

Columbus Police Division Directive	EFFECTIVE Dec. 30, 2016	NUMBER 11.07
	REVISED Apr. 30, 2021	TOTAL PAGES 9
Body-Worn Camera (BWC)		



Cross Reference: 5.01, 5.02, 5.03, 11.02

Supervisor's Manual: 6.00, 6.06

I. Introduction

The principal purpose of a BWC system is to collect evidence that may be used to prosecute traffic and criminal offenses, assist with investigations, or help evaluate and train personnel. It can also provide documentation of whether the situation was handled lawfully and professionally. Police interactions with individuals during enforcement activity may rapidly evolve, and recording these interactions is an excellent way to provide transparency to the community.

II. Definitions

A. Classification

The category assigned to each video recording, chosen from the following four selections, after the camera has been deactivated.

Note: If personnel are unsure of which classification to choose, the video should be classified as evidence.

1. Evidence

A recording which may be used as evidence to document an incident as it pertains to an enforcement action/adversarial encounter.

Examples of evidence: misdemeanor and felony investigations, arrests, use of force incidents, forced entries, and traffic and pedestrian stops. This is not an all-inclusive list.

2. Non-evidence

A recording, whether accidental or intentional, which has no evidentiary or administrative value.

Examples of non-evidence: accidental/incidental recording, equipment checks, and training. This is not an all-inclusive list.

3. Permanent

A recording to be kept indefinitely.

Examples of permanent: Any incident that select Division personnel (for example, a supervisor or detective) believe should be classified in a category that does not expire.

4. Civil Unrest

A recording which may be used as evidence to document an incident as it pertains to an enforcement action/adversarial encounter during a period of civil unrest.

Examples of civil unrest: demonstrations, protests, and riots. In most instances, personnel will be directed to use this classification by a Division supervisor (for example, an Incident Commander or a Field Force Lieutenant). This is not an all-inclusive list.

III. Policy Statements

A. Activation

1. ***Sworn personnel who are assigned an individual BWC and who are required to wear the BWC for their current tour of duty shall record the following unless otherwise excluded by this directive or ordered by a sworn Division supervisor:***

- a. ***Dispatched*** calls for service

- (1) ***Sworn personnel shall activate the BWC when dispatched or upon a self-initiated response to all dispatched calls for service.***

Note: Personnel receiving a dispatched run while in a location or engaged in activities as listed in Sections III,R and III,S shall activate their BWC at the first reasonable opportunity to do so.

- b. ***Self-initiated activity***

- (1) ***Sworn personnel shall activate the BWC prior to exiting their vehicle, or if not in a vehicle, prior to approaching an individual, for all self-initiated enforcement actions, investigative activities, and citizen contacts or any time citizen contact is likely to occur.***

- (2) ***Sworn personnel shall activate the BWC as soon as it is reasonable and safe to do so any time a citizen initiates contact.***

- c. ***All investigatory stops***

- d. ***All traffic and pedestrian stops***

- e. ***All uses of force***

- f. ***All arrests***

- g. ***All forced entries of a structure, vehicle, or other premise***

- h. ***All pursuits by vehicle, bicycle, foot, or other means of transportation available to Division personnel***

- i. ***All responses involving the use of Emergency Vehicle Operations (EVO)***

- j.* Sworn personnel shall activate the BWC when an encounter becomes adversarial, or its use would be appropriate and/or valuable to document an incident unless otherwise prohibited.
- B.* Sworn personnel who are assigned an individual BWC **and who are working an assignment where a BWC is required** shall, at the beginning of their shift, ensure the BWC is fully charged, operable, and all previous video recordings have been uploaded.
- C.* **Sworn personnel who are assigned an individual BWC and working an assignment where the BWC is required shall notify their supervisor at the first reasonable opportunity when they become aware their BWC is inoperable, malfunctioning, or displaying a battery symbol with two bars or less.**
- D.* Sworn personnel shall use only Division-issued BWCs **unless serving on a Task Force where the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the sponsoring agency regarding the use of the BWC requires otherwise.**
- E.* All recorded images and audio recordings made on the BWC are the property of the Division of Police. Division personnel shall not disseminate or duplicate these recordings outside of the Division unless approved by the Chief of Police, pursuant to the Ohio Public Records Act, in accordance with a legally binding subpoena, **or as required by a Task Force MOU.**
- F.* Sworn personnel shall wear the BWC in the location and manner required by their **current** assignment.
- Note: Generally, uniformed officers who are assigned to temporarily work in plainclothes for directed patrol or other special assignments will not be required to wear their assigned BWC. However, their supervisor(s) may direct personnel to wear their BWC depending on the day's mission.**
- G.* **Sworn personnel assigned an individual BWC shall use the BWC when working overtime to backfill a patrol assignment or other operational assignment.**
When working overtime to backfill a patrol assignment or other operational assignment, sworn personnel without an assigned BWC shall be assigned to work with at least one other officer who is equipped with a functioning BWC.
- H.* BWCs are not required **and may not be available** for special duty work, **but they may be used provided that the BWC can be fully charged and videos can be uploaded prior to the start of the next regular tour of duty.** The City will not compensate personnel for travel time or uploading/charging the BWC.

- I. BWCs may be used for City overtime, **for example, parades or festivals**, if personnel have a charged BWC and its use on City overtime does not interfere with the BWC being uploaded or charged for their regularly assigned tour of duty or as ordered by a supervisor.
- J. **Sworn personnel who are not required to wear a BWC and who choose to wear one shall activate the BWC as required in Section III,A and shall comply with all policies and procedures contained in this directive.**
- K. BWC use shall be documented on all appropriate paperwork and in the electronic reporting system.
- L. All sworn personnel involved in the execution of any search warrant served during a tactical operation on an occupied structure shall be equipped with an operating BWC and shall activate their BWC prior to entry of the occupied structure or associated curtilage.
1. Other than a no-knock warrant, the knock on an entry door, the announcement of law enforcement having a search warrant, and the required statutory time delay prior to entry shall be recorded.
- Note: This section applies to personnel working in regular and/or overtime status.
- M. Headquarters Operations Section, Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Section, In/Tac Unit personnel, **Mayor's Security Officer(s), and investigative unit personnel who have been assigned BWCs** shall comply with their respective Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for requirements specific to their assignments.
- N. Task force personnel shall comply with their respective SOP and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the sponsoring agency for the use of the BWC and the retention and release of BWC video.
- O. Sworn personnel wearing a BWC should announce when they are recording as close to the start of the encounter as possible unless it is unsafe, impractical, or unnecessary. Sworn personnel are not required to cease recording at the request of any person unless ordered by a sworn Division supervisor.
- P. Sworn personnel shall continue recording until the enforcement activity or encounter has ended, or **until** they are ordered/permitted to stop recording by a sworn supervisor.
1. Tactical personnel shall continue recording until the execution of a search warrant served during a tactical operation on an occupied structure and associated curtilage has ended. The execution has ended after initial entry is made, suspects are detained or taken into custody, and the scene has been secured.
 - a. Sworn supervisors may direct tactical personnel to start, continue, or stop recording after the execution of the warrant has ended based on the circumstances.

Note: When reviewing BWC footage from an incident, sworn personnel must stop recording to view and/or upload the video.

Q. BWC recordings may be used to provide evidence, record an incident to document the actions and statements of suspects during interviews or while being placed into custody, or as a means to verify an action taken.

R. The BWC shall not be used to record non-work-related personal activities where personnel have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as inside locker rooms, dressing rooms, or restrooms, unless a criminal offense has occurred.

S. The BWC shall not be intentionally activated to record privileged communication or conversations of fellow Division personnel during routine, non-enforcement-related activities, with or without their knowledge.

T. The BWC shall not be used:

1. To gather intelligence information solely based on First Amendment protected speech, associations, or religion;
2. During a strip search or body cavity search; or
3. During a Lethality Assessment Screen.

Note: If the BWC was previously activated during an incident, sworn personnel do not need a supervisor's approval to deactivate the BWC for any of the above-listed reasons.

U. The BWC shall not be used if ordered by a sworn supervisor.

1. To preserve privacy and dignity, a sworn supervisor may grant approval to not record or to deactivate the BWC for certain people or places. ***This approval shall not be granted if a citizen has been injured as a result of police activity.***
2. Explicit approval ***to not record or to deactivate the BWC*** shall be given verbally over the radio or in an operations plan.

V. Sworn personnel may deactivate the BWC:

1. When gathering information from a confidential informant or source.
2. Without explicit supervisor approval when not in the presence of suspects or citizens and speaking with the Division's legal advisor, covert/investigative personnel, a supervisor, or other sworn personnel.
3. While engaged in guard duty inside a hospital; however, if an encounter becomes adversarial and/or enforcement action becomes necessary, the BWC shall be activated as soon as practical.
4. Sworn personnel shall deactivate the BWC after securing weapons and entering the door into the prisoner processing areas of Franklin County Sheriff's Office Corrections Centers.
 - a. The preferred course of action is to allow sheriff's office personnel to handle any problem associated with a prisoner. If Division personnel are forced to take enforcement action, they shall activate the BWC as soon as practical.

- W.** If sworn personnel do not activate the BWC, the battery is exhausted/ depleted, or the recorder malfunctions, they shall document the reason(s) on the appropriate paperwork, in the CAD, and/or in the electronic reporting system.
- X.** If sworn personnel do not record the entire contact, justification shall be expressed verbally on the BWC before turning it off when it is safe and practical to do so.
- Y.** Sworn personnel **shall** re-activate the BWC if they re-engage suspects/ citizens.
- Z.** Sworn personnel may be ordered by a sworn supervisor to relinquish their BWC.
- AA.** All digital data shall be uploaded as directed and shall be classified and stored in a secure database that allows limited access. Sworn personnel shall upload video footage prior to going on leave, except when permission is granted by the chain of command designating an alternate time for uploading. If sworn personnel become incapable of uploading the video, the chain of command will make arrangements for uploading all video footage.
- BB.** Personnel shall not tamper with, erase, alter, or destroy any original recorded section of video or audio.
- Note:** The appropriate authority designated by the Chief of Police will determine proper action for recordings captured by inadvertent BWC activation when it is otherwise prohibited.
- CC.** Personnel shall classify all recordings consistent with Division training and policy. Personnel shall not knowingly classify a video inappropriately or take other inappropriate actions to prevent a recording from being viewed or uploaded or to alter retention periods.
- DD.** BWC recordings shall be securely stored and maintained pursuant to the City of Columbus Division of Police Records Retention Schedule. All stored recordings are subject to release in accordance with Ohio's public records laws.
- EE.** Sworn personnel may review video footage of an incident in which they were involved prior to completing a report or making a statement to help ensure accuracy. Sworn personnel should not use the fact that a recording was made as a reason to give a less detailed description of an incident.
- FF.** A supervisor may view BWC video footage for the purpose of investigations, training, reviews, inquiries, civil claims, or litigation. This may include random reviews or recordings brought to the supervisor's attention that may lead to positive corrective action or discipline as outlined in the applicable collective bargaining agreement (CBA).
- Note:** Supervisors investigating/managing an incident or sworn personnel wanting to view video in the mobile environment should follow the procedures outlined on the Division's intranet.

GG. Supervisory and investigative review of BWC recordings

1. BWC recordings are subject to review at any time once the recording is uploaded to the server.
2. Supervisors and the involved chain of command wishing to review a BWC recording shall conduct the review on a Division computer.
 - a. Supervisors shall log in to the secured server with their Division-issued password.
 - b. After being uploaded to the secured server, Division supervisors will have access to BWC recordings unless access has been restricted due to an investigative purpose.
3. Supervisors and investigative personnel wishing to request a copy of a BWC recording shall complete and forward an Internal Video/Audio Request, form S-35.104.
4. Supervisors shall document the review of BWC recordings related to incidents under investigation on the Incident Video Review, form U-10.197. Supervisors shall address the relevant portion(s) of the recording within the administrative investigation to be reviewed by the chain of command as necessary.
5. Supervisors should conduct random reviews of BWC recordings to ensure videos are classified appropriately and to use the observations for open discussion and training.
6. Supervisors using BWC recordings for an investigative purpose shall review or reclassify BWC recordings as appropriate and in accordance with established law, Division policy, and the applicable CBA.

HH. Sworn personnel who have been issued a BWC and who transfer to an assignment that is not assigned a BWC shall return all issued equipment, including any assignment-specific take home chargers, to PoliceNET personnel.

II. Division personnel who are assigned to use or **are** otherwise involved with BWC equipment must complete mandatory training. This training includes proper operation and care, policies and procedures, and limitations of BWC footage. Additional training shall be provided periodically to ensure the continued effective use of the system and equipment and to incorporate changes, updates, and other revisions in policies or equipment.

Sworn personnel transferring into a unit where BWCs have been deployed shall contact Advanced Training Unit and PoliceNET personnel for training and issuance of a BWC as soon as practical.

IV. Procedures

A. Sworn Personnel

1. Classify the recordings as appropriate.
2. Notify your supervisor of any known malfunctioning **equipment**, lost/damaged equipment, **or equipment displaying two bars or less in the battery symbol on the BWC display.**

3. Mark 10-23T for technology repair.
- B. Supervisor
1. ***Ensure required personnel have a functional BWC to complete their tour of duty.***
Assign personnel working overtime to backfill a patrol assignment or other operational assignment who do not have an issued BWC to work with at least one other officer who is equipped with a functioning BWC.
 2. ***Direct personnel with a lost, under-charged, malfunctioning, or damaged BWC to return to the substation or designated location to charge the BWC or attempt to remedy the malfunction.***
 - a. ***If functionality cannot be restored, direct personnel to respond to the PoliceNET Unit to have the BWC repaired or replaced. If the PoliceNET Unit is closed, obtain a replacement from the on-duty Headquarters Operations Section Sergeant. The replacement BWC becomes the sworn employee's Division-issued BWC.***
 - b. ***If the BWC cannot be repaired or replaced, assign personnel without a functioning BWC to work with at least one other officer who is equipped with a functioning BWC, or if staffing permits, assign the personnel without a functioning BWC to administrative duties for the remainder of the tour.***
 3. Determine if the malfunctioning or lost/damaged equipment was the result of normal wear and tear or negligence, and follow the procedures outlined in the "Lost, Damaged, or Malfunctioning Property" directive.
- C. PoliceNET Personnel/ Headquarters Operations Section Sergeant
- Collect malfunctioning or damaged equipment and replace it immediately.
- D. Chief of Police
- Appoint specific Division personnel to meet annually to review policy and collect data concerning BWC usage, including when video footage is used in criminal prosecutions, internal affairs matters, civilian complaints, injuries and assaults on sworn personnel, use of force incidents, and any associated costs.
- E. Supervisors Conducting Random Reviews
1. Review randomly selected BWC recordings on a regular basis. The incidents should be no more than 30 days old.
 2. Forward the completed Cruiser Video System (CVS)/Body-Worn Camera (BWC) Supervisory Review, form U-10.193, to the bureau commander when there are areas of concern, for example, user error(s) or observations of misconduct, etc.

F. Bureau Commander

1. Forward the Cruiser Video System (CVS)/Body-Worn Camera (BWC) Supervisory Review form with user error(s) through the chain of command to the immediate supervisor of the officer(s) who made the recording.
2. If potential misconduct is discovered within the recording, determine the appropriate course of action.

G. Immediate Supervisor

1. Ensure sworn personnel who created the BWC recording correct the error.
2. If directed by the chain of command, complete an administrative investigation and send a copy of the Cruiser Video System (CVS)/Body-Worn Camera (BWC) Supervisory Review form to the Headquarters Operations Section.

H. Headquarters Operations Section

1. File completed Cruiser Video System (CVS)/Body-Worn Camera (BWC) Supervisory Review forms.
2. Track results annually to determine compliance/training needs