



Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department

GENERAL ORDER

4.32

BODY WORN CAMERAS

POLICY

The Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) is committed to creating transparency, ensuring accountability, and enhancing public trust by effectively using body worn cameras (BWC). The BWC system is designed to record law enforcement activity to preserve evidence used in criminal investigations, administrative investigations, civil litigation, and disciplinary actions. The BWC system may also be used to identify training, tactical, and policy improvements, and to address employee performance issues. IMPD employees will maintain and use the BWC system in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy and department training.

PROCEDURE

I. Operational Requirements

- A. Only a department-issued BWC will be worn by employees to record law enforcement activities.
- B. Employees assigned a BWC must wear the device while in uniform.
- C. Employees in uniform that are engaged in off-duty employment or assignments that require law enforcement powers or the use of department equipment must be equipped with a BWC and adhere to this policy.
- D. The BWC system must be worn in a holster designed for the BWC to ensure the BWC reasonably replicates the employee's sightline.
- E. Prior to being issued a BWC, employees must complete department BWC training regarding:
 1. The proper use and maintenance of the equipment,
 2. Placement of the device,
 3. Department policy of BWC usage, and
 4. Uploading procedures.
- F. Employees who directly supervise members issued a BWC, must also complete department training regarding the device.
- G. Employees must inspect and test their BWC equipment at the beginning of each shift by:
 1. Verifying the audio and video device is functioning,
 2. Confirming the BWC is fully charged,
 3. Confirming the holster sensor and Bluetooth device has an adequate power supply,
 4. Ensuring the device is properly worn,
 5. Documenting their information in the system (when required), and
 6. Depressing the status button on the Bluetooth device (if being used).



H. At the end of their shift, employees will:

1. Charge their BWC and holster sensor, in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and department training.
2. Ensure each recording is properly labeled with the associated case or CAD number, for retention.
3. Log out of AVaiLWeb to prevent unauthorized users from accessing the program.

I. A BWC recording will not be used to replace a written report. Employees will complete detailed narratives and probable causes for reportable incidents pursuant to General Order 4.25 – *Incident Reporting*.

J. Supervisors will use AVaiLWeb to monitor the number of unlabeled reports each shift, and ensure officers have labeled them before the end of the shift.

K. Employees will notify a supervisor, as soon as reasonably possible, when they discover an operational issue with a BWC that they cannot resolve. Supervisors will provide a replacement BWC, when necessary, and notify the BWC System Administrator to replace the malfunctioning device.

II. Activating the BWC System

A. The BWC will automatically activate through:

1. CAD integration when a dispatched officer is within approximately 500 ft. of a dispatched run,
2. In-car trigger (e.g., light bar activation, siren activation, etc.), or
3. When the employee:
 - a. Goes into a prone position,
 - b. Begins running,
 - c. Begins rotational movement or change in orientations (e.g., begins to fight), or
 - d. Draws their handgun.

B. BWCs may be manually activated or deactivated with the Bluetooth wrist device.

C. If the BWC does not automatically activate, employees will manually activate the device in the following circumstances:

1. Responding to dispatched calls, starting before the employee arrives on scene.
2. During traffic or other investigative stops.
3. Anytime lights and/or sirens are activated.
4. Making an arrest or seizure.
5. Questioning victims, suspects, or witnesses.
6. During vehicle or foot pursuits.
7. During a use of force incident or investigation.
8. Immediately after being involved in a traffic accident.
9. Prior to transporting any citizen (except those participating in a ride along).



10. During all searches of people, vehicles, or premises conducted with or without a warrant.
 11. When pointing a firearm.
 12. When entering a private residence or business for law enforcement purposes.
 13. At the inception of any other type of law enforcement encounter with a member of the public.
 14. Any time the employee believes the recording would be appropriate and beneficial to the department's operations.
- D. If an automatic trigger fails to activate, or if one of the above incidents is not recorded, the employee will notify their supervisor and complete a Blue Team within one working day of the incident. The Blue Team must include:
1. Any automatic triggers that failed to activate the BWC, and why the employee was unable to manually activate their BWC.
 2. The supervisor will send the Blue Team directly to the BWC System Administrator.
 3. The BWC System Administrator will review each Blue Team to determine the cause of the failed activation, and to take corrective or disciplinary action to prevent further failures.
- E. Supervisors must activate their BWC while on scene of a dispatched run or officer-initiated incident or investigation, even when not backed on to the run.
- F. BWCs may be remotely activated
1. The ability to remote activate a BWC will be limited to the Chief of Police or designee, SWAT and ERG Commanders, Communications supervisors, and the BWC Administrator.
 2. Remote activation allows users to turn on all cameras in a selected area simultaneously or start a live stream of an officer's BWC that is already recording.
 3. Employees will be notified before their device is remotely activated.
 4. Remote activation will be limited to monitoring high risk search warrants, SWAT operations, social disorder events, officer down events; or when necessary for officer safety, tactical purposes, operational purposes, or as ordered by the Chief of Police.
- G. When practical and safe, employees will inform members of the public that their BWC is recording as close as possible to the inception of the interaction, while the BWC is activated. If employees are unable to inform a citizen of the recording, they must explain why it was impractical or unsafe in the associated CAD or in an AVailWeb note.
- H. Criminal Intelligence employees who are working, but not in a department uniform, are not required to notify members of the public when they are recording. A Blue Team must be completed indicating the illegal activity, criminal predicate, or reasonable suspicion they observed before turning on their camera.
- I. Employees will document the existence of BWC recordings in all incident reports and ECWS citations by stating, "This incident was recorded with a body worn camera" at the beginning of their narrative, probable cause, and/or UTT comments section.



III. Deactivating the BWC System

- A. Employees will continue recording until their involvement in an event ends (i.e., they mark in service) or the event is concluded, unless otherwise directed by this general order. The conclusion of the event occurs when:
 - 1. All relevant communications with the public are concluded,
 - 2. The gathering of evidence is completed, and
 - 3. Transportation and/or transfer of custody is completed.
- B. Employees will deactivate their BWC when their involvement in an event is concluded and prior to responding to another incident, when possible.
- C. If a member of the public requests an employee stop recording during an event that is required to be recorded by policy, the employee will continue to record and explain to the citizen that department policy requires the recording of the event.
 - 1. If an employee is at a private residence during an event that is required to be recorded by policy, the employee will continue to record and explain to the citizen that department policy requires the recording of the event.
 - 2. Recordings made pursuant to an arrest or search of the residence or person(s) are not considered a consensual encounter for the purposes of this policy. The BWC will remain activated until the event is completed to ensure the integrity of the recording.
- D. Employees may deactivate their BWC when privacy concerns outweigh law enforcement interest, and the absence of the recording will not affect the investigation. This may include:
 - 1. Natural death investigations,
 - 2. Child or sexual assault victim interviews,
 - 3. Cultural or religious objections to being recorded,
 - 4. Inside schools when children are present, and
 - 5. Circumstances where recording could impede or limit the cooperation of victims or witnesses.
- E. When a recording is stopped due to a citizen's request for a reason listed above, the request and reason for stopping the recording must be documented on the camera prior to turning the recording off.
- F. If an interaction becomes contentious or confrontational after a recording has been stopped, the employee must resume video recording.
- G. Employees will state on camera the reason for any breaks in recording and document the stoppage in the associated CAD or incident report.
- H. Employees will deactivate their cameras if they are dispatched to a bomb threat, or they believe they have located an explosive device. All devices capable of emitting radio frequency energy including the BWC should be at least 300 ft. away from any suspect device pursuant to General Order 4.13 – *Bomb Threat Procedures*.
- I. A supervisor or detective can order cameras on a scene to be turned off if the officer's interaction with citizens has concluded, and there is no further investigatory value.



- J. Officers blocking or directing traffic who are not interacting with members of the public may deactivate their cameras.

IV. Prohibited Use of the BWC System

- A. Unless for a necessary law enforcement purpose (e.g., crimes in progress), employees will not record in sensitive areas such as:
 - 1. Restrooms, locker rooms, and dressing rooms,
 - 2. Detention facilities,
 - 3. Mental health, counseling, or therapeutic facilities, and
 - 4. Medical facilities.
- B. Employees will not record:
 - 1. Strip searches,
 - 2. Tactical briefings,
 - 3. Coaching sessions,
 - 4. Union activities,
 - 5. Any privileged conversations (e.g., attorney and client, a doctor and patient, etc.),
 - 6. Courtroom proceedings, or
 - 7. People engaged in First Amendment activities (e.g., marches, protest, etc.) unless:
 - a. The employee has reasonable suspicion to believe criminal activity is occurring, or
 - b. Imminent risk to public safety or property destruction appears likely.
- C. Employees will notify the BWC System Administrator if they inadvertently record any of the above restricted activities to ensure they are flagged for appropriate redaction.
- D. Employees will notify the BWC System Administrator if they record an undercover officer, a confidential informant, or any of the above events. The BWC System Administrator will ensure those recordings are flagged for proper redaction.
- E. Employees will not secretly record other department members, supervisors, city employees, or law enforcement officers pursuant to General Order 9.18 – *Eavesdropping / Unauthorized Recording*.
- F. The department will not use any biometric technology, such as facial recognition, to conduct general searches of BWC recordings.
- G. Stored video and audio data from BWC must not be used:
 - 1. To create a database or pool of mug shots,
 - 2. As fillers in photo arrays, or
 - 3. In conjunction with facial recognition software.



V. Uploading, Retention, and Dissemination of BWC Video

- A. Uploading of BWC recordings will occur automatically when connected to the cloud-based storage system through the RocketIoT installed in department vehicles. If an employee does not have a working RocketIoT in their vehicle, they may upload their video to another employee's RocketIoT.
- B. If no RocketIoT is available, employees must report to a district headquarters or the IMPD Light Shop within 24 hours to upload their recordings through a Waypoint available at those locations.
- C. All BWC recordings will be retained for at least 190 days from the date of the recording. The BWC System Administrator is responsible for the retention and destruction of BWC recordings.
- D. If a BWC recording is used in a criminal, civil, or administrative proceeding, the recording shall be retained until final disposition of all appeals and order from the court.
- E. Detectives are encouraged to review the associated recordings of every criminal case they are assigned, and ensure all videos are labeled appropriately. Detectives will ensure recordings for their cases are kept until all appeals are completed.
- F. All BWC recordings are the property of IMPD. Dissemination outside of the department is strictly prohibited, except to the extent permitted or required by law, and only with authorization from the Chief of Police, or designee, in consultation with the IMPD Legal Unit.
 - 1. Employees are prohibited from allowing unauthorized members of the public or personnel to view recordings.
 - 2. Public requests for BWC recordings must be directed to:
 - a. The Indy.gov website at: <https://www.indy.gov/activity/request-a-public-record>, or
 - b. IMPD Citizen Services Office at: 317-327-3155.
- G. Employees will not record, copy, share, disseminate, or otherwise distribute any BWC recordings, by any means, unless for legitimate law enforcement purposes.
- H. Employees will not edit, alter, erase, tamper with, or delete BWC recordings. Any tampering with evidence will result in department discipline and possible criminal charges.

VI. Reviewing BWC Recordings

- A. Employees may review their own BWC recordings, and recordings shared by other employees, in preparation of any report, statement, or Blue Team.
 - 1. Any employee compelled by a supervisor to make a public safety statement, must make that statement before reviewing their recording. After the public safety statement has been made the employee may review their recordings.
 - 2. Employees are encouraged to review their recordings before completing use of force Blue Teams or testifying in court.
- B. Investigators may review BWC recordings, when necessary, for an official criminal or administrative investigation.



- C. Supervisors may review BWC recordings only for the following:
1. Blue Team reportable incidents,
 2. Incident related to an employee's on-duty injury, and
 3. To help determine discipline when:
 - a. There is a complaint of misconduct, or
 - b. The supervisor witnessed misconduct.
- D. Supervisors are prohibited from reviewing BWC recordings for the sole purpose of searching for violations of department policy not related to a specific complaint or incident.
- E. FTO Specialists may review any recording of any employee on their district who is training in the FTO program, or in their probationary year.
- F. Training Academy staff may review BWC recordings to assess its value for training purposes, with approval from the Deputy Chief of Oversight, Audit, and Performance.
1. Recordings may be shown for training purposes.
 2. Employees depicted in these recordings will be notified when they will be used for training.
 3. If an employee depicted in a recording objects to the recording being show for training purposes, they may send an inter-department to the Chief of Police stating their objection.
 4. The Chief of Police, or designee, will determine if the employee's objections outweigh the training value.
- G. The review of any BWC recordings must be done out of view of the public.
- H. The Chief of Police, Assistant Chief, Deputy Chiefs, and Public Information Office (PIO) may review BWC recordings to assess its value to further the department's goals of creating transparency, ensuring accountability, and enhancing public trust.
1. The PIO may release recordings to provide information concerning events that affect public welfare, public interest, or for other reasons as authorized by the Chief of Police.
 2. Any recording released by the PIO for public viewing must be redacted according to Indiana State Law.
 3. Employees depicted in these recordings will be notified before they are released.
 4. If an employee depicted in a recording objects to the recording being used by the PIO, they may send an inter-department to the Chief of Police stating their objection.
 5. The Chief of Police, or designee, will determine if the employee's objection outweigh the released videos value.
- I. The BWC System Administrator has access to all recordings and is responsible for:
1. Marking recordings as confidential if they involve IA, SIU, or CIRT investigations; show SWAT tactics; or are of a sensitive nature.
 2. Ensuring that any recording released to the public is redacted according to Indiana State Law and guidance from the Legal Unit.



3. Conducting a weekly audit of BWC recordings to ensure the devices and system are being operated and maintained according to policy and manufacturer recommendations.
 - a. Weekly audits will consist of reviewing at least ten randomly selected reports.
 - b. Weekly audits will be compiled into a monthly report to be reviewed by the Deputy Chief of Oversight, Audit, and Performance.

VIII. Critical Incident Management

- A. Employees who are involved in or respond to a critical incident, including officer-involved shootings, in-custody death, or other use of deadly force, will continue recording until a supervisor is on scene.
- B. Supervisors responding to the scene will follow the procedures outlined in General Order 1.7 – *Critical Incident Response Team* and General Order 1.31 – *Use of Force Investigation, Reporting, and Review*. Additionally, supervisors will:
 1. Order the employee to stop recording before giving a public safety statement,
 2. Take the BWC from the employee,
 3. Upload the recording as soon as practical,
 4. Ensure the recording uploaded to AVaiLWeb.
 5. Turn the BWC off after the recording has been uploaded to AVaiLWeb, and
 6. Keep the BWC secure until CIRT decides to take the BWC as evidence or release it back to the involved employee.
- C. If the involved employee is incapacitated, an on-scene supervisor must recover the employee's BWC prior to transportation to the hospital, when feasible.
 1. If it is not possible to recover the employee's BWC before transport, the BWC must be recovered at the first reasonable opportunity.
 2. The supervisor will upload the recording and view the recording as soon as reasonably possible, if necessary to obtain suspect information, and ensure the BWC is no longer recording.
 3. After confirming the video has been uploaded, the supervisor will turn off the BWC.
 4. If the involved employee had a physical confrontation, special consideration should be made to preserve potential evidence (e.g., blood, DNA, etc.) on the employee's clothing and BWC.