

119.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to provide officers with specific guidelines and instructions on when and how to use Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) so that officers can consistently record their contacts with the general public in accordance with the law. The use of BWCs provides documentary evidence for criminal investigations, internal or administrative investigations, and civil litigation.

119.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Alabama A&M Department of Public Safety that officers, where the recordings are consistent with this policy and law, will activate the BWC when such use is appropriate and lawful during the performance of their official duties. This policy does not govern the use of secret recording devices used in undercover operations. (21.3.7.a)

119.3 PROCEDURE

119.3.1 Administration

The Alabama A&M Department of Public Safety has adopted the use of BWCs to accomplish several objectives. The primary objectives are as follows:

- BWCs allow for accurate documentation of police-public contacts, arrests, and critical incidents. They also serve to enhance the accuracy of an officer's report and court testimony.
- Audio and video recordings may also enhance the department's ability to review probable cause for arrest, officer and suspect interaction, evidence for investigative and prosecutorial purposes, and to provide additional information for officer evaluation and training.
- BWCs may also be used in documenting crime and accident scenes or other events that include the confiscation and documentation of contraband or evidence.

119.3.2 Requirements for Activation and Deactivation of the BWC. (21.3.7.b)

Officers, while performing their official duties, will immediately activate the BWC to record contacts with individuals with the exceptions of the restrictions outlined in Section D. Officers will use the BWC to record all portions of the following incidents:

- Responding to emergency call for service.

All vehicle and foot pursuits.

- All traffic stops including the investigation of a vehicle and occupants already stopped or parked.
- All searches including, but not limited to, people, vehicles, buildings and places.
- All requests for consent to search without a warrant will be recorded, including searches of persons, vehicles, and buildings. Both audio and video recordings will be made of the request and consent when practical. This type of recording is intended to replace the use of any department form used to gain and/or record the consent to search without a warrant, when an officer requests such permission.
- All arrests and/or citations
- All prisoner transports
- Any incident where an officer performing their official duty and it may become necessary for the officer to invoke his/her authority as a law enforcement officer.
- Any incident upon direction of a supervisor, or at the request of another police officer, or anytime an officer deems it appropriate to activate the BWC.
- All domestic, intimate partner and relationship violence calls including suspect and victim interviews.
- All voluntary and involuntary commitment interactions and transports.
- Any situation or event that the officer, through his/her training and experiences believes should be recorded.

119.3.3 Procedures for BWC Use

- All officers while in uniform and working a scheduled shift or special event are required to wear a BWC at all times while on duty or on assignment unless otherwise instructed by the Chief of Police or designee.

- Field Training Officers, during a trainee's training period, will wear and use their BWC according to the requirements specified for use while in uniform.

Officers will only use department issued BWCs. The BWC equipment and all data, images, video, and metadata captured, recorded, or otherwise produced by the equipment is the sole property of the Alabama A&M Department of Public Safety. Video footage that is being viewed WILL NOT be recorded by any other method (i.e., cellphones, another video camera, etc.)

- The BWC must be worn in a position that permits recording, as closely as possible, to that which an officer is looking at during an encounter where the officers is involved or present. It must be worn on the outermost uniform shirt or jacket and not worn on the duty belt.

- Officers will document the use of a BWC in an incident, arrest and related report narrative when recordings were made during the incident in question. BWC recordings are not a replacement for written reports and documentation; however, officers may review the recordings.

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- Internal conversations with other department personnel without the permission of the Chief of Police or his designee;

- When on breaks or otherwise engaged in personal activities; or

In locations where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as a restroom, locker room, or similar facility unless such use is necessitated by exigent circumstances or an active crime in progress.

- When conducting a crime prevention or safety program, participating in a panel Q&A, or in internal or external meetings.

- When participating in an interview associated with a supervisory investigation or internal affairs investigation unless specifically approved and permitted by the Chief of Police.

- When processing an arrestee at a detention facility when such recording is prohibited.

- When conducting vehicle patrol, foot patrol, or during a building check, unless specified within this policy or determined by the officer that the BWC should be activated.

- While working a Special Event unless determined by the officer that the BWC should be activated or it is specified within this policy or by the event's Operation's Plan that the BWC should be activated. The intentional or continual recording of an athletic event is strictly prohibited.

119.3.5 Criminal and Administrative Use of BWC Captured Data (21.3.7c)

- University Adjudication. Access to the recordings by Student Conduct will be on a case-by-case basis, approved by the Chief of Police or his or her designee with priority given to protecting criminal court cases first. Exceptions may be made where evidence is needed to quickly remove a person from campus enrollment or employment with urgency based upon the threat or risk he/she poses to the campus community. These recordings may be redacted where necessary.

- Use in a criminal proceeding. If a case is being adjudicated in the State judicial system, the investigating and/or arresting officer will notify the District Attorney's office that there is BWC data associated with the criminal case. This notification may be made through the submission of a case file, officer's notes and remarks on citations, in person notifications with the District Attorney's Officer, or through email