

TITLE: BODY WORN CAMERAS (BWC)	NUMBER 15.11
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REVISION HISTORY: (Adopted 08-30-2013) R1/06-14-2014	

15.11.1 PURPOSE

A Body Worn Camera (BWC) is an “on-the-body” video and audio recording system assigned to an officer as an additional means of documenting specific incidents in the field. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines related to the use, management, storage, and retrieval of the audio and video recordings from the departmentally issued BWC.

15.11.2 TRAINING

The Body Worn Camera (BWC) will be carried only by personnel who have been properly trained in its use. The BWC issued by the Department will be the only BWC authorized for use. Any use of a BWC will conform to the current methods and techniques as approved by the Training Division.

15.11.3 DEPLOYMENT OF BODY WORN CAMERAS

Body Worn Cameras (BWC) will be assigned to officers primarily working in a uniformed capacity in a field assignment. All BWC assigned to a division should be utilized on a daily basis.

Immediate supervisors are responsible for ensuring that affected on-duty officers are equipped with a functioning BWC at the beginning of each shift. The supervisor will record the officer and assigned camera into the designated software application to enable proper video uploading into the remote digital storage system.

Upon being assigned the BWC, individual officers are responsible for its use and maintenance during their shift. Any apparent problems with the BWC will be immediately brought to the attention of a supervisor.

Officers will wear the BWC on their strong (gun hand) side and mounted in one of the departmentally approved methods, utilizing only the mounting equipment provided by the manufacturer of the BWC. It shall be the responsibility of the officer to ensure the BWC remains in a position to allow the recording of an encounter or incident that most closely replicates the eyesight perspective of the officer.

15.11.4 USE OF THE BODY WORN CAMERA

The Body Worn Camera (BWC) shall be activated to record during all field contacts involving actual or potential violations of law to include:

- Traffic stops
- Suspicious vehicles or persons
- Arrests
- Voluntary contacts of an investigative nature

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The BWC shall also be activated when responding to the following calls for service:

- Disturbances or disorders
- Calls involving emotionally or mentally disturbed subjects
- Offenses involving weapons or violence
- When responding to any “in progress” call for service

Additionally, the BWC shall be activated during the following situations:

- While operating a vehicle in a manner that requires activation of its blue lights and siren under law
- During tactical activities, including the execution of search warrants
- During warrantless searches of individuals, vehicles, buildings, and other places
- During the initial inventorying of seized money or any high value property

If not already activated, the BWC shall be activated to record any encounter that becomes adversarial after initial contact or in any situation that the officer believes its use would be appropriate or valuable to document the incident or encounter.

Once the BWC is activated, officers will continue to record until the conclusion of their involvement in an event. If working an event that becomes investigative in nature, an officer should deactivate the BWC when the initial response has transitioned into that of a controlled and orderly investigation. When utilized during the execution of a search warrant, an officer may deactivate the BWC after the initial sweep of the location when the incident transitions from tactical in nature to investigatory. Additionally, an officer may deactivate the BWC at any point that he reasonably believes that doing so will not result in the loss of critical documentary information, or when directed to do so by a supervisor.

15.11.5 RESTRICTED USES AND DEACTIVATION OF BODY WORN CAMERAS

Body Worn Cameras (BWC) shall be used only for legitimate law enforcement purposes in accordance with applicable law, departmental policy, and City Personnel Policy H-1.

The BWC will not be used to record fellow city employees except during an investigation of a suspected violation of criminal, traffic, or local law.

Unless present in an official capacity, the BWC should not be used in bathrooms, locker rooms, or other places where there is an expectation of privacy.

Prior to conducting a strip search, the officer will record a 360-degree video of the location where the strip search will be conducted. During the actual strip search, the BWC shall be utilized to only capture audio of the event by positioning the camera away from the subject of the search.

For the purpose of protecting their identity, the BWC will not be used while interacting with known confidential informants or undercover officers. In situations where the recording of an interaction with an informant is of important evidentiary value, an officer may choose to capture audio recordings of the interaction by positioning the camera away from the informant.

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Officers will not use the BWC to record personal activity.

Officers shall only use the BWC while in patient care areas of a health care facility when the recording is for official purposes and care should be used to record only the parties involved in the event being investigated.

The BWC should be deactivated prior to discussing a case on scene with other officers or during on scene tactical planning.

Citizens are not allowed to view BWC recordings unless permission has been obtained from the Chief of Police or his designee.

The viewing of any recording for anything other than approved Departmental purposes is prohibited.

No officer shall attempt to erase, edit or otherwise alter any data captured by a BWC.

The downloading or converting of any recording captured by a BWC for any type of personal use is strictly prohibited.

15.11.6 COLLECTION OF BODY WORN CAMERA DATA

Prior to the end of an officer's duty day, officers, utilizing the designated software application, will categorize each recording captured by the Body Worn Camera (BWC) and label it with their last name, followed by the associated case number or event number, when available. In instances where an officer has multiple recordings of the same incident, they will differentiate the files when labeling them to include parentheses containing a numeral, beginning with the number 1. Each subsequent recording from that event will be labeled in the same manner, with the numerals continuing sequentially. When complete, officers will return the BWC to a supervisor or place it in a designated drop box for docking.

Officers shall note in any incident reports and/or citations that there is a BWC recording of the incident, to include a brief description of what was captured by the BWC.

Officers may use media captured via the BWC to assist with an investigation and to aide in the completion of reports.

Officers are encouraged to inform their supervisors of any recordings that may be of value for training purposes.

15.11.7 RETENTION

The Body Worn Camera (BWC) and all video files are the property of the Greensboro Police Department and are to be used for official purposes only.

Any portion of a recorded image that records an event surrounding a violation of the law, which includes an infraction or a crime or offense prosecutable in the criminal courts in this State or the

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United States, is considered a record of a criminal investigation, as described by NCGS 132-1.4, and not a public record, as deemed in NCGS 132-1.

Any portion of a recorded image that may be used to subject an employee to Departmental disciplinary action is a part of that employee's personnel file as defined in NCGS 160A-168, and is open to inspection only as provided by that statute unless otherwise required to be disclosed as evidence in a criminal proceeding.

Uploaded recordings will be retained on the remote digital storage system based upon the retention schedule established for each category of recording.

It shall be the assigned case officer's responsibility to ensure that all recordings which constitute evidence, or are required to be included in the case file, are downloaded and stored within the Department's designated video storage system prior to their scheduled purge date from the remote digital storage system. An incident report is required for all recordings stored on the Department's video storage system.

Digital files associated with an investigation shall be purged in conjunction with other evidence associated with that case.

In the event of an unintentional activation of the BWC, an officer may request the recording be deleted. A memorandum detailing the circumstances of the unintentional recording will be forwarded to the officer's Division Commander. If approved, the deletion will be made by the system administrator.

15.11.8 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervisors will ensure that all uniformed officers are equipped with available Body Worn Cameras (BWC) prior to the beginning of their shift. When issuing cameras, the BWC should not be removed from the docking station before the transfer of data is complete.

Upon receiving notification of any damage or malfunction of a BWC, the supervisor will remove the BWC from service and notify the system administrator of the need for repair.

Supervisors will ensure that all recorded events are documented by the officer in the associated reports and citations.

Supervisors will ensure that any recordings relating to an administrative investigation are downloaded and stored for inclusion in the investigative file prior to their scheduled purge date from the remote digital storage system.

Supervisors shall conduct routine reviews of selected recordings captured by officers assigned to them in order to assess officer performance, ensure that the BWC is being utilized properly, and to identify videos that may be appropriate to enhance training programs or experiences.

Notification of the existence of recordings which may be beneficial for training purposes shall be forwarded via the chain of command to the Commanding Officer of the Training Division for determination of training value and use. If an involved officer objects to the use of a

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recording for training purposes, he may submit his objection, in writing, via the chain of command to both the Commanding Officer of the Training Division and the Deputy Chief of the Management Bureau to determine whether the training value outweighs the officer's objection.

Supervisors will be responsible for ensuring that all assigned BWC are collected at the end of an officer's shift and properly docked for charging and uploading of files.

15.11.9 AUDITING

Officers assigned to utilize BWC are expected to be in complete compliance with Departmental policy and training concerning the use, management, storage and retrieval of the audio and video recordings from the departmentally issued BWC. The Professional Standards Division will conduct random monthly audits of BWC usage to ensure compliance with departmental policy and training.

Monthly, the Professional Standards Division will use computerized random methods to select individual squads to be reviewed. Employees on the selected squads BWC usage will be audited. These squads will be selected from the entire pool of candidates assigned to utilize BWC. The number of squads selected for auditing, and the frequency of the selection process, will be determined by Professional Standards Division so as to ensure that the number of employees audited each month represents a minimum of 10% of the total number of employees eligible for auditing.

In addition to the random auditing process, the Professional Standards Division will review BWC audio and video recordings on an "as needed" basis to conduct internal investigations and inquiries.