


Atlanta Police Department Policy Manual		Standard Operating Procedure
Effective Date January 1, 2016		APD.SOP.3133 Body Worn Cameras (BWC)
Applicable To: All employees		
Approval Authority: Chief George N. Turner		
Signature: Signed by GNT		Date Signed: 12/16/15

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1. PURPOSE

This directive shall provide employees with the guidelines and procedures for the authorization, use, issuance, maintenance, recording, data storage, and data retention of city-issued Body Worn Cameras (BWC).

2. POLICY

Employees issued a BWC shall wear, use, and maintain only body worn cameras (BWC) and any related equipment authorized and approved by the Atlanta Police Department under the terms of this directive. The BWC shall be used during the course of regular and extra job duties, for the purpose of potential evidence in the prosecution of criminal and traffic offenses, departmental internal investigations, and any other situations which the Department shall deem necessary. (CALEA 5th ed. Standard 41.3.8(a) and 83.2.2)

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The Chief of Police or his/her designee shall ensure that all employees issued a BWC adhere to the guidelines and procedures listed in this directive. The Chief of Police or his/her designee, shall be the final approving authority regarding the BWC and all recordings and data release as it relates to the media/press or general public.

3.2 Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that employees under their command are in compliance with this directive. Supervisors shall further be responsible for inspecting all equipment pertaining to the Body Worn Cameras (BWC) which shall be issued to employees in accordance with APD.SOP.1090 "Inspection".



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- 3.3 Supervisors shall take immediate corrective action when necessary, regarding the use and/or misuse of BWC equipment, and BWC data/images in accordance with APD.SOP.2020 "Disciplinary Process".
- 3.4 The BWC shall be issued to and used only by trained personnel.
- 3.5 Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that employees under their command are equipped with their assigned BWC at the beginning of their shift.
- 3.6 Employees at the rank of sergeant and below who are assigned a BWC shall be required to wear and use the BWC during the course of their regular and extra job duties. Employees at the rank of lieutenant or higher shall have the option, but are not required to wear and/or use the BWC during the course of their regular and extra job duties.
- 3.7 The Training Section Commander shall be responsible for ensuring that all training regarding the BWC meets departmental policies and procedures, is compliant with all CALEA and State Certification Program (GACP) standards, and any other city, state, or federal laws governing the use, maintenance, and operation of the BWC.
- 3.8 All employees regardless of rank shall be required to attend BWC training. All training regarding the BWC shall be conducted by instructors that have successfully completed the BWC training.
- 3.9 Central Records shall be the final repository for all reports associated with the use of the BWC.
- 3.10 The Public Affairs Unit (PAU) is responsible for coordinating all open records requests relating to the video data captured and of that archived by the BWC.
4. ACTION
  - 4.1 Only employees who have been trained and issued a BWC shall be authorized to wear and use the device.
    - 4.1.1 Employees shall be trained by the designated instructors in the areas listed to include, but not limited to:
      - a. Reasonable Expectation of Privacy;
      - b. BWC Hardware/Equipment;
      - c. BWC Software; and
      - d. Operation of BWC.
    - 4.1.2 Employees shall wear the BWC in a manner consistent with their training, and which will allow the recording of an incident that most closely replicates the best sight line of view for the employee during a recording encounter.
    - 4.1.3 It shall be the responsibility of employees to ensure the BWC remains in a position for proper recording of citizen encounters or incidents during their shift.
    - 4.1.4 Employees shall use their BWC in accordance with their training, in order to perform their on duty functions.



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- 4.2 Start of shift
  - 4.2.1 Prior to the beginning of the shift, employees shall turn on the BWC, ensure the device has powered up correctly, has a fully charged battery, and is functioning properly.
  - 4.2.2 Employees shall inspect the BWC to ensure there are no visible or obvious signs of damage. In the event there is damage or a malfunction discovered with the BWC, employees shall report the discovery to their immediate supervisor.
  - 4.2.3 Employees shall place the BWC into its normal (buffering/loop) mode, and shall remain in the normal (buffering/loop) mode unless the employee has the BWC in event (recording) mode.
- 4.3 Recordings  
(CALEA 5th ed. Standard 41.3.8(b))
  - 4.3.1 Law enforcement officers may use their BWC or other camera devices during the lawful performance of their duties to observe, photograph, videotape, or record the activities that occur in places where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy if they occur in the presence of the law enforcement officer. (Senate Bill 94, O.C.G.A Section 16-11-62 Unlawful Eavesdropping or Surveillance)
  - 4.3.2 Employees shall place the BWC in event (recording) mode upon arriving on scene of a call for service requiring recording of an incident, or when interacting with the public in a law enforcement capacity which the officer and/or his or her supervisor deems necessary to record and document.
  - 4.3.3 Supervisors shall place the BWC in event (recording) mode upon arriving on scene of all supervisor requests initiated by a citizen or an employee regarding a call for service or incident.
  - 4.3.4 The Atlanta Police Department recognizes that employee safety is paramount and understands that events can take place without notice. Employees shall place their BWC into event (recording) mode for the following circumstances listed to include, but not limited to:
    - a. Vehicle or Pedestrian stops;
    - b. Department approved vehicle safety checkpoints;
    - c. Field Interviews;
    - d. Vehicle or Foot Pursuits;
    - e. Emergency Driver (either code 2 or code 3);
    - f. When requested by a citizen during an encounter with law enforcement;
    - g. While en route to crimes in progress where fleeing suspects or vehicles may be captured on video leaving the crime scene;
    - h. Statements made by suspects, victims or witnesses while interviewing; and
    - i. Execution of a search warrant.



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- 4.3.5 Employees may activate the BWC anytime they believe its use would be appropriate and/or valuable to document an incident, or as instructed by their supervisor. The BWC shall be placed in event (recording) mode as soon as it is practically possible for employees to do so in order to capture an event.
- 4.3.6 If there is a non-activation or interruption of recording by employees arriving on scene of an incident requiring activation of the BWC, or if an employee does not place the BWC in event (recording) mode while interacting with the public in a law enforcement capacity deemed necessary by the employee and/or his or her supervisor, the employee shall begin recording the event as soon as practically possible and document the circumstances in a written report explaining the delay in activation or interruption in the recording of the incident in accordance with APD.SOP.3060 "Report Writing".
- 4.3.7 Employees shall adhere to all guidelines and procedures in accordance with APD.SOP.3190 "Juvenile Procedures" when recording interactions involving Juveniles with their BWC.
- 4.3.8 Employees shall deactivate their BWC when the incident has transitioned to a controlled orderly manner, when the interaction has been completed by the employee, or as instructed by their supervisor. (CALEA 5th ed. Standard 41.3.8(b))
- 4.3.9 Employees are permitted to access and review either video stored on their BWC or the employee's video uploaded to the Atlanta Police Department (APD) approved storage network **with the exception of all use of force incidents** (see section 4.9.3).
- 4.3.10 Employees shall not share or provide copies of any video footage with members of the public, the press/media or persons not authorized to view the footage, except in accordance with APD.SOP.1060 "Public Affairs".
- 4.4 Prohibited Use  
(CALEA 5th ed. Standard 41.3.8(c))
- 4.4.1 The purpose of the BWC is to be used during law enforcement interactions with the public. The BWC shall not be used for the following reasons to include, but not limited to:
- The BWC shall not be activated in areas such as but not limited to: dressing rooms, locker rooms and restrooms unless performing a legitimate law enforcement action;
  - When possible, employees shall refrain from recording exposed genitals or other sexually sensitive areas, unless doing so would be unavoidable;
  - The BWC shall not be intentionally activated to record conversations of fellow employees without their knowledge during non-enforcement activities or administrative functions;
  - The BWC shall not be used to record undercover officers or confidential informants; and
  - Employees shall not use any recording device (such as a phone, secondary camera or any other such device) to record captured video/audio footage or retrieve stored data.**
- 4.4.2 Employees are prohibited from using a BWC in a non-law enforcement capacity for personal activities or use. Doing so shall be deemed a violation in accordance with APD.SOP.2010 "Work Rules" and APD.SOP.6050 "Dept. Employees' Responsibilities with Regard to Information Technology" Section 4.6.6. (CALEA 5th ed. Standard 41.3.8(c) and 83.2.2)



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- 4.5 Tampering with the BWC
  - 4.5.1 The BWC and recordings are the property of the Atlanta Police Department. Use of the BWC for any purpose not associated with an employee's duties, or as specifically prescribed in this Standard Operating Procedure, is strictly prohibited. (CALEA 5th ed. Standard 41.3.8(c))
  - 4.5.2 Employees are strictly prohibited from disabling or destroying a BWC. This includes changing or attempting to change settings and/or permission levels within a BWC.
  - 4.5.3 Employees shall not interfere or intentionally block the ability of the BWC to record an encounter.
  - 4.5.4 The intentional destroying or altering of any evidentiary recording produced from the BWC by any employee shall be treated as a violation of O.C.G.A 16-10-94 tampering with evidence, O.C.G.A 16-10-94 interference with government property, APD.SOP.2010 "Truthfulness" Section 4.1.3, and subject to disciplinary and/or criminal prosecution.
- 4.6 End of Shift
  - 4.6.1 At the end of each shift, employees shall remove their assigned BWC, ensure their BWC is powered down properly, check to ensure that all cords and/or connecting mechanisms are disconnected from the BWC, and place their assigned BWC into the designated secured mounting station.
  - 4.6.2 Employees shall ensure the BWC is seated correctly into the mounting station in order for recorded video footage and data to be transferred from the device to the APD approved storage network at the end of each shift.
  - 4.6.3 BWCs are to remain in the secured mounting station area at all times when not assigned to an employee, and shall not be removed from the work location, taken home, **or used outside of the normal scope of shift duties** unless otherwise instructed by their supervisor.
  - 4.6.4 Supervisors shall ensure that all employees who are assigned a BWC, mount/secure the device in the appropriate designated areas and upload all video footage and data by the end of their shift.
  - 4.6.5 When it is necessary to tag a particular piece of video footage regarding a case, employees or supervisors shall add a retention tag to the footage, add the case number for identification purposes of each video tagged, and ensure that it has been uploaded onto the APD approved storage network before the end of their shift.
- 4.7 Use of BWC on Extra Jobs
  - 4.7.1 Employees issued a BWC shall adhere to all aforementioned guidelines and procedures regarding the BWC while performing their extra job duties.
  - 4.7.2 Any video captured must be uploaded when the employee returns to their regular assignment, unless otherwise directed by a supervisor.
  - 4.7.3 Any use of force incident captured by the BWC must be uploaded by a supervisor before the end of the extra job shift. Supervisors and employees shall adhere to guidelines and procedures in accordance with APD.SOP.3010 "Use of Force".



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- 4.8 Data Storage and Retention  
(CALEA 5th ed. Standard 41.3.8(d))
- 4.8.1 BWC recorded data shall remain stored on a secured APD approved storage network, in accordance with Georgia Archives (State Govt. Schedule 13-002) and The Georgia Records Act O.C.G.A. 50-18-90 et seq. The retention guidelines are as follows:
- |                              |            |
|------------------------------|------------|
| a. Traffic Stop              | 45 Days    |
| b. Citation                  | 90 Days    |
| c. Citizen Contact           | 45 Days    |
| d. Criminal Investigation    | 60 Days    |
| e. Use of force w/ no arrest | 90 Days    |
| f. Arrest                    | 5 Years    |
| g. Homicide                  | Indefinite |
- 4.8.2 BWC recordings submitted to the Property Control Unit as evidence, shall be retained as outlined in APD.SOP.6030 "Property and Evidence Control" Section 4.2. Any decision to retain certain data possessing evidentiary or other value beyond the archival period must be approved and documented in writing by the Deputy Chief of Strategy and Special Projects Division, or his or her designee. (CALEA 5th ed. Standard 83.2.2)
- 4.9 Review of BWC recording data  
(CALEA 5th ed. Standard 41.3.8(g))
- 4.9.1 The Georgia Open Records Act shall exempt audio and video recordings used by law enforcement in places where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy from disclosure under certain circumstances specified in accordance with O.C.G.A. Section 50-18-72(a)(26.2).
- 4.9.2 Any use of force incident captured by the BWC must be uploaded by a supervisor before the end of the employee's shift/tour of duty. Supervisors and employees shall adhere to guidelines and procedures in accordance with APD.SOP.3010 "Use of Force".
- 4.9.3 Any employee involved in a "use of force" incident, shall complete an incident report of the event prior to viewing the BWC footage. Only after an employee has completed an incident report following a use of force event, shall the employee be permitted to view BWC footage if they desire to do so.
- 4.9.4 Upon completion of the incident report, the employee shall include the following statement:
- "I have completed this report prior to reviewing any video/audio pertaining to this incident to the best of my knowledge."*
- 4.9.5 Whenever an employee or supervisor reviews a recording, they shall place a note in the video detailing their reasoning for accessing the video.
- 4.9.6 Employee responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
- |                   |
|-------------------|
| a. Video tagging; |
| b. Reviewing;     |



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- c. Not allowing unauthorized people to view the BWC footage;
  - d. Not obtaining copies of video without authorization; and
  - e. Prohibiting the release of footage without permission.
- 4.10 Audits of BWC Recording Data  
(CALEA 5th ed. Standard 41.3.8(g))
- 4.10.1 The Chief of Police or his or her designee shall determine and approve a BWC Compliance Administrator.
- 4.10.2 The BWC Compliance Administrator shall be responsible for conducting audits of BWC footage, and shall ensure accountability and compliance in accordance with the guidelines and procedures in this directive.
- 4.10.3 Any violations regarding this written directive, and as it pertains to local, state, or federal laws shall be documented and submitted to The Office Of Professional Standards (OPS) for further review in accordance with APD.SOP.2020 "Disciplinary Process".
- 4.10.4 The Compliance Administrator shall conduct a random audit of BWC data on a semi-annual basis and generate a report documenting the findings.
- 4.10.5 The audit should be reflective of the department and include multiple samples for review. The report shall further address any training or written directive issues resulting from the audit, and provide recommendations regarding compliance and accountability.
- 4.10.6 The report shall be submitted to the Deputy Chief of Strategy and Special Projects Division (SSP) for review.
- 4.11 BWC Compliance Administrator
- 4.11.1 The BWC Compliance Administrator shall be responsible for the following:
- a. Maintaining an accurate listing of all BWC users;
  - b. Management of the digital data storage management system;
  - c. Assigning permissions and roles to users in the BWC system as directed and/or approved by the Chief of Police or his or her designee;
  - d. Overall maintenance of the BWC system;
  - e. Responding to requests from the Public Affairs Unit; and
  - f. Redacting or deleting any video in accordance with local, state, and federal laws governing the release of such materials. Any video redacted shall be documented and filed for recording purposes by the BWC Compliance Administrator.
- 4.11.2 The Compliance Administrator shall be responsible for conducting audits of BWC footage, generate a report documenting the findings, and shall ensure accountability and compliance in



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accordance with the guidelines and procedures in this directive. The report shall be submitted to the Deputy Chief of Strategy and Special Projects Division (SSP) for review.

- 4.11.3 Any violations regarding this written directive, and as it pertains to local, state, or federal laws shall be documented and submitted to The Office Of Professional Standards (OPS) for further review in accordance with APD.SOP.2020 "Disciplinary Process".
- 4.12 Maintenance of BWC  
(CALEA 5th ed. Standard 41.3.8(e))
- 4.12.1 All employees are responsible for the proper care and safekeeping of any BWC issued to them. Any damaged or lost equipment due to the employee's negligence or carelessness shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with (APD.SOP.2020 Disciplinary Process, Section 4.14).
- 4.12.2 During the course of an employee's shift, if their BWC is damaged, lost, or becomes inoperable, the replacement procedures shall be as follows:
- During Normal Business Hours
- a. Employee shall notify their immediate supervisor regarding the status of the BWC;
  - b. Employee shall advise dispatch radio regarding the situation, request an incident number to document the event and notify of "out of service" status;
  - c. Employee shall report to the Atlanta Police Department Training Academy, notify a supervisor and have the BWC replaced after inspection by a trained academy staff member;
  - d. The designated academy staff member shall retrieve the inoperable BWC from the employee, deactivate and log the inoperable BWC, provide the employee with a functional device, and if necessary return the defective BWC to the manufacturer for repair.
  - e. Employee shall return to service and report back to their duty assignment.
- After Normal Business Hours
- a. Employee shall notify their immediate supervisor regarding the status of the BWC;
  - b. Employee shall advise dispatch radio regarding the situation, request an incident number to document the event and notify of out of service status;
  - c. Employee shall report to the Atlanta Police Department Property Control Unit, notify the on duty supervisor and have the BWC inspected by a trained Property Control Unit staff member.
  - d. The designated Property Control Unit staff member shall retrieve the inoperable BWC from the employee, deactivate and log the inoperable BWC, provide the employee with a functional BWC, and if necessary return the defective BWC to the manufacturer for repair.
  - e. The Property Control Unit supervisor on duty shall complete the appropriate property issuance form and ensure it is logged and recorded in the designated area.





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f. Employee shall return to service and report back to their duty assignment.

4.12.3 If an employee's BWC is damaged, lost, or becomes inoperable while off duty, the employee shall report the incident to their supervisor upon returning to their next shift/tour of duty and adhere to the procedures applicable in accordance with section 4.12.2 in this directive.

4.13 Remote Activation of BWC

4.13.1 Remote activation shall only be done during exigent circumstances or when an officer's safety is in peril. An officer merely not answering his radio in and of itself, is not an unusual occurrence.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 Code 2: Operating an Authorized City of Atlanta Police vehicle with the emergency lights activated.

5.2 Code 3: Operating an Authorized City of Atlanta Police vehicle with the emergency lights and sirens activated.

5.3 Body Worn Camera (BWC): An "on the body" video and audio recording system assigned to an officer/employee as a means of documenting interactions between employees issued a device and the public.

5.4 Event Recording Mode: The BWC is actively recording an incident or event.

5.5 Buffering/Loop Mode: The BWC is in standby status. Not actively recording an incident or event.

5.6 Video Tag/Tagging: To digitally label a particular piece of video footage captured by the BWC for review.

5.7 BWC Compliance Administrator: A person or unit assigned by the Chief of Police or his or her designee to monitor, maintain, and facilitate all operations regarding the BWC.

5.8 Citizen Encounter: An encounter with a citizen that has no criminal or investigative purpose. Ex: Stopping to say hello to someone or interacting with persons to obtain information that is non-criminal in nature.

5.9 Use of force without an arrest: Any use of force by an employee which does not result in a physical arrest i.e. (breaching a door, damage to property, or animal encounters).

## 6. CANCELLATIONS

APD.SOP.14.05 "Body Worn Cameras Pilot Program" (BWCPP) effective: September 1, 2014  
and Signed: September 2, 2014



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#### 7. REFERENCES

Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) 5th Edition Standards 41.3.8 (a-g) and 83.2.2.

O.C.G.A 16-10-94 tampering with evidence,  
O.C.G.A 16-10-94 interference with government property  
O.C.G.A. 50-18-90 et seq. Georgia Records Act  
Georgia Archives (State Govt. Schedule 13-002)  
Senate Bill 94, O.C.G.A Section 16-11-62 Unlawful Eavesdropping or Surveillance  
O.C.G.A. Section 50-18-72(a)(26.2).

APD.SOP.1060 "Public Affairs"  
APD.SOP.1090 "Inspections"  
APD.SOP.2010 "Work Rules"  
APD.SOP.2020 "Disciplinary Process"  
APD.SOP.2080 "Training"  
APD.SOP.2130 "Dress Code"  
APD.SOP.3010 "Use of Force"  
APD.SOP.3020 "Search and Seizure"  
APD.SOP.3030 "Arrest Procedures"  
APD.SOP.1090 "Inspections"  
APD.SOP.3060 "Report Writing"  
APD.SOP.3190 "Juvenile Procedures"  
APD.SOP.6030 "Property and Evidence Control"  
APD.SOP.6050 "Dept. Employees' Responsibilities with Regard to Information Technology"