


	SUFFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE GENERAL ORDER	Distribution	General Order Number
		ALL PERSONNEL	5.26
		Original Issue Date	Reissue/Effective Date
		11/08/2021	08/19/2024
Order Title: BODY WORN CAMERAS		Accreditation Standard:	Section
		POSTC: 3.5.4	5
		Section Title PATROL FUNCTIONS	
Rescinds: Version Dated 07/08/2024		 James Canon, Jr., Chief of Police	

This General Order is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This General Order should not be construed as creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this General Order will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish Suffield Police Department guidelines and limitations for the use and management of body-worn camera systems including the use, management, storage and retrieval of digital multimedia video files stored on or generated from the use of department issued or approved body-worn camera equipment including but not limited to:

- Creating video and audio records to contribute to the accurate documentation of critical incidents, police-public contacts, crime and accident scenes, and arrests.
- Preserving visual and audio information for use in current and future investigations in accordance with applicable guidelines referenced herein.
- Capturing crimes in-progress, whether committed against the police officer or the community, and to preserve evidence for presentation in court.
- Documenting police response to an incident.
- Aiding in the documentation of victim, witness or suspect statements pursuant to an on-scene response and/or documentation of the advisement of rights, and consents to conduct a lawful search, when applicable.
- Reducing the number of false complaints made against a police officer in the course and scope of his or her official police duties.

The purpose of equipping police officers with body-worn recording equipment and dashboard cameras is to assist in the following:

- Strengthening police accountability by documenting incidents and encounters between officers and the public.
- Resolving officer-involved incidents and complaints by providing an objectively independent record of events.
- Improving agency transparency by allowing the public to see video evidence of police activities and encounters in accordance with applicable laws regarding public disclosure.
- Identifying and strengthening officer performance by using footage for officer training and monitoring when appropriate and consistent with the law.
- Improving evidence documentation for investigation, prosecutions, and administrative reviews of employee performance and/or civil actions.

II. POLICY

The Suffield Police Department is committed to the belief that on-officer body-worn camera system is an important and valuable tool for law enforcement. On-officer video is essentially audio-video documentation of a police officer's investigative and enforcement activities from the perspective of the officer's person. The use of on-officer video is expected to result in greater transparency, more effective prosecution, and improved protection against false allegations of excessive use of force, misconduct or racial profiling.

The use of body-worn camera systems provides documentation of law enforcement interaction with the public by providing recorded evidence of actions, conditions and statements that may be used for court proceedings, internal review, or review by the public through formal request. Goals of a body-worn camera system include officer safety, to accurately document events during the course of an incident, to provide prosecutors with the best evidence for court proceedings, and to determine the accuracy of complaints made against Suffield Police Department officers. The Suffield Police Department will utilize the Axon camera system.

Officers are prohibited from erasing, altering, or tampering with any mobile audio or video equipment or attempting to erase, alter or tamper with any video or audio equipment, including intentionally stopping/starting a recording.

1. All body-worn recording equipment and dashboard cameras and media associated with the body-worn recording equipment and dashboard cameras, data, images, video/audio and metadata captured, recorded, or otherwise produced by the body-worn and dashboard cameras shall not be viewed, copied, released, disclosed, or disseminated in any form or manner outside the parameters of this policy pursuant to the department's FOI policy and practice.

2. Each law enforcement unit shall require usage of a dashboard camera in each police patrol vehicle used by any police officer employed by such unit in accordance with the unit's policy adopted by the unit based upon the guidelines developed and maintained jointly by the POST Council and the Commissioner of DESPP.
3. Each police officer shall use body-worn camera equipment while interacting with the public in such sworn member's law enforcement capacity in accordance with the department's policy, if adopted by the department and based upon the guidelines established by the POST Council and DESPP. This includes all police officers assigned to other agencies as well as police officers assigned to state and federal task forces. Police officers who are federally deputized task force officers shall comply with this policy as modified by the policy of the federal agency to which they are assigned.
4. Police officers working non-uniform assignments shall adhere to the requirements for the wear and activation of body-worn camera equipment as set forth in this policy except when such wear would hinder the performance of duty or readily identify the officer as a police officer when such identification would be detrimental to their assignment, duties, or mission.
5. This policy is not intended to govern the use of surreptitious or covert recording devices.

III. DEFINITIONS

Evidence.com Software: A secure video file management system required for downloading, storing, and retrieving video files recorded with the Axon camera.

Body-Worn Camera (BWC): A body-worn audio/video recording system primarily consisting of a camera with mic that is worn by the Police Officer to capture digital multimedia evidence during the course and scope of their police duties. Referred to as either "Body worn camera" (BWC) or "WiFi wearable camera" throughout this document. The Suffield Police Department police currently use the Axon Body Camera.

In-car Camera: A vehicle borne camera system mounted in Suffield Police Department marked cruisers consisting of a video camera, hard mounted screen and controls, and in vehicle storage. Referred to as "in-car video" throughout this document. The Suffield Police Department police currently use the Axon Dash Mounted Camera.

Administrative Search Warrant: Any search warrant that is executed from an office setting with in the police department and does not have potential for confrontation or use of force. Examples of these warrants include, but are not limited to, financial, internet or telephone records, served through electronic means, or the execution of warrants on cellular telephone or electronic devices already in the possession or care of the Suffield Police Department.

Digital Storage Media: Any medium used to store digital media for evidence purposes, such as CD, DVD, USB, or other storage media.

Digital Multimedia Video Files (DMVF): Digital multimedia files consist of all digital recordings, to include but not limited to audio, video, photographs, and their associated metadata. Metadata includes any digital identifiers that are captured as part of the actual recording, such as date/time, GPS coordinates, labeling, etc.

Event Categories: The labeling identifier for various calls for service used within the ETM and on the BWC systems.

Evidence Transfer Management (ETM): ETM is the transfer of media from the body-worn and dashboard cameras to a secured server or other reliable secured storage source. The method of evidence transfer management for body-worn and dashboard cameras shall be approved by the Chief of Police.

Law Enforcement Unit: Any agency or department of this State or a subdivision or municipality thereof, or, if created and whose primary functions include the enforcement of criminal or traffic laws, the preservation of public order, the protection of life and property, or the prevention, detection, or investigation of crime. C.G.S. § 7-294a.

Police Officer: A sworn member of a law enforcement unit or any member of a law enforcement unit who performs police duties. C.G.S. § 29-6d(2).

Police Patrol Vehicle: Any state or local police vehicle other than an administrative vehicle in which an occupant is wearing body worn camera equipment, a bicycle, a motor scooter, an all-terrain vehicle, an electric personal assistive mobility device, or an animal control vehicle. C.G.S. § 29-6d(5).

Retention Rules: A set of rules within the Evidence.com system that apply to the various Event Categories. This system allows for the automatic and immediate assignment of general retention guidelines of recorded events that fall within the retention for the Freedom of Information Act and State Library of records requirements. These may adjusted after the fact by the Chief of Police's system designee.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. General

1. The Suffield Police Department has authorized the use of body-worn camera systems. The Department will use the camera systems to document events and capture data, which will be preserved in a secure server at the Suffield Police Department. Once captured, these recordings cannot be altered in any way, and are protected with multiple layers of encryption. The Suffield Police Department has adopted the use of body-worn camera systems to accomplish the following objectives:

- a. To enhance officer safety.
 - b. To accurately document statements and events during the course of an incident.
 - c. To enhance the officer's ability to document and review statements and actions for both internal reporting requirements and for courtroom preparation/testimony.
 - d. To preserve visual and audio information for use in current and future investigations.
 - e. To provide an impartial measurement for self-critique and field evaluation during officer training or coaching and mentoring sessions.
 - f. To enhance the public trust by preserving factual representations of officer-citizen interactions in the form of video and audio recordings.
2. All department issued or approved body-worn cameras equipment and media associated with the body-worn cameras, data, images, video/audio and metadata captured, recorded, or otherwise produced by the body-worn and dashboard cameras shall not be viewed, copied, released, disclosed, or disseminated in any form or manner outside the parameters of this policy pursuant to the department's FOI policy and practice.
 3. Each Suffield Police Department police officer shall use body worn camera equipment while interacting with the public in such sworn member's law enforcement capacity in accordance with the department's policy, if adopted by the department and based upon the guidelines established by the POST Council and DESPP. This includes all police officers assigned to other agencies or Task Force's, including state and federal agencies. Police officers who are federally deputized task force officers shall comply with this policy as modified by the policy of the federal agency to which they are assigned.
 4. Police officers working non-uniform assignments shall adhere to the requirements for the wear and activation of body-worn camera equipment as set forth in this policy except when such wear would hinder the performance of duty or readily identify the officer as a police officer when such identification would be detrimental to their assignment, duties, or mission.
 5. This policy does not govern the use of surreptitious/covert recordings devices used in undercover operations

B. Operational Use (POSTC 3.5.4 (a))

1. Body-worn cameras shall be operated in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines and Suffield Police Department training and policies.
2. The body-worn cameras shall be worn at all times by the assigned officer.
3. Officers assigned to Investigative Services or other special assignments operating in that capacity shall carry their department issued body-worn camera and have it fully functional, charged and available for use. Detectives should make every attempt to utilize the body-worn camera in accordance with this policy, but it is recognized that due to the sensitive nature of their work it is not always prudent. Detectives unsure if and when to deploy their body-worn camera should consult with their immediate supervisor and/or their States Attorney.
4. Issued or approved body-worn cameras shall be operated in accordance with the manufacturer's recommended guidelines, department training and department policies and procedures.
5. Prior to each shift, officers shall test and inspect the body-worn camera for any physical damage and to ensure the system is fully charged and operational. Only fully charged and operational systems shall be used.
 - a. If problems are encountered with any component of the system, the body-worn camera shall not be used, and the officers shall arrange for repair or replacement through established departmental procedures. The officer shall immediately be provided with a replacement body-worn camera.
 - b. Malfunctions, damage, loss, or theft of any part of the body-worn camera shall be immediately reported to a supervisor. The officers shall immediately be provided with a replacement body-worn camera.
 - c. Uniformed Officers – At the beginning of each shift the officer ensure their body worn camera is linked to their assigned patrol vehicle in accordance with training. Once linked, the body worn camera will then be placed back on the officer.
6. Officers issued or assigned a body-worn camera shall wear such camera on their outmost garment and shall position it above the midline of the Officer's torso when in use (Per C.G.S. § 29-6d[c](2))

7. While it is generally implied that words and/or actions performed in the presence of a police officer have no expectation of privacy, if asked the officer will inform the person they are being recorded. This should be documented in the officer's report.
8. Police officers issued or assigned a body-worn and dashboard cameras shall activate the camera while interacting with the public in a law enforcement capacity. For the purposes of this policy, "interacting with the public in a law enforcement capacity," means that a police officer is in personal contact with one or more members of the public, the purpose of which is to conduct a self-initiated investigation into, or to respond to a third-party complaint involving, the possible commission of any offense, violation or infraction.
9. This policy is not intended to describe every possible situation in which a body-worn camera should be used. Sound judgment and discretion shall dictate when a body-worn camera is activated; however, officers should record the following types of incidents unless unsafe, impossible or impractical to do so: (POSTC 3.5.4 (a))
 - a. Vehicle and pedestrian investigative detentions and stops;
 - b. Observed unlawful conduct;
 - c. Vehicle and foot pursuits;
 - d. Use of force;
 - e. High-risk situations;
 - f. Advising an individual of Miranda rights;
 - g. Statements made by suspects, victims, or witnesses;
 - h. Interviews with suspects, victims, or witnesses;
 - i. Vehicle searches;
 - j. K-9 deployments;
 - k. Physical arrest of persons;
 - l. Transportation and processing of prisoners;
 - m. Observed items of evidentiary value;
 - n. Service of a Search Warrant;
 - o. Service of an Arrest Warrant;
 - p. An encounter initiated by a private person (flag down);
 - q. Any contact that becomes adversarial after the initial contact in a situation that would not otherwise require recording;
 - r. Any other circumstances where the officer believes recording an incident would be appropriate.

Note: At no time shall police officers disregard officer safety or the safety of the public for the purpose of activating or utilizing the body-worn and dashboard cameras.

10. The camera should generally be used during incidents that create reasonable suspicion in the mind of a reasonable police officer that a crime has been committed, is being committed, or will be committed in the future.
11. Officers, who do not activate their body-worn cameras in situations where they were required to as outlined above, may be subject to discipline. If a citizen complaint is made and the officer does not activate his body-worn camera as required, it will be a factor examined when determining final resolution of the investigation.
12. Once a body-worn camera is activated, it shall not be intentionally turned off until the incident has reached a conclusion. Additional police officers arriving on a scene that have been issued or assigned a body-worn and dashboard cameras shall also record the interaction with the public, and shall also continue to record until the completion of the incident. For purposes of this policy, conclusion of an interaction with the public occurs when a police officer terminates his/her law enforcement contact with a member of the public. If it becomes necessary to discuss issues surrounding an investigation with a supervisor or another officer in private, the officer may mute their body-worn camera; thereby preventing their private conversation from being recorded.
13. The use of a body-worn camera does not replace the need for required documentation. All incident/supplemental reports shall be completed, regardless of the video that has been captured.
14. Whenever an officer records an incident or any portion of an incident, which that officer reasonably believes will likely lead to a citizen complaint, the officer shall immediately bring it to the attention of his/her supervisor.
15. In situations requiring a report and/or citation, officers **SHALL** document the use of a body-worn camera in the following manner:
 - a. Within the synopsis **AND** narrative portions of an incident report.
 - b. Within a supplemental report.
 - c. As a notation on a citation.
16. Officers wearing a body-worn camera may use the system to capture statements from victims, witnesses, and suspects in place of utilizing a digital recorder. The use of a body-worn camera for such purposes shall be documented in the same manner as above.

17. Once video is captured and downloaded, officers shall identify the data file within the following manner:
 - a. By entering the full call number (7) within the Case Number field. Any event requiring recording shall have a call number associated with it.
 - b. Selecting the appropriate category. In the event more than one category is applicable, the category with the longer retention rate **SHALL** be selected.
 - c. Entering applicable details within the Comment field. The comments should include sufficient information to identify/retrieve the file, such as case type, location, suspect/driver name, etc. If an officer needs the file maintained as evidence, this shall be noted in the comment field.
 - d. Name and ID numbers will be assigned spare cameras for the duration that any personnel need a spare due to any circumstance.

C. Operational Prohibitions / Restrictions

1. Officers shall not modify, tamper, dismantle, or attempt to make repairs to the body-worn cameras. Any officer, who intentionally disables or damages any part of the body-worn camera, or who fails to activate or deactivate the system required by this policy without justifiably reason, will be held accountable and subject to criminal and/or internal disciplinary action.
2. Officers will not enable a password protected lock on the device in case a situation arises that another officer or supervisor needs to retrieve recorded evidence from the device.
3. Department-issued body worn cameras are intended for official Departmental use only and are not to be used for frivolous or personal activities. Intentional misuse or abuse of the units will result in disciplinary action.
4. Officers will typically not allow citizens to review recordings; however, officer discretion is allowed to replay the recording for citizens at the scene in order to mitigate possible complaints.
5. To respect the dignity of others, members utilizing body-worn cameras will make reasonable efforts to avoid recording persons who are nude, or when sensitive areas are exposed.
6. Body-worn cameras **SHALL NOT** be activated in places where a reasonable expectation of privacy exists, such as locker rooms, dressing rooms, or restrooms unless there is a call for service in that area where law enforcement response is needed.

7. Except as otherwise provided by any agreement between the department and the federal government, no police officer shall use body-worn or dashboard recording equipment to intentionally record:
 - a. A communication with other law enforcement agency personnel, except as the officer performs his or her duties;
 - b. An encounter with an undercover officer or informant
 - c. When an officer is on break or is otherwise engaged in a personal activity;
 - d. A person undergoing a medical or psychological evaluation, procedure or treatment;
 - e. Any person other than a suspect to a crime if an officer is wearing his/her issued or approved body-worn camera in a hospital or other medical facility setting; or
 - f. In a mental health facility, unless responding to a call involving a suspect to a crime who is thought to be present in the facility.
 - g. Any private conversation to which the officer is not a party: or
 - h. Any telephonic conversation unless specifically authorized by law while in the performance of their official duties.
 - i. A strip search
 - j. In a locker room, changing room or restroom, unless confronting a violent or assaultive suspect or in an incident involving the anticipated use of force.
8. The intentional recording of confidential informants and undercover officers is prohibited, unless authorized by a supervisor.
9. Non-work related personal activity shall not be recorded.
10. Under no circumstances shall any recordings be used or shown for the sole purpose of bringing ridicule or embarrassment upon any person.

11. Officers shall not use body-worn cameras to make surreptitious recordings of other department members, except as necessary in the course of a criminal investigation or for department administrative investigations, and only with the consent of the Chief of Police.
12. Officers **SHALL NOT** make copies of any recording for their personal use and are prohibited from using a recording device (such as a camera phone or secondary video camera) to record media from the server or any device utilized to view data recorded on body-worn cameras.
13. Officers are prohibited from using their personal phone or smart device for body-worn camera applications.
14. Any uploading or converting digital recordings for use on any type of social media is prohibited unless authorized for official department purposes by the Chief of Police of their designee.

Officers shall not record individuals who are lawfully engaging in a protest or other First Amendment protected right of speech or demonstration, unless there is at least reasonable suspicion of criminal activity, or to serve any other legitimate law enforcement purpose.

15. In incidents involving an officer's use of force (as defined in General Order [*3.01: Use of Force - General*](#)) officers may review their video of the incident before the officer has completed his/her force investigation report. Once the officer has completed his/her use of force report they may also view the video with the Supervisor conducting the force investigation. Any discrepancies or additional information determined by the review of the video will be documented and explained by the Supervisor in their evaluation of force report.
16. Although generally, body-worn cameras should remain activated until the conclusion of an incident, officers may deactivate the body-worn cameras should they determine that, based upon the circumstances; the investigation could be significantly hampered if the recording were to continue. Whenever possible, police officers should consult with supervisors before making the decision to deactivate their body-worn cameras.
17. Whenever possible, a police officer who deactivates or mutes the body-worn cameras during the course of an event in which this policy otherwise requires recording, shall both record on the camera the reason for the interruption or termination of recording prior to deactivating or muting the body-worn cameras, and document such event in their report.

a. Officers are prohibited from turning off their body worn camera while on-scene during an investigation or while interacting with victims, witnesses or suspects. All information regarding an investigation, including discussions with other officers or supervisors, should be recorded absent extreme circumstances. Additionally, officer should not mute their body worn camera while discussing the investigation absent one of the circumstances listed above.

18. When circumstances prevent a police officer from activating a body-worn camera or cause a camera to be deactivated in accordance with the guidelines established within this policy, the officer shall activate or reactivate their cameras as soon as practical.

19. If any malfunctioning or unintentional failure to record in accordance with this policy occurs, the officer shall document the reason and notify their supervisor regarding the lack of recording. Such documentation shall be in a manner determined by the Chief of Police.

D. End of Shift Procedures

1. Officers shall ensure that all files from an issued or approved body-worn cameras are securely downloaded and retained in accordance with this policy, with sufficient frequency so as to ensure that there remains adequate data storage available for recording future incidents.
2. Officers shall cause the recorded video to be stored, downloaded, transferred or otherwise saved and labeled or cataloged as evidence in the following circumstances:
 - a. Any incident where an arrest is made or may be made, and/or a search is conducted;
 - b. An event that captures an officer's reportable use of force in the discharge of their official duties;
 - c. Any interaction with the public where the officer determines that it would be prudent to retain the recording for longer than the minimum retention period set forth in this policy.
 - d. An event that is a major motor vehicle or criminal incident involving death, serious injury, or catastrophic property damage.

E. Deletion of Unintentional Recordings

1. In the event of an unintentional activation of the body-worn camera during non-enforcement or non-investigative activities, e.g. restroom or meal break, other areas where reasonable expectation of privacy exists: officers may request recording deletion.
2. The unintended recording will be noted using the “Accidental Activation” category dropdown box. Actual deletion will require two-party authorization. One of those parties will be the Chief of Police or their designee; the other will be the agency Administrator. Authorization will be noted by each party in the comment field within Evidence.com for that video.

F. Accountability, Review and Security (POSTC 3.5.4 (b))

1. All body-worn camera users will be responsible for monitoring system effectiveness and making recommendations for operational improvement and policy revision.
2. The Suffield Police Department will ensure officers, detectives, supervisors, and non-law enforcement court personnel have access to recorded events for legitimate law enforcement purposes or other articulated reasons.
3. Officers authorized under this policy may review video as it relates to:
 - a. Their involvement in an incident for the purposes of completing a criminal investigation and preparing official reports.
 - b. Prior to courtroom testimony or for courtroom presentation.
 - c. Providing a statement pursuant to an administrative inquiry/investigation.
 - d. For training purposes.
4. A supervisor may review a specific incident contained on digital media for the purpose of training, critique, early intervention inquiries, civil claims, administrative inquiry, or other articulated reasons.
5. Evidence.com automatically time/date stamps each recording and upload of same by the assigned officer name. Uploaded video that is deemed to be evidentiary in nature shall be categorized appropriately as such within Evidence.com as soon as practical by the investigating officer, so as to prevent deletion.

6. All digital media collected using body-worn cameras is considered a record of the Suffield Police Department. Access to recordings shall be granted to authorized users only. It is the responsibility of authorized users to keep their username and password confidential. Accessing, copying, or releasing any recordings for other than official law enforcement purposes is strictly prohibited, except as required by law.
7. Evidentiary copies of digital recordings will be accessed and copied from the Axon servers for official law enforcement purposes only.
8. The release of requested digital media through written public records request will be subject to the same statutory exemptions from disclosure as any other department records classified under Connecticut State Statute.
9. The Suffield Police Department's video administrator will conduct quarterly audits to verify and deactivate users who are no longer authorized.

G. Supervisory Responsibilities

1. Supervisory personnel shall ensure that officers equipped with body-worn cameras utilize them in accordance with policy and procedures defined herein.
2. Supervisors shall periodically inspect issued or approved body-worn camera equipment assigned to officers to ensure proper operability per testing protocols provided through training and manufacturer's recommendations.
3. Supervisors will periodically review the ETM to ensure videos are not uncategorized.
4. Supervisors or other persons designated by the Chief of Police may periodically review a minimum of two issued or approved body-worn and dashboard cameras recordings of traffic stops and citizen contacts in accordance with this policy as well as reports generated as a result of these incidents to:
 - a. Ensure body-worn and dashboard cameras equipment is operating properly;
 - b. Ensure that police officers are utilizing the body-worn and dashboard cameras appropriately and in accordance with policies and procedures; and
 - c. Identify any areas in which additional training policy revisions or guidance is required.

- d. The Town of Suffield does not intend this supervisory audit process as a tool to locate/identify the possibility of any inadvertently recorded personal conversations between employees that were not otherwise required to be recorded. Nothing in this section, however, precludes the department from taking appropriate action based on the detection of such information that is in violation of law or agency policy.
 - e. The monthly reviews are to be inclusive of all personnel within the Suffield Police Department regardless of rank and position, with reviews being conducted by the direct supervisor of each rank.
5. Should circumstances require the immediate retrieval of a digital recording (e.g., serious crime scenes, agency shootings, department-involved accidents), a supervisor shall respond to the scene to secure the body-worn camera system and maintain chain of custody.
 6. In the event of a damaged or malfunctioning BWC, the Supervisor shall re-issue the officer another BWC for use in the field. This will be taken from administrative personnel before taking another patrol officer's BWC from service. The Supervisor is responsible for notifying the Lieutenant of the damage and/or malfunction. The Chief's ETM designee will be responsible for repairs once notified of the need.
 7. Supervisors shall ensure that all body-worn and dashboard cameras video files are appropriately preserved in accordance with this policy.

H. Chief of Police Responsibilities

1. The Chief of Police shall designate one or more department members to oversee and administer the storage and management of all digital multimedia video files generated by the use of issued or authorized dashboard cameras.
2. The Chief of Police may authorize body-worn camera policy that provides additional guidelines and training requirements not mandated by this policy, provided that it does not conflict with state or federal law or the provisions set forth in this policy.
3. The Chief of Police shall ensure the body-worn camera data collection and storage is purged from the systems operation storage and/or software program in accordance with the State of Connecticut Library Records of Retention schedule and department policy.
4. The Chief of Police shall ensure that body-worn camera video files that are subject to a preservation request or court order are appropriately catalogued and preserved.

5. The Chief of Police shall approve the method of evidence transfer management (ETM) from the body-worn cameras to a secured storage server, cloud, website or other secured digital media storage.

I. Retention of Video (POSTC 3.5.4 (c))

1. Whenever practical, officers should download video utilizing the Evidence.com software. At the end of their shift, officers **SHALL** place the body-worn camera into the docking station. This will allow remaining evidence to be transferred from the system to the server, and for the battery to be charged. The system should not be removed from the dock until the data has been uploaded, and the battery is fully charged.
2. Digital multimedia files shall be maintained in an approved storage location, such as a server, storage device, cloud storage, website, or other approved secure storage media, authorized by the Chief of Police.
3. Digital multimedia files will be retained for 90 days from date of download. Evidence.com will automatically delete any video after that period unless otherwise marked, per Connecticut State Library Records of Retention Schedule. Digital multimedia files as evidence will be maintained according to the retention schedule set by the Connecticut State Library - Office of the Public Records Administrator.
4. Digital multimedia files shall be preserved while a case remains open and under investigation, or for a minimum of four (4) years while criminal or civil proceedings are ongoing or reasonably anticipated, or in accordance with the State Records of Retention schedule, whichever is greater.
5. Nothing in these guidelines shall require the Suffield Police Department to store such data for a period longer than one year, except in the case where the Department knows the data is pertinent to any ongoing civil, criminal or administrative matter.
6. All other digital multimedia files reproduced for evidentiary purposes or otherwise caused to be preserved shall be maintained for a minimum of four (4) years.
7. Digital multimedia files shall be preserved in accordance with any specific request by representatives of the Division of Criminal Justice, Municipal Attorney, Officer of the Attorney General, retained counsel and other authorized claims representatives in the course of their official duties.
8. Digital multimedia files shall be preserved in response to oral, electronic or written preservation requests from any member of the public where such requests indicate that litigation may be reasonably anticipated.

- a. All such preservation requests shall promptly be brought to the attention of the recipient's supervisor and the Municipal Attorney's office.

J. Releasing or Duplicating Body-Worn Camera Recordings

2. Processing Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests:

- a. All FOIA requests for body-worn cameras downloaded data files shall be processed through the office of the Chief of Police or their designee.
- b. Duplicating Body-worn cameras Downloaded Data Files
 - i. When a police officer who is required to produce a digital multimedia video file pursuant to a subpoena or other court order, the Chief of Police or other designee shall arrange, prior to the date of the court appearance, for a copy of the required portion of the original video file to be duplicated.
 - ii. The original video file, as well as any duplicate copy, shall be held as evidence in accordance with this policy.

K. Authorized Personnel Access to Digital Multimedia Files

1. General access to digital multimedia files shall be granted to authorized personnel only. Accessing, copying, or releasing any digital multimedia video files for other than official law enforcement purposes is strictly prohibited, except as otherwise required by state and federal statutes, policies and procedures.
 - a. The Chief of Police or designee(s) may review specific body-worn and dashboard cameras downloaded data files for the purpose of training, performance review, critique, early intervention inquiries, civil claims, administrative inquiry, or other articulable reason.
 - b. A Suffield Police Department police officer may review a recording from their body-worn camera recording equipment in order to assist such officer with the preparation of a report or otherwise in the performance of his or her duties.

- c. If a police officer is giving a formal statement about the use of force or if a police officer is the subject of a disciplinary investigation in which a recording from body-worn recording equipment or a dashboard camera with a remote recorder, is being considered as part of a review of an incident, the officer shall have the right to review (A) such recording in the presence of the officer's attorney or labor representative, and (B) recordings from other body-worn recording equipment capturing the officer's image or voice during the incident. Not later than forty-eight hours following an officer's review of a recording under subparagraph (A) of this subdivision, or if the officer does not review the recording, not later than ninety-six hours following the initiation of such disciplinary investigation, whichever is earlier, such recording shall be disclosed, upon request, to the public. Such disclosure may be delayed if the officer, due to a medical or physical response or an acute psychological stress response to the incident, is not reasonably able to review a recording under this subdivision, but in no event shall disclosure be delayed more than one hundred forty-four hours following the recorded event, subject to the provisions of C.G.S. 29-6d subsection (g).
- d. If a request is made for public disclosure of a recording from body-worn recording equipment or a dashboard camera of an incident about which (A) a police officer has not been asked to give a formal statement about the alleged use of force, or (B) a disciplinary investigation has not been initiated, any police officer whose image or voice is captured on the recording shall have the right to review such recording in the presence of the officer's attorney or labor representative. Not later than forty-eight hours following an officer's review of a recording under this subdivision, or if the officer does not review the recording, not later than ninety-six hours following the request for disclosure, whichever is earlier, such recording shall be disclosed, upon request, to the public. Such disclosure may be delayed if the officer, due to a medical or physical response or an acute psychological stress response to the incident, is not reasonably able to review a recording under this subdivision, but in no event shall disclosure be delayed more than one hundred forty-four hours following the recorded event, subject to the provisions of C.G.S. § 29-6d(g)
2. Under no circumstances shall any individual with access to body-worn digital multimedia files be allowed to use, show, reproduce or release recordings for the purpose of ridicule or embarrassment of any police officer or any other individual, or for other non-law enforcement related purposes. This includes disclosure of any portion of a body-worn cameras video file to a media organization unless such disclosure has been approved by the Chief of Police or designee.

3. Digital multimedia files may be reviewed by individuals other than the recording police officer in any of the following situations:
 - a. By a department member investigating or adjudicating a complaint regarding a specific act of officer conduct;
 - b. By technical support staff for purposes of assessing proper functioning of the body-worn cameras;
 - c. By the Internal Affairs Unit or other Unit or person(s) designated by the Chief of Police, when participating in an official misconduct investigation concerning a specific act or officer conduct alleged in a complaint of misconduct;
 - d. By a sworn law enforcement officer who is participating in a criminal investigation;
 - e. By the Town of Suffield's legal representative;
 - f. Any other personnel designated by the Chief of Police.
 - g. Suffield Police Department officers may review a recording from their own issued or assigned body-worn recording equipment in order to assist such officer in providing a statement as a witness to events which are the subject of a department internal administrative inquiry, including officer shooting investigations;
 - h. By representatives of the Division of Criminal Justice, Town of Suffield's Attorneys, Office of the Attorney General, retained counsel and other representatives authorized by the municipality, such as municipal insurance carriers, in the course of their official duties; or
 - i. By other department personnel as authorized by the Chief of Police or designee

H. Training

1. The Training Officer will maintain the department approved body-worn camera system training curriculum.
2. Only officers who have successfully completed departmentally approved training in accordance with statues in the use of the equipment, and in the retention of data created by such equipment are authorized to use body-worn cameras.

3. Only those officers who have received training in the retention of data created by dashboard cameras are authorized to activate and utilize the dashboard camera equipment.
4. The Training Officer shall be responsible for providing:
 - a. Basic user training
 - b. Periodic refresher training
5. The Training Officer is responsible for updating the course of training as necessitated by changes in policy or equipment.
6. System users are encouraged to report to the Training Officer any event that may be considered valuable for training purposes.
7. Every police officer must receive training on the proper care and maintenance of the equipment at least annually.

I. Annual Compliance Reporting

1. No later than January 31st of each given year for the previous year, the SUFFIELD Police Department shall submit the Annual Body-Dash Cam Compliance form utilizing the [POSTC Annual Body-Dash Cam Form](#) to UCONN's Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy (IMPR) to CTPoliceReport@uconn.edu. The Suffield Police Department shall post the completed Annual Body-Dash Cam Report form on the Department's internet website.

Note: In the Suffield Police Department's first report, the Department must report all incidents found in an internal investigation to have violated the dash-cam policy for both 2023 and 2024 calendar years.

2. The Suffield Police Department is required to report any incidents in which an Suffield Police Department officer was found in an internal investigation to have violated the Department's policy regarding the use of dash-cam recording equipment. (See PA 23-204).
3. The Suffield Police Department shall also complete the IMRP's [Supplemental Body and Dash Cam Compliance Survey](#). The Supplemental Survey must only be completed once to establish a baseline for the first year.