



Lansing Police Department Manual

600.63 – BODY WORN CAMERA/MOBILE VIDEO RECORDERS

Operational Procedure

Effective Date: 02/2023

Rescinds: 03/2016

PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to establish guidelines for the operation, use, and management of Departmental body worn camera (BWC) devices and mobile video recording (MVR) devices. The Department is providing body worn camera and mobile video recording devices for officer protection and to: supplement written police reports; collect evidence; document officer activity; provide future training aids; facilitate investigations and provide feedback as to the device and its functioning.

POLICY

Officers will be assigned a body worn camera. Fully marked patrol vehicles will be outfitted with MVR devices. Officers will use BWC/MVR devices as intended.

GOALS

- To foster an environment ensuring civility and respect between the community and the LPD, improving transparency, and reducing liability.
- To improve behavior by all individuals during police/citizen encounters.
- BWC and MVR Devices will be utilized to:
 - Collect evidence for use in the prosecution of criminal offenses;
 - Record contacts with the public to secure additional evidence in connection with criminal and internal investigations;
 - Allow for supervisory review to ensure Departmental policies and procedures are followed;
 - Capture footage useful for training purposes;
 - Protect officers from false claims of misconduct;
 - Protect citizen privacy rights;

DEFINITIONS

- **Body Worn Camera (BWC):** A camera system designed to be worn by police officers to capture Digital Multimedia Evidence.
- **Mobile Video Recorder (MVR):** A vehicle mounted camera system designed to capture Digital Multimedia Evidence.
- **Digital Multimedia Evidence:** All digital recordings captured by a body worn camera or mobile video recorder including but not limited to; audio, video, photographs, and any associated metadata.
- **Metadata:** Digital identifiers that are captured as a part of an actual recording, such as date/time, GPS coordinates, labeling, etc.

- **Live Mapping:** A feature of the BWC system where the location of the employee wearing the BWC can be viewed in real time.
- **Live Streaming:** A feature of the BWC system that enables remote viewing of BWC footage in real time.

TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT

- Training
 - Prior to utilizing a BWC/MVR device, officers will receive Department approved training on its proper operation and the Department's procedure with respect to device usage.
 - Additional updates will be provided to ensure the continued effective use of the equipment, proper calibration, appropriate performance, incorporated changes, updates, and/or other revisions in procedures or equipment.
- Use and Care of Equipment
 - Officers will exercise reasonable care in the use of the BWC, MVR, and related equipment to ensure proper functioning.
 - Personnel will log on to the MVR system at the beginning of each shift and log off upon shift completion.
 - Officers will inspect and test BWC's and MVR's prior to each shift to verify proper functioning and will notify their supervisors of any problems.
 - Officers will report malfunctions of BWC's and MVR's or related equipment to their supervisor as soon as possible so a replacement unit may be assigned.
 - Officers immediately upon discovery that a BWC or MVR has been lost, destroyed, or damaged will inform their supervisor.
 - Supervisors will contact the Electronic Equipment Maintenance Unit (EEMU) staff for needed repairs or replacement.
 - Officers will wear body worn cameras on their outer most garment and above the mid-line of their torsos, in positions designed to produce effective recordings.
 - Officers will not use personally owned BWC's or MVR's while on duty.

OPERATION

- Officers will activate BWC or MVR devices during contact with the public to accomplish the goals of this procedure as outlined above. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Traffic stops, investigatory activity, vehicle accidents and motorist assists.
 - Vehicle pursuits and emergency runs.
 - Dispatch calls for service and self-initiated or proactive policing efforts.
 - Crime scenes and fleeing or combative subjects.
 - Whenever directed by a supervisor.
 - Field interrogations or interviews.
 - Any time an officer believes a recording may be beneficial for a law enforcement or training purpose.
 - Any and all transports (courtesy or prisoner), and;
 - Any other duty related official contacts with the public.
- When within schools or hospitals and engaged in police activities, officers will initiate normal recording as outlined above.
- Once activated, officers will not deactivate the BWC/MVR system until he or she has disengaged contact with a witness, complainant, victim, or suspect, subject to the following exceptions:

- De-activation is approved by a supervisor.
- When recording an event will compromise the safety of a civilian or an officer; or
- When an officer is interacting with a member of the public in a matter of an exceedingly sensitive or private nature, including but not limited to the following:
 - An informant providing intelligence of criminal activity.
 - Death notifications.
 - Interviews of victims of criminal sexual conduct, at their request.
- Body-worn cameras/ MVR devices will not be used to record:
 - Communications with other police personnel.
 - Encounters with undercover officers or informants.
 - When an officer is on break, vehicle maintenance, court and other activities not outlined in the Operation section of this procedure.
 - Communications made in any location where an individual has a heightened expectation of privacy, unless responding to a call for service.
 - Communications to or from individuals with whom an officer has a privileged relationship, such as spouses, attorneys, labor representatives, and medical care providers.
- When a body worn camera is not activated or an entire contact is not recorded, the officer will document the reasons on the BWC/MVR device and daily log.
- Officers will not edit, alter, erase, duplicate, copy, share, or otherwise distribute in any manner BWC/MVR images and information without the prior written approval of the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
- All files from BWC/MVR devices will be securely uploaded no later than the end of the officer's shift. Each file will contain information related to the date, body-worn camera identifier, and assigned officer.
- Officers will tag BWC/MVR video with the complaint number for the incident, if applicable, under the video ID field.
- Officers will choose and designate the appropriate category based on the incident recorded.
- The BWC/MVR equipment, all data, images, video, and metadata captured, recorded, or otherwise produced by this equipment is the sole property of the agency.

REVIEW OF RECORDINGS

- Upon review of recordings officers and supervisors will notify the Training Unit of events contained on the BWC/MVR system which may be useful as a training resource.
- Officers may review recordings from their own assigned BWC/MVR at any time in connection with their official duties and are encouraged to review such recordings as necessary to refresh memory and ensure accuracy of reports.
- Supervisors may review BWC/MVR recordings, in their discretion, in support of the goals of this procedure.
- Other sworn or civilian employees may review body-worn camera recordings when necessary to their assigned job functions.
- No other review of body-worn camera recordings will be allowed without express written permission of the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

LIVE MAPPING AND STREAMING

- Live Mapping
 - When an employee under a supervisor's command is actively recording with their BWC, the supervisor can view the location of the employee via their BWC in real-time.

- The Live Mapping feature enables a supervisor to have better situational awareness of the location of an officer. This feature may be helpful in the following incidents:
 - Coordinating a response to a major incident such as, but not limited to, an active shooter, hostage situation, shots fired, or civil unrest.
 - Following the location of a foot pursuit.
 - Identifying the location of an officer in need of assistance or who is not responding or unable to utilize their radio for communications.

- Live Streaming

- Authorized users may Livestream BWC footage to assist an employee, to deploy additional resources, or to check for compliance. Potential applications of the live streaming feature can be used in the following situations:
 - Tracking and observing a foot pursuit of a suspect and providing information to responding units.
 - Viewing high-risk incidents, vehicle pursuits, hostage situations, shots fired, or active shooter incidents.
 - Viewing situations where command requires multiple viewpoints to coordinate a safe response.
 - Viewing a building search or the execution of search warrants.
 - Determining whether an officer is injured or needs emergency assistance.
 - Any circumstance which at the time seems unusual and warrants live review.
- While the Livestream feature is a tool for supervisors to assist members, its use shall not preclude the responsibilities of supervisors to respond to an incident in person.
- The details of all access to the Livestream feature are automatically recorded in the Audit Log for the BWC Recording System.
- Authorization for use:
 - Sworn personnel, the rank of Sergeant and higher, will have authorized access to the Live Streaming and Mapping function.
 - Members of the Crime Analyst Unit will have access to the Live Streaming and Mapping Function.
- START
 - During START Operations BWC live stream will only be authorized by the Tactical Commander and/or the Incident Commander.
 - During START operations only START members, Tactical Commander, Incident Commander, and/or the rank of Captain or above can live stream START BWC footage.

RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION OF RECORDINGS

- BWC/MVR equipment and all data, images, video, and metadata captured, recorded, or otherwise produced by the equipment are the property of the City of Lansing.
- All files from BWC/MVR will be securely stored in accordance with State law and City of Lansing policies. Such stored files will not be kept longer than is reasonably necessary for use in investigations or prosecutions (including appeals); for use in resolving civil claims and/or civil actions; for internal disciplinary investigations, or as useful for police training. In capital offense prosecutions, files will be kept until the alleged offender is no longer under the control of a criminal justice agency.
- Digital multimedia evidence that is untagged as evidence will be auto purged at 30 days.
- Digital multimedia evidence that is tagged as evidence will remain stored pursuant to State

of Michigan approved retention schedules or retention schedules developed pursuant to the City of Lansing retention schedules, and as approved by the State of Michigan Office of the Great Seal.

- Digital multimedia evidence that is relevant to a formal complaint against an officer or LPD will be retained no less than 3 years after the date the recording is made pursuant [MCL 780.316\(3\)](#) – Law Enforcement Body Worn Camera Act).
- Release of stored digital multimedia evidence to the public is subject to the requirements of State law, including the Freedom of Information Act, [MCL 15.231](#), et seq., City of Lansing Administrative Policies, and the LPD FOIA procedures.
- Requests for the deletion of portions of a recording from a BWC/MVR (e.g., in the event of a privileged or personal recording) must be submitted in writing to the Chief of Police or his/her designee and will not be granted unless permitted by State law or approved retention schedules.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT

- Employees will not edit, alter, erase, duplicate, copy, share, or otherwise distribute in any manner BWC/MVR images and information except as authorized by this policy, by LPD policy or procedure, or without the prior written approval of the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
- The use of BWC/MVR, all data, images, video, and metadata captured, recorded or otherwise produced by the equipment for any purpose other than in accordance with this policy is prohibited.
- Employees will not attempt repair or modification of any BWC/ MVR device or related equipment.
- The use of the Live Streaming and/or Mapping feature in any way other than in the course of their official duties is strictly prohibited. Any prohibited use of the Live Streaming and Mapping feature will be subject to disciplinary action.
- Supervisors shall not Livestream the BWC of another member for purposes not related to operational necessity or compliance reviews.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

This policy does not increase liability for the City of Lansing or its employees in any way. It will not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in any sense, evidentiary or otherwise, with respect to third party claims insofar as the employer's or employee's respective legal duties as imposed by law. This policy does not vest any third-party rights that would not exist independent of this policy.