

LITTLETON POLICE DEPARTMENT

2 Kittridge Lane
Littleton, New Hampshire 03561
(603) 444-7711

PROCEDURE #: 15-1

SUBJECT: Body Worn Cameras

Statutory Authority: RSA 595-A, RSA 91-A, RSA 570-A

NOTE: This written directive is for the internal governance of the Littleton Police Department, and as provided by RSA 516:36, is not intended and should not be interpreted to establish a higher standard of care in any civil or criminal action than would otherwise be applicable under existing law.

Date of issue

04-20-2015

Issuing Authority

Chief Paul Smith

Effective Date

04-20-2015

Distribution

All

I. PURPOSE

This policy is intended to provide sworn officers and parking enforcement 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.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of this department that officers shall activate the BWC when such use is appropriate to the proper performance of his or her 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.

III. PROCEDURES

A. 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 also enhance this agency's 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.

B. When and How to Use the BWC

1. Officers shall activate the BWC to record all contacts with citizens in the performance of official duties. This shall include, but not be limited to calls for service, interviews, interrogations, accidents, arrests, and incidents.
2. Officers shall inform individuals that they are being, "Audio and video recorded". In locations where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as a residence, they may decline to be audibly recorded. Officers will explain the use of the camera if subject objects to the camera. If a refusal to allow audio and video recording is not recorded on the BWC, the officer shall attempt to obtain a written denial of consent when applicable. If consent is not given, officers shall not audio record the citizen making the request.
3. In addition to the aforementioned incidents, officers may record with the audio portion disabled anytime the officer believes such recording has a legitimate law enforcement purpose. Officers may audibly and visually record any incident in which all involved parties consent. This notification does not apply to crimes in progress or similar situations where notification is impractical.
4. Officers shall record audio and video during all arrests. Officers should make the subject(s) of the arrest aware that he or she is being audio and video recorded and they have the right to remain silent.
5. 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 (see items D.1-4).
6. 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.
7. Civilians shall not be allowed to review the recordings at the scene.
8. BWC's shall be worn on all uniformed patrol shifts and special details unless authorized by the Chief of Police or his or her designee.

9. BWC's shall be worn by Parking Enforcement personnel during the performance of his or her duties.
10. Officers shall activate his or her BWC as soon as practical and as close to the beginning of contact as possible.

C. Procedures for BWC Use

1. BWC equipment is issued primarily to uniformed personnel as authorized by this agency. Officers who are assigned BWC equipment must use the equipment unless otherwise authorized by supervisory personnel.
2. Department personnel shall use only BWCs issued by this department. The BWC equipment and all data, images, video, and metadata captured, recorded, or otherwise produced by the equipment is the sole property of the agency.
3. Department personnel who are assigned BWCs must complete an agency approved and/or provided training program to ensure proper use and operations. 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.
4. 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 a replacement unit may be procured.
5. Officers shall inspect and test the BWC prior to each shift in order to verify proper functioning and shall notify their supervisor of any problems.
6. Officers shall not edit, alter, erase, duplicate, copy, share, or otherwise distribute in any manner BWC recordings without prior written authorization and approval of the Chief of Police or his or her designee.
7. Officers are encouraged to inform their supervisor of any recordings that may be of value for training purposes.
8. If an officer is suspected of wrongdoing or involved in an officer-involved shooting or other serious use of force, the department reserves the right to limit or restrict an officer from viewing the video file.
9. Requests for deletion of portions of the recordings (e.g., in the event of a personal recording) must be submitted in writing and approved by the Chief of Police or

his or her designee in accordance with state record retention laws. All requests and final decisions shall be kept on file.

10. Officers shall note in incident, arrest, and related reports when recordings were made during the incident in question. However, BWC recordings are not a replacement for written reports.

D. Restrictions on Using the BWC

BWCs shall be used only in conjunction with official law enforcement duties. The BWC shall not generally be used to record:

1. Communications with other police personnel without the permission of the Chief of Police;
2. Encounters with undercover officers or confidential informants;
3. When on break or otherwise engaged in personal activities; or
4. In any location where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as a restroom or locker room.

E. Storage

1. All files¹ shall be securely downloaded periodically and no later than the end of each shift. Each file shall contain information related to the date, BWC identifier, and assigned officer.
2. All images and sounds recorded by the BWC are the exclusive property of this department. Accessing, copying, or releasing files for non-law enforcement purposes is strictly prohibited.
3. All access to BWC data (images, sounds, and metadata) must be specifically authorized by the Chief of Police or his or her designee, and all access is to be audited to ensure that only authorized users are accessing the data for legitimate and authorized purposes.
4. Files should be securely stored in accordance with state records retention laws and no longer than useful for purposes of training or for use in an investigation or prosecution.

F. Supervisory Responsibilities

1. Supervisory personnel shall ensure that officers equipped with BWC devices utilize them in accordance with policy and procedures defined herein.
2. 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.

3. The Field Training Program supervisor shall, on a regular basis, review BWC video of recruit trainees during their FTEP training program. Training issues, guidance or other pertinent information gathered during the BWC review shall be brought to the FTO assigned to the trainee for consideration and action as deemed necessary.

¹ For the purpose of this document, the term “file” refers to all sounds, images, and associated metadata.

Sources

IACP
Hinsdale, NH Police Department
Milton , NH Police Department
RSA 91-A
RSA 595-A
RSA 570-A

Re-written By

Chief Paul J. Smith

Reviewed Date

04-20-2015

Revised

04-20-2015

Authorized By:

Paul Smith
Chief of Police