In-Car Camera (ICC)
 - a. The officer assigned to the vehicle shall have the ICC powered on while the vehicle is in service. An in-service vehicle is defined as one being operated while the assigned officer is functioning in an on-duty capacity or working an approved off-duty employment detail.
 - b. The officer assigned to the vehicle shall have their assigned BWC paired with the ICC at all times while the vehicle is in service and the ICC is powered on.

- c. The ICC paired with the BWC shall be activated to record the audio and video of all traffic stops and vehicle pursuits in their entirety; this applies to both primary and secondary officers on scene. Other events that must be recorded are vehicle accident scenes, vehicle inventories, field interviews, and any evidence of criminal activity.
- d. The officer shall not cease recording or power off the ICC during traffic stops, motor vehicle pursuits, or any instance where recording has already commenced.

G. Deactivation of the Body-Worn Camera (BWC) and In-Car Camera (ICC) [CALEA 41.3.8 (b)]

- 1. Deactivation of a BWC/ICC shall occur when the event has concluded, the victim and/or witness contact has concluded, or the detainee and/or offender has been released and contact has concluded.
- 2. If an officer fails to activate the BWC/ICC or fails to record the entire event, or interrupts the recording, the officer shall document why a recording was not made, was interrupted, or was terminated. The officer shall also notify their immediate supervisor.
- 3. At the end of each shift, all officers operating a BWC shall ensure their BWC is docked properly, and that all videos are assigned incident case numbers and classified. Any use of force videos must be uploaded at the end of the officer's shift, unless directed by a supervisor to upload the video sooner.

H. Prohibited Use and Tampering

- 1. The purpose of the BWC and ICC is to accurately document interactions between officers and the public, as well as to preserve evidence for investigations. The following incidents **shall not** be recorded with a BWC/ICC:
 - a. Administrative communications, as defined by this directive;
 - b. Communication between Confidential Reliable Informants (CRI) and undercover officers who are not involved in an active scene;
 - c. Periods when an officer is on break or is otherwise engaged in personal activities and/or conversations;
 - d. Locations where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as a restroom or locker room, except in the lawful discharge of official duties; and
 - e. Roll calls, briefings, departmental meetings, and other departmental business unrelated to active events.
- 2. Unless engaged in a legitimate law enforcement action, officers shall not record in private areas such as dressing rooms, locker rooms, restrooms, or similar locations.
- 3. All digital evidence collected using the BWC and ICC is considered an official record of the Clayton County Police Department (CCPD) and is for official use only.
 - a. Employees are prohibited from accessing, viewing, or sharing restricted video footage and from using BWC or ICC equipment for personal activities.
 - b. Employees are prohibited from accessing, copying, forwarding, or releasing any digital evidence for any purpose other than official law enforcement use, and only when done in accordance with departmental policies and procedures. Furthermore, public release of digital evidence is explicitly forbidden without the prior approval of the Chief of Police.
- 4. Officers shall not remove, dismantle, or tamper with any hardware and/or software component or part of the BWC or ICC.
- 5. Personal computer equipment and software programs shall not be utilized when making copies of digital evidence.

I. Body-Worn Camera (BWC) for Undercover, Tactical and Plain Clothes Operations

The following outlined procedures are for Specialized Units that engage in undercover or tactical operations. These procedures are in addition to those otherwise outlined in this directive.

1. All officers shall wear a BWC when identifying and acting as a police officer, unless operating in an undercover capacity or at the discretion of their supervisor.
2. Officers issued BWCs who are wearing plain clothes or business attire are generally not required to wear the device during normal duty, unless they are engaged in enforcement activity or ordered to do so by a supervisor.
3. BWCs assigned to Canine Officers shall be activated any time the police service dog (PSD) is removed from the vehicle in anticipation of it being used in an enforcement nature. Once activated, the Canine Officer shall not turn off the BWC until the call has been concluded.
4. Officers deputized as federal task force officers (TFOs) shall follow the applicable federal law enforcement agency guidelines for BWC usage while conducting federal task force operations and investigations.
5. Officers assigned to the Criminal Investigation Division (CID) shall be exempt from wearing a BWC on investigative operations while not in uniform, unless otherwise ordered to do so by a supervisor.

J. Report Requirements

1. Officers must document the status of their BWC and/or ICC recordings in any official report. This includes confirming the existence of a recording, noting any malfunction, or explaining why a required recording was not made, was deactivated, or was not activated.
2. The BWC/ICC recording is a supplement to, not a replacement for, a complete written report. Officers must still write a complete and detailed narrative of the event.
3. Officers shall complete a written report describing each item and detailing the circumstances by which all of the evidence and/or property was found, obtained, received or seized. This is in addition to logging evidence or property in RMS Evidence through a Property Intake, or when utilizing a Property Receipt.

K. Evidence Storage & Retention [CALEA 41.3.8 (d)]

1. The Custodian of Record for BWC and ICC recordings shall be the Department's Records Custodian.
2. All digital evidence collected using the BWC and ICC is considered an official record of the Clayton County Police Department (CCPD) and is for official use only.
3. Uploading of BWC and ICC DME shall occur automatically and wirelessly upon activation of the BWC and/or ICC.

Upon completion of any video recording, the user shall make a manual classification of the video footage. The user shall classify the video footage by accessing Polaris and selecting a classification from a drop box that best describes the recording. The classification of the video can be made on either a computer or the BWC.

The user shall immediately classify the footage upon completion of an event, unless exigent circumstances exist.

Refer to the list of *CCPD Body-Worn Camera (BWC) and In-Car Camera (ICC) Digital Multimedia Evidence (DME) Classifications* in Appendix A of this directive.

4. Employees shall not edit, alter, erase, duplicate, copy, share, or otherwise distribute in any manner BWC or ICC DME without the written approval from the Chief of Police.

5. All files from BWCs and ICCs shall be securely stored in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 50-18-96, and for no longer than is useful for purposes of training, or for use in an investigation or prosecution (including appeals), or for use in resolving a claim, pending litigation, or disciplinary investigation. In capital punishment prosecutions, files shall be kept until the alleged offender is no longer under control of a criminal justice agency.
6. In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 50-18-96(b), video recordings from law enforcement body-worn devices or devices located on or inside of law enforcement vehicles shall be retained for 180 days from the date of such recording except: (1) If such recording is part of a criminal investigation, shows a vehicular accident, shows the detainment or arrest of an individual, or shows a law enforcement officer's use of force, it shall be retained for a minimum of 30 months from the date of such recording; and (2) If such recording contains evidence that is or can reasonably be anticipated to be necessary for pending litigation, it shall be retained for 30 months from the date of such recording, and if litigation is commenced during such period it shall be retained until a final adjudication of such litigation.

The Department's retention period exceeds those types of incidents outlined in O.C.G.A. § 50-18-96 (b), and examples of such incidents are shown below.

CLASSIFICATION	RETENTION PERIOD
Vehicle Accident	48 months (1440 days)
Use of Force	5 years (1825 days)
Use of Force OIS	10 years (3650 days)
Misdemeanor Cases and/or Arrests	5 years (1825 days)
Felony Cases and/or Arrests	10 years (3650 days)

All incidents involving the above classifications, or any other crime or complaint, shall not be deleted before the specified retention period without permission from the Office of Professional Standards (OPS). For further information on retention periods refer to the list of *CCPD Body-Worn Camera (BWC) and In-Car Camera (ICC) Digital Multimedia Evidence (DME) Classifications* in Appendix A of this directive.

L. Access & Viewing [CALEA 41.3.8 (c)]

1. Civilians shall not be allowed to view the recordings on scene. However, a viewing or copy of a recording can be provided by the Department upon the proper submission of a *Request to Inspect Public Records Form* and ten-dollar (\$10.00) payment fee in accordance with the Open Records Act. Requests from entities other than law enforcement for copies of DME must be in writing on the entity's official letterhead, signed by the entity's chief executive and accompanied by a check made payable to the "Clayton County Police Department" for the amount outlined in the fee schedule on the *Request to Inspect Public Records Form*. The DME in question must not be subject to pending criminal prosecution or exempt from disclosure, pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 50-18-72.
2. All requests for copies of DME shall be made through the Records Custodian of the Central Records & Permits Unit. All money received from approved requests shall be processed by the Central Records & Permits Unit.
3. The Evidence and Property Unit shall be responsible for reproducing and forwarding copies to the Central Records & Permits Unit for distribution of DME. The Central Records & Permits Unit shall also ensure the copy and distribution are properly documented.
4. Duplicate materials are furnished to the requesting party for the express use of the requester, and further duplication or distribution without the express written consent of the Chief of Police is prohibited.

5. Officers shall be permitted to review their issued BWC and assigned ICC recordings at any time, unless restricted by the Chief of Police. To ensure report accuracy and consistency, officers are encouraged to review recordings prior to completion. [CALEA 41.3.10 (a)]
6. When providing a formal statement regarding a use of force incident, or when being the subject of an internal investigation, the officer shall have the right to:
 - a. Review the recordings in person; and
 - b. Review any other BWC or ICC recordings that captured their image or voice during the incident. [CALEA 41.3.10 (c)]
7. The Department reserves the right to restrict an officer from viewing video if the officer is suspected of wrongdoing, or involved in an officer-involved shooting, or involved in any other serious use of force incident. [CALEA 41.3.10 (b)]
8. Supervisors and the Office of Professional Standards (OPS) personnel may access DME to investigate allegations of employee misconduct, administrative or criminal investigations. [CALEA 41.3.10 (d)]
9. DME from BWCs and ICCs may be utilized for training purposes after the case has been adjudicated in court. Copies of the DME can be obtained from the Evidence Unit once written permission has been granted by the Chief of Police.

M. Documented Review of Captured Data

1. The Shift/Unit supervisors shall be responsible for conducting a random review of video recordings of each officer on their shift on a quarterly basis to ensure proper usage of BWC/ICC equipment and compliance with this directive. Each review shall be at least fifteen (15) minutes long. [CALEA 41.3.10 (e)]
2. This type of review can be accomplished while performing other supervisory duties, such as reviewing use-of-force incidents, citizen contacts, complaints, or commendation reviews.
3. The Shift/Unit supervisors shall document their review on the appropriate form (e.g., *Incident Report*, *Incident Supplemental Report*, *Significant Incident Log*, etc.).
4. The documentation shall detail the reviewing supervisor's observations of the officer's professionalism, operational competency, and adherence to departmental policies and procedures.

N. Annual Administrative Review [CALEA 41.3.10 (f)]

An administrative review of this directive, and the ICC and BWC program, shall be reviewed by the Chief of Police annually. The annual review is intended to confirm that the ICC and BWC program is meeting its goals, including:

1. Assessing how policy, training, and operational practices align with the Department's mission;
2. Identifying exemplary officer performance and areas that may need improvement;
3. Verifying that equipment maintenance and data storage procedures are being followed; and
4. Ensuring compliance with all legal and accreditation requirements.

V. CANCELLATION

This procedure amends and supersedes the following standard operating procedure: *B13: Body-Worn and In-Car Cameras*, dated October 31, 2025.