



<i>Subject:</i> Body Worn Cameras		<i>General Order Number:</i> 10.36
<i>Effective Date:</i> 07/06/16	<i>Reference:</i>	
Approval: Chief Justin D. Laps		<i>No. of Pages:</i> 4
Updated: Annually		

**Chapter 10**

I. Purpose

To establish policy and guidelines for electronic data collection resulting from the use of body-worn audio/visual camcorders (BWC). It also serves to direct Rangers and their supervisors in the proper use and maintenance of the BWC. The purpose of the BWC is to provide an accurate unbiased audio/visual record of enforcement related and non-criminal incidents that will enhance criminal prosecutions and limit civil liabilities.

II. Policy

The use of the BWC system provides documentation of law enforcement interaction with the public by providing evidence for the judicial system, internal review, or review by the public through formal request. The primary function of the BWC is officer safety and not to initiate disciplinary action against the officer. This does not preclude data collected on the BWC from being used as evidence relating to a complaint of misconduct made against a law enforcement officer by any person present at the scene of the incident when such a complaint could result in additional training, counseling or disciplinary action in accordance with Park District policy. Rangers of the Stark County Park District shall use the BWC when interaction with the public will potentially result in further enforcement action, or any situation, condition, or event having a potential for loss of life, injury or damage to property.

III. PROCEDURE

A. General guidelines for the use of BWC:

1. The BWC is intended to supplement reports and investigations, aid in prosecution, improve officer performance through training and promote officer safety.

2. The BWC is to be used to document events, actions, or statements made during patron contacts, interviews, arrests, and critical incidents.
3. The BWC is meant to enhance the department's ability to review probable cause for arrests, searches and seizures, arrest procedures, officer and suspect interaction, and evidence for investigative purposes, as well as for officer evaluation and training.
4. The BWC shall be activated at the initiation of any interaction having the potential to result in enforcement actions taken by a Stark County Park District Ranger.
5. The BWC shall not be deactivated until the enforcement action is completed or the camera reaches the end of battery life, whichever comes first.
6. Rangers shall not attempt to erase any audio and/or video on the BWC or tamper with the unit in any way.
7. All Rangers shall wear and use the BWC during their assigned shift unless a BWC is not available. If two Rangers are working as a team, at least one Ranger shall wear and use the BWC in accordance with this policy.
8. To the extent practical without compromising officer safety, all public contacts that may result in further enforcement action shall be recorded. These contacts include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Traffic Stops (traffic violations, stranded motorist assistance and all crime interdiction stops)
  - b. Priority responses
  - c. Arrests
  - d. Vehicle searches
  - e. Physical or verbal confrontations
  - f. Prisoner transports
  - g. Crimes in progress
  - h. Fishing license / hunting license checks
  - i. Any situation where a non-prisoner is in the vehicle and being transported; e.g., a child, an elderly person, someone having a medical event
  - j. Any use of force
  - h. Miranda warnings and responses from in custody suspects
  - i. Any other circumstance where the officer believes that a recording of an incident would be appropriate.
9. Whenever possible, Rangers should inform individuals that they are being recorded unless unsafe, impractical, or impossible. In locations where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as a residence, they may decline to be recorded unless the recording is being made in pursuant to an arrest or search of the residence or the individuals. The BWC shall remain activated until the event is completed in order to ensure the integrity of the recording unless the contact moves into an area restricted by this policy.
10. If an interruption occurs, the Ranger will document the reason for the interruption or termination of the recording. If a Ranger feels it is

## Exhibit P

necessary to stop recording (e.g. talking to a victim of sexual assault, confidential informant) within the constraints of policy, the Ranger will verbally indicate their intent to stop recording before stopping the device, and upon reactivation, state that the camera was restarted. The interruption should be documented in the incident report.

11. If a Ranger fails to activate the BWC, the Ranger will document in an incident report why a recording was not made.

### B. Ranger Responsibilities

1. All BWC equipment shall be operated in accordance with the manufacturer's recommended guidelines.
2. Malfunctions, damage, loss or theft of the BWC shall be reported to the supervisor.
  - a. An incident report shall be completed documenting the suspected cause(s) of equipment failure or circumstances resulting in damage, loss or theft.
3. A Ranger that has recorded any activity that they feel may be needed in court as evidence shall notify the supervisor requesting the removal of recordable media and placement into evidence.
4. A Ranger that has recorded any activity that they deem important and necessary to preserve shall notify the supervisor requesting the removal of recorded media for preservation.

### C. Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Supervisors shall be responsible for checking the BWC equipment on a regular basis to ensure it remains in good working order.
2. Supervisors who are informed of or otherwise become aware of malfunctioning equipment shall ensure that authorized personnel make repairs in a timely manner.
3. Supervisors shall conduct periodic reviews of recorded media in order to:
  - a. Assess officer performance
  - b. Assure proper functioning of BWC equipment
  - c. Determine if BWC equipment is being properly operated
  - d. Identify recordings that may be appropriate for training

### D. Data Management

1. The Chief Ranger shall designate a data manager to be responsible for collecting all recorded media as needed.
2. Once the media is surrendered, the data manager shall:
  - a. Ensure recorded media is downloaded to a secure location on the park server with authorized control access.
  - b. Make appropriate entries in the recorded media chain of custody log.
3. The data manager shall collect all video on the BWC. All recorded media needed for evidence purposes should be marked to ensure their preservation.
4. Recorded media needed for evidence purposes shall be retained until all possible appeals have been exhausted. Recorded media evidence can also be destroyed by order of a judge or prosecutor.

5. Recorded media not needed for evidence, discipline or training purposes may be destroyed thirty (30) days after the recording date.
  6. The data manager shall maintain strict control over access to the retained recorded media files. They may be called to testify in court regarding the security of the recorded media.
  7. Requests for recorded media will be honored upon written requests to view such recordings. The person requesting access to view the media may be charged a fee established in the Stark County Park District record retention and release policy.
- E. Prohibitions
1. Any use of the BWC for any purpose other than official law enforcement business is a violation of this policy. Non-law enforcement business can include, but is not limited to:
    - a. Covertly recording other law enforcement personnel.
    - b. Recording a conversation with a supervisor, board member, park director or other government employee.
    - c. Personal use of the BWC.
    - d. Recording a conversation that the officer is not party to, unless the officer is handling a law enforcement incident and is in a lawful position when the taping occurs.
  2. Rangers shall not use the BWC to record a particular person based solely on the person's race, color, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin or physical ability.
  3. Any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action outlined in the Stark County Park District Employee Handbook.
- F. Training
1. Rangers will receive training and will review manufacture documentation regarding the proper use of the BWC.
  2. After the initial training, rangers will receive additional training if the BWC system receives upgrades that change the overall function or another BWC system is implemented.