

# JACKSONVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Policy: 10-24

## BODY WORN DIGITAL RECORDING EQUIPMENT

Effective: 07-15-14

Revised: 01-18-21

**PURPOSE:** This Department has adopted the use of Body Worn Digital Recording equipment (BWDR) to supplement the current Mobile Video/Audio Recording (MVAR) equipment; that is, to provide a suitable back-up system should the officer's MVAR system fail.

**POLICY:** The use of Body Worn Digital Recording equipment provides an unbiased audio/video recording of events the officer encounters. These recordings can be useful for the documentation of evidence, the preparation of offense reports, and future court testimony. These recordings can also protect officers from false allegations of misconduct and be of use when debriefing incidents or evaluating performance. In order to maximize the utility of this equipment, officers shall follow the procedures for BWDR equipment use as set forth in this policy.

### PROCEDURES:

#### I. OPERATING PROCEDURES AND USAGE

This section is not intended to describe every possible situation where the system may be used. In some circumstances it may not be possible to capture images of an incident due to conditions or location of the camera however the audio portion can be valuable evidence and is subject to the same activation requirements. Officers shall adhere to the following procedures when utilizing BWDR equipment.

- A. Prior to each shift, a supervisor will ensure all BWDR devices are adequately charged.
- B. The supervisor has the responsibility to make sure the officer is trained on the use and operation of the BWDR device. The device will be used in accordance with the operations manual.
- C. Prior to use, Officers assigned BWDR equipment shall inspect the device to ensure there is no visible damage and the device is in good working order. Any visible damage or concerns about the functionality of the equipment will be brought to the attention of the officer's immediate supervisor as soon as it is practical to do so.
- D. At the end of the officer's shift he will return the device to the supervisor.
- E. The BWDR equipment's primary function is to serve as a viable option when a marked patrol vehicle's MVAR becomes temporarily disabled due to hardware and/or software failure. With the BWDR, the supervisor can assign it to the officer and put the vehicle back into immediate operation if another vehicle with functioning MVAR equipment is not immediately available. When used in this manner all provisions of Policy 16-3: Mobile Video/Audio Recording Equipment apply.
- F. The BWDR equipment can be assigned by the patrol supervisor as additions to the MVAR. These should be utilized by the officer to cover "blind spots" that the MVAR would not otherwise be able to record (i.e. inside a residence on a domestic disturbance call, foot pursuit out of camera range, etc.).
- G. The BWDR equipment can be utilized for special operations with prior approval from the Chief of Police or his designee.
- H. Although the BWRD has the ability to take still photos, this is not the preferred method of photographing a crime scene. The use of standard digital camera equipment is the preferred method. However, nothing precludes the officer from utilizing this option under exigent circumstances.

## II. PROHIBITED ACTIONS

- A. Officers shall not erase or alter, in any manner, the recordings.
- B. Officers shall not introduce any unauthorized hardware, software, or any other files onto the BWDR equipment.
- C. All digital media that is captured using the BWDR equipment is considered the property of the Jacksonville Police Department. Accessing, copying, or releasing captured video without the approval of the Chief of Police or his designee is strictly prohibited.

## III. STORAGE AND MANAGEMENT

- A. BWDR storage devices containing information that may be of value for case prosecution or in any criminal or civil adversarial proceeding shall be safeguarded as other forms of evidence. As such, these video/audio recordings will:
  - 1. Be subject to the same security restrictions and chain of evidence safeguards as any other evidence.
  - 2. Not be released to another criminal justice agency for trial or other reasons without having a duplicate copy made and returned to safe storage.
  - 3. Not be released to other than bona fide criminal justice agencies without prior approval of the Chief of Police or his designee.
  - 4. Only be released to the general public in compliance with legal requirements of the Freedom of Information Act of Arkansas.

## IV. DIGITAL VIDEO PROCEDURES

- A. The digital recording from the BWDR will be downloaded to the BWDR external hard drive in the Patrol Lieutenant's Office.
- B. Upon completion of the download, the digital recording will remain on the external hard drive for forty five (45) days unless an unforeseen malfunction, such as equipment or software failure, occurs.
- C. If a digital recording is needed for evidence to present in court, the officer shall request copies to be made on a media storage device.
  - 1. This shall be done via chain of command to the Patrol Division Commander or his designee as soon as practical in advance of the court date.
  - 2. Officer's requests are dependent upon the approval of the Patrol Division Commander or his designee.
- D. The Patrol Division Commander or his designee will then copy the digital recording from the external hard drive to a media storage device for use in court.



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Chief of Police