
Portable Audio/Video Recorders

423.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the use of portable audio/video recording devices by members of this department while in the performance of their duties. Portable audio/video recording devices include all recording systems whether body-worn, hand held or integrated into portable equipment.

This policy does not apply to mobile audio/video recordings, interviews or interrogations conducted at any Girard Police Department facility, authorized undercover operations, wiretaps or eavesdropping (concealed listening devices).

423.1.1 CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

This policy contains content that pertains to Ohio Collaborative Law Enforcement Agency Certification (OCLEAC) Standards.

See attachment: [OCLEAC Standards Compliance Checklist 5-19-2020.pdf](#)

423.2 POLICY

The Department is issuing Body-Worn Cameras (BWC's) to all uniformed members of the service (each member will receive the BWC upon start of his/her shift at roll call). This policy applies to all uniformed members of service to include all supervisors responsible for that shift. The use of recorders is intended to enhance the mission of the Department by accurately capturing contacts between members of the Department and the public.

423.3 COORDINATOR

The Chief of Police or the authorized designee should designate a coordinator responsible for:

- (a) Establishing procedures for the security, storage and maintenance of data and recordings.
- (b) Establishing procedures for accessing data and recordings.
- (c) Establishing procedures for logging or auditing access.
- (d) Establishing procedures for transferring, downloading, tagging or marking events.
- (e) Establishing procedures for a documented review of recordings.

423.4 MEMBER PRIVACY EXPECTATION

All recordings made by members on any department-issued device at any time, and any recording made while acting in an official capacity of this department, regardless of ownership of the device it was made on, shall remain the property of the Department. Members shall have no expectation of privacy or ownership interest in the content of these recordings.

423.5 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Each supervisor or OIC will retrieve the BWCs from the docking stations for each member of the service working uniform Patrol. Prior to going into service, each uniformed member will be

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responsible for making sure that he/she is equipped with a portable recorder issued by the Department, and that the recorder is in good working order. If the recorder is not in working order, the member becomes aware of a malfunction at any time, or the recorder is lost or otherwise not accounted for, the member shall promptly report the failure to his/her on-duty supervisor or OIC and obtain a functioning device as soon as reasonably practicable. The loss, damage, or malfunction of a BWC shall be documented in the BWC ACTIVITY LOG. Uniformed members should wear the recorder to the outermost garment with the mounting hardware provided.

Any member assigned to a non-uniformed position may carry an approved portable recorder at any time the member believes that such a device may be useful. Unless conducting a lawful recording in an authorized undercover capacity, non-uniformed members should wear the recorder in a conspicuous manner when in use or otherwise notify persons that they are being recorded, whenever reasonably practicable.

When using a portable recorder, the assigned member shall record his/her name, GPD identification number and the current date and time at the beginning and the end of the shift or other period of use, regardless of whether any activity was recorded. This procedure is not required when the recording device and related software captures the user's unique identification and the date and time of each recording.

Members shall document the existence of a recording in any report or other official record of the contact, including any instance where the recorder malfunctioned or the member deactivated the recording. Members should include the reason for deactivation. Documenting all video should include but not limited to date, time, incident number, name, location and nature of call. This will ensure proper case management and officer ID. Further all arrest, traffic stops, or incidents that were recorded shall be documented in the ACTIVITY LOG. An arresting or reporting officer must identify any other member of the service who captured all or part of the event on their BWC. The officers will follow the procedure on tagging and labeling their video pursuant to their training of the BWC.

423.6 SUPERVISORY AND ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS FOR BWC

- (a) Provide/Issue BWC to members of the service at Roll Call.
- (b) Inspect each BWC to ensure it is powered on and properly affixed to the officer.
- (c) Review BWC procedure at each roll call on the activation/deactivation of the BWC.
- (d) Visit/meet with members of the service equipped with BWC's during their tour of duty to ensure that they are recording mandated events/incidents and that the BWC is properly functioning.
- (e) Document all failures to record events, failures of the BWC, damage to the BWC, or the loss of the BWC (or it being unaccounted for). This will be documented in the ACTIVITY LOG BOOK.

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- (f) Supervisor's must prepare and forward a TYPED report on Department letterhead detailing any failure, damage or loss of the BWC. This is to include if a mandatory event is not recorded.

423.7 ACTIVATION OF THE AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDER

This policy is not intended to describe every possible situation in which the portable recorder should be used, although there are many situations where its use is appropriate. Members should activate the recorder any time the member believes it would be appropriate or valuable to record an incident.

The portable recorder shall be activated in any of the following situations:

- (a) All enforcement and investigative contacts including stops and field interview (FI) situations
- (b) Traffic stops including, but not limited to, traffic violations, stranded motorist assistance and all crime interdiction stops
- (c) All calls for service, overdose investigations, dealing with emotionally disturbed persons, and criminal investigations
- (d) Self-initiated activity in which an officer would normally notify 9-1-1 Center
- (e) Any other contact that becomes adversarial after the initial contact in a situation that would not otherwise require recording

Members should begin recording prior to or immediately upon arrival at incident location. In the event of an unanticipated or exigent circumstance occurrence, activate the BWC as soon as it is feasible and safe to do so. At no time should proper tactics or safety be compromised to begin a recording. However, the recorder should be activated in situations described above as soon as reasonably practicable. As soon as reasonable, and practical, notify members of the public that an interaction is being recorded, unless notification could compromise the safety of any person or impeded an investigation.

Members should remain sensitive to the dignity of all individuals being recorded and exercise sound discretion to respect privacy by discontinuing recording whenever it reasonably appears to the member that such privacy may outweigh any legitimate law enforcement interest in recording. Requests by members of the public to stop recording should be considered using this same criterion. Members may choose to deactivate the BWC upon the request of a victim, or citizen if a suspect is not present, that the information may be sensitive, and it is safe and advisable to do so after considering all circumstances, to include the requester's desire for privacy and or confidentiality. Recording should resume when privacy is no longer at issue unless the circumstances no longer fit the criteria for recording.

423.7.1 CESSATION OF RECORDING

Once activated, the portable recorder should remain on continuously until the member reasonably believes that his/her direct participation in the incident is complete or the situation no longer fits the criteria for activation. In case of an arrest, recording will not cease until the arrestee is placed

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into the hold cell (after booking). Recording may be stopped during significant periods of inactivity such as report writing or other breaks from direct participation in the incident.

423.7.2 SURREPTITIOUS USE OF THE PORTABLE RECORDER

Ohio law permits an individual to surreptitiously record any conversation in which one party to the conversation has given his/her permission (ORC § 2933.52).

Members may surreptitiously record any conversation during the course of a criminal investigation in which the member reasonably believes that such a recording will be lawful and beneficial to the investigation.

Members shall not surreptitiously record another department member without a court order unless lawfully authorized by the Chief of Police or the authorized designee.

423.7.3 EXPLOSIVE DEVICE

Many portable recorders, including body-worn cameras and audio/video transmitters, emit radio waves that could trigger an explosive device. Therefore, these devices should not be used where an explosive device may be present.

423.8 PROHIBITED USE OF PORTABLE RECORDERS

Members are prohibited from using department-issued portable recorders and recording media for personal use and are prohibited from making personal copies of recordings created while on-duty or while acting in their official capacity. Furthermore, members may not edit, delete, or alter any video, audio captured by the BWC or stored on the Departments network, or approved storage media. The video system maintains an audit trail for all transactions conducted on the system.

Members are also prohibited from retaining recordings of activities or information obtained while on-duty, whether the recording was created with department-issued or personally owned recorders. Members shall not duplicate or distribute such recordings, except for authorized legitimate department business purposes. All such recordings shall be retained at the Department.

Members are prohibited from using personally owned recording devices while on-duty without the express consent of the Shift Sergeant. Any member who uses a personally owned recorder for department-related activities shall comply with the provisions of this policy, including retention and release requirements, and should notify the on-duty supervisor of such use as soon as reasonably practicable.

Recordings shall not be used by any member for the purpose of embarrassment, harassment or ridicule.

The following are additional prohibited uses of portable recorders:

- (a) Performance of administrative duties or non-law enforcement functions
- (b) Routine activities within the Department
- (c) Departmental meetings and training
- (d) Off Duty employment

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- (e) Interviewing CI's
- (f) Interviewing victims of a sex crime
- (g) Interviewing concerned citizens complaints
- (h) In court, except for any altercation involving a disturbance or incident that the uniformed member of service must act on.
- (i) Inside all medical facilities
- (j) The use of BWC's for off duty side jobs are prohibited. No officer is to use, take or authorize any off -duty officer a BWC while working a private off-duty job

Notification to Supervisor or OIC if a prohibited event as described was recorded.

423.9 IDENTIFICATION AND PRESERVATION OF RECORDINGS

To assist with identifying and preserving data and recordings, members should download, tag or mark these in accordance with procedure and document the existence of the recording in any related case report.

A member should transfer, tag or mark recordings when the member reasonably believes:

- (a) The recording contains evidence relevant to potential criminal, civil or administrative matters.
- (b) A complainant, victim or witness has requested non-disclosure.
- (c) A complainant, victim or witness has not requested non-disclosure but the disclosure of the recording may endanger the person.
- (d) Disclosure may be an unreasonable violation of someone's privacy.
- (e) Medical or mental health information is contained.
- (f) Disclosure may compromise an undercover officer or confidential informant.

Any time a member reasonably believes a recorded contact may be beneficial in a non-criminal matter (e.g., a hostile contact), the member should promptly notify a supervisor of the existence of the recording.

423.10 RETENTION OF RECORDINGS

The default preservation period for the BWC video will be one year, at which time it will be automatically deleted, depending on the category, case, event assigned to the video it may be retained for a longer period if necessary. A supervisor may request a recording be retained longer periods if they feel it necessary. The supervisor shall on Department letterhead submit a letter to the Chief of Police to retain a certain event captured by a BWC, stating the reason event information and officer involved.

423.10.1 RELEASE OF AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDINGS

The department is required by law to disclose certain information and material related to criminal and civil proceedings pursuant to Ohio Law, and rules governing discovery in civil as well as

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criminal cases, The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), subpoenas and court orders. The Chief of Police will respond to all subpoenas, court orders, FOIA's writs, and any other request made.

Requests for the release of audio/video recordings shall be processed in accordance with the Records Maintenance and Release Policy.

423.11 REVIEW OF RECORDED MEDIA FILES

When preparing written reports, members should review their recordings as a resource (see the Officer-Involved Shootings and Deaths Policy for guidance in those cases). Members may also review recordings when the subject of an official department investigation, when a witness to a departmental investigation, and when the recording is needed for a court date, trial pre-trial or preliminary hearing. However, members shall not retain personal copies of recordings. Members should not use the fact that a recording was made as a reason to write a less detailed report.

Supervisors are authorized to review relevant recordings any time they are investigating alleged misconduct or reports of meritorious conduct or whenever such recordings would be beneficial in reviewing the member's performance.

Recorded files may also be reviewed:

- (a) Upon approval by a supervisor, by any member of the Department who is participating in an official investigation, such as a personnel complaint, administrative investigation or criminal investigation.
- (b) Pursuant to lawful process or by court personnel who are otherwise authorized to review evidence in a related case.
- (c) By media personnel with permission of the Chief of Police or the authorized designee.
- (d) In compliance with a public records request, if permitted, and in accordance with the Records Maintenance and Release Policy.

All recordings should be reviewed by the Custodian of Records prior to public release (see the Records Maintenance and Release Policy). Recordings that unreasonably violate a person's privacy or sense of dignity should not be publicly released unless disclosure is required by law or order of the court.

The officer will make a request to view the recording, stating the reason, incident number (date, name of suspect etc.). The request will be forwarded to the Chief of Police for approval. Once approved the request will be forwarded to one of the Captains to set a time and date for the reviewing of the recording.

UNLESS AUTHORIZED NO OFFICER IS TO REVIEW ANOTHER OFFICERS RECORDING FOR ANY PURPOSE.

If a victim, witness or suspect request to view a video from an event/incident/arrest they shall be directed to the Chief of Police. If a citizen not related to the event/incident or arrest request to view a recording, they are to be declined, and referred to the Law Director.

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423.12 MAINTENANCE OF RECORDERS

Maintenance of the BWC's and all equipment is the responsibility of those members of the service trained to perform these actions. If there are any problems relating to maintenance, care of, or malfunctions with the system it must be immediately reported to the Chief of Police.

423.13 TRAINING SUPERVISOR

- (a) Periodically review BWC video as appropriate, to provide positive feedback and address any performance or tactical deficiencies observed.
- (b) Assess compliance with the policy and procedure set forth, and to take necessary remedial action to correct deficiencies.
- (c) Be responsible for the integrity and security of the BWC's, relating to the hardware and video management of the system.
- (d) Conduct an investigation when notified of the recording of an event which is prohibited, and or involves a use of force, citizen complaint or any other such event deemed necessary under this policy and procedure.
- (e) Evaluate compliance with this policy and procedure.
- (f) Ensure officers will receive periodic training on this policy and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding at least annually.

423.14 POLICY REVIEW

Annually, the Chief of Police or the authorized designee shall conduct a review of this policy for best practice and compliance purposes.

423.15 TRAINING

Initially, at least annually, or more frequently upon any updates, sworn members of this department shall certify in writing, or acknowledge electronically, that they have received, read, and understand this policy.

Attachments

**OCLEAC Standards Compliance
Checklist 5-19-2020.pdf**



STANDARDS COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

This document shall accompany all agency compliance submissions consisting of agency directive(s) and proofs of compliance documentation specific to each standard.

The agency directive and associated compliance documentation shall:

- 1) Adequately cover each standard and associated bullet;
- 2) Be clearly marked with each standard number and bullet, and;
- 3) Include an explanation in the space provided for any areas where compliance could not be met.

Any submissions not meeting the above criteria will be forwarded to a subject matter expert for assistance and may result in a delay in the agency obtaining Ohio Collaborative Certification.

STANDARD 8.2015.1

USE OF FORCE / DEADLY FORCE

The agency maintains a Use of Force / Deadly Force written directive that includes:

- a. policy statements in support of the Ohio Collaborative guiding principles;
- b. when a written report shall be conducted;
- c. investigation / report reviews for policy compliance; and
- d. annual read and sign and testing over directive content for sworn agency personnel.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

USE OF FORCE

Employees may only use the force which is reasonably necessary to effect lawful objectives including: effecting a lawful arrest or overcoming resistance to a lawful arrest, preventing the escape of an offender, or protecting or defending others or themselves from physical harm.

USE OF DEADLY FORCE

The preservation of human life is of the highest value in the State of Ohio. Therefore, employees must have an objectively reasonable belief deadly force is necessary to protect life before the use of deadly force. Deadly force may be used only under the following circumstances: 1. to defend themselves from serious physical injury or death; 2. to defend another person from serious physical injury or death; or 3. In accordance with U.S. and Ohio Supreme Court decisions, specifically, *Tennessee v. Garner* and *Graham v. Connor*.

↓ *For agency completion: Agency compliance feedback for Use of Force / Deadly Force*

Written directive meets all bullets (if no, explain):

Supporting **compliance documentation** meets all bullets (if no, explain):

STANDARD 8.2015.2

RECRUITMENT AND HIRING

The agency maintains a Recruitment and Hiring directive that includes:

- a. policy statements in support of the Ohio Collaborative guiding principles;
- b. establishment of an agency recruitment plan;
- c. establishment of agency EEO plan;
- d. identification of sworn officer applicant qualifications;
- e. identification of sworn officer application and selection process;
- f. annual review of agency hiring and recruitment process; and
- g. initial read and sign over agency hiring and recruitment directive, for applicable personnel.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The goal of every Ohio law enforcement agency is to recruit and hire qualified individuals while providing equal employment opportunity. Ohio law enforcement agencies should consist of a diverse workforce. Communities with diverse populations should strive to have a diverse work force that reflects the citizens served.

Non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity is the policy. Law enforcement agencies shall provide equal terms and conditions of employment regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, veteran status, military status, or disability. This applies to all terms or conditions associated with the employment process, including hiring, promotions, terminations, discipline, performance evaluations, and interviews.

Agencies should utilize due diligence in ensuring that their prospective employees have the proper temperament, knowledge and attitude to handle this very difficult job. Agencies should have appropriate mechanisms in place in order to achieve this mission. Further, agencies should ensure their employment requirements are related to the skills that are necessary to be a successful employee.

↓ For agency completion: Agency compliance feedback for Recruitment and Hiring Standard

Written directive meets all bullets (if no, explain):

Supporting **compliance documentation** meets all bullets (if no, explain):

STANDARD 8.2016.3

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The agency maintains a written directive on Community Engagement activities that includes:

- a. policy statements in support of the Ohio Collaborative guiding principles;
- b. identification of agency specific programs;
- c. methods for sharing and receiving information within the agency's service area; and
- d. initial read and sign over agency community engagement directive for all agency personnel.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Agencies shall utilize proven strategies or develop their own strategies that are focused on community engagement. Examples may include: youth programs, educating the community on police policy and procedures, educating officers about the community they serve, sharing , receiving and providing information to the public, jointly identifying areas of concern, and communicating, when appropriate, significant changes in agency operations or other areas.

The intent of this standard is to establish agency accountability for the community involvement function in writing. The function should be developed and operated to effectively meet the needs of the agency, with consideration of the department size and budget, as well as the community it serves.

↓ *For agency completion: Agency Compliance Feedback for Community Engagement*

Written directive meets all bullets (if no, explain):

Supporting **compliance documentation** meets all bullets (if no, explain):

STANDARD 12.2016.4

BODY WORN CAMERAS

If applicable, the agency maintains a written directive on Body Worn Cameras that includes:

- a. the purpose and organizational philosophy regarding use in support of the Ohio Collaborative guiding principles;
- b. requirements and restrictions for activation and deactivation of the device;
- c. criminal and administrative use of the camera captured data;
- d. data storage, retention and disclosure requirements reflective of public records law and privacy concerns;
- e. requirements for a documented review of camera captured data; and
- f. initial read and sign for users and supervisors

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Agencies utilizing body worn cameras must develop strong and consistent policies that provide guidance to their personnel as to the appropriate use of body worn cameras. Policies need to address, at a minimum, activation and deactivation, auditing, storage, retention, public records and releases video related to victims, especially child victims, injured victims, victims of sexual assault and other privacy concerns. It is recognized the audio and video data is viable recorded evidence that may provide a means of accountability for those officers and the public. It is also recognized the audio video data may not be an accurate reflection of all that is involved with an incident. Audio video data cannot reflect the human cognitive conditions associated with officer in public contact. Additionally, A/V shall not supersede the principles established by *Graham v. Connor*.

↓ *For agency completion: Agency Compliance Feedback for Body Worn Cameras*

Written directive meets all bullets (if no, explain):

Supporting **compliance documentation** meets all bullets (if no, explain):

STANDARD 12.2016.5

LAW ENFORCEMENT TELE-COMMUNICATOR TRAINING

If the agency employs Tele-communicators, as defined by [ORC 4742.01](#), the agency must ensure a training program and directives exist to allow for Tele-communicators to be proficient in:

- a. obtaining complete and accurate information callers requesting law enforcement assistance;
- b. accurately classifying and prioritizing requests for assistance; and
- c. obtaining and accurately relaying information which may affect responder and / or citizen safety.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Training shall meet and support minimum standards as established by legislation for 911 call centers and public safety answering points (PSAPs).

↓ *For agency completion: Agency Compliance Feedback for Tele-communicator Training*

Written directive meets all bullets (if no, explain):

Supporting **compliance documentation** meets all bullets (if no, explain):

STANDARD 3.2017.6

BIAS FREE POLICING

The agency maintains a written directive on Bias Free Policing that includes:

- a. policy statements in support of the Ohio Collaborative guiding principles;
- b. training on bias based profiling issues and relevant legal aspects;
- c. corrective measures to address violations of this policy to include a Supervisor's review and discipline on violations to the policy;
- d. data collection on all self-initiated traffic stops; and
- e. annual administrative review that is made available to the public.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Criminal Profiling, in itself, can be a useful tool to assist law enforcement officers in carrying out their duties. Officers shall not consider race / ethnicity to establish reasonable suspicion or probable cause, except that officers may take into account the reported race / ethnicity of a potential suspect(s) based on trustworthy, locally relevant information that links a person or persons of a specific race / ethnicity to a particular unlawful incident(s).

Law enforcement agencies should prohibit the use of any bias based profiling in its enforcement programs, as it may lead to violations of the constitutional rights of the citizens served, undermine legitimate law enforcement efforts and may lead to claims of civil rights violations. Additionally, bias based profiling alienates citizens, fosters distrust of law enforcement by the community and may result in media scrutiny, legislative action and judicial intervention.

Law enforcement personnel should focus on a person's conduct or other specific suspect information. Annually, the agency should include profiling related training that should include field contacts, traffic stops, search issues, asset seizure and forfeiture, interview techniques, cultural diversity, discrimination and community support.

↓ *For agency completion: Agency Compliance Feedback for Bias Free Policing*

Written directive meets all bullets (if no, explain):

Supporting **compliance documentation** meets all bullets (if no, explain):

STANDARD 3.2018.7

INVESTIGATION OF EMPLOYEE MISCONDUCT

The agency maintains a written directive on Investigations of Employee Misconduct that includes:

- a. policy statements in support of the Ohio Collaborative guiding principles;
- b. describe formal complaint process, outline how and where to file a complaint;
- c. outline procedures for accepting, processing, and investigating the complaint;
- d. have a timeline for the resolution of the complaint;
- e. include safeguards to protect legal and contractual rights of employees; and
- f. ensure the public has access to complaints and / or commendations through social media or the agency's community relations programs.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A well-constructed complaint process is an integral tool in community-police relations. There is a significant impact when a community knows and understands its concerns can be legitimately addressed in a proper setting. Further, officers can be better served when they can refer aggrieved individuals to a trusted process. Neither officers nor community members benefit from attempts to have concerns addressed and redressed during a traffic stop or in the midst of an incident. It may prove beneficial for law enforcement agencies to reach out to community members in an effort to publicize, promote and develop processes that are mutually beneficial to all.

↓ For agency completion: Agency Compliance Feedback for Investigation of Employee Misconduct

Written directive meets all bullets (if no, explain):

Supporting **compliance documentation** meets all bullets (if no, explain):

AGENCY NAME	O.R.I.#
AGENCY CONTACT	CONTACT #