

## Portable Audio/Video Recorders

### 424.1 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 (Minn. Stat. § 626.8473). Portable audio/video recording devices include all recording systems whether body-worn, handheld or integrated into portable equipment.

This policy does not apply to mobile audio/video recordings, interviews or interrogations conducted at any Brooklyn Park Police Department facility, undercover operations, wiretaps or eavesdropping (concealed listening devices) unless captured by a portable recording system.

#### 424.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

**Portable recording system** - A device worn by a member that is capable of both video and audio recording of the member's activities and interactions with others or collecting digital multimedia evidence as part of an investigation and as provided in Minn. Stat. § 13.825.

### 424.2 POLICY

The Brooklyn Park Police Department may provide members with access to portable recorders for use during the performance of their duties. 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.

### 424.3 MEMBER PRIVACY EXPECTATION

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

### 424.4 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Prior to going into service, each uniformed member will be responsible for making sure that he/she is equipped with a portable recorder issued by the Department, if one is available and that the recorder is in good working order (Minn. Stat. § 13.825). If the recorder is not in working order or the member becomes aware of a malfunction at any time, the member shall promptly report the failure to his/her supervisor and obtain a functioning device as soon as reasonably practicable. Uniformed members should wear the recorder in a conspicuous manner or otherwise notify persons that they are being recorded, whenever reasonably practicable (Minn. Stat. § 626.8473).

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

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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, employee 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 should 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 (Minn. Stat. § 626.8473). Members should include the reason for deactivation.

Officers shall not intentionally block the BWC's audio or visual recording functionality to defeat the purposes of this policy.

Any member who loses their BWC shall immediately report the missing device to the on duty supervisor.

### **424.5 ACTIVATION OF THE AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDER**

This policy is not intended to describe every possible situation in which the 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 recorder should be activated in any of the following situations:

- (a) All enforcement and investigative contacts including stops and field interview (FI) situations
- (b) All calls for service that involve interaction or anticipated interaction with individuals
- (c) The execution of search warrants
- (d) Traffic stops including, but not limited to, traffic violations, stranded motorist assistance and all crime interdiction stops
- (e) Self-initiated activity in which a member would normally notify Dispatch
- (f) Any other contact that becomes adversarial after the initial contact in a situation that would not otherwise require recording

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

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criterion. Recording should resume when privacy is no longer at issue unless the circumstances no longer fit the criteria for recording.

At no time is a member expected to jeopardize his/her safety in order to activate a portable recorder or change the recording media. However, the recorder should be activated in situations described above as soon as reasonably practicable.

### 424.5.1 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER'S

#### **Philosophy:**

The Brooklyn Park Police Department recognizes that the duties and working environment for School Resource Officers (SRO) are unique within law enforcement. It is recognized that SRO's are required to maintain school safety while keeping the sanctity of the learning environment that the school provides. SRO's are expected to continuously build trusting relationships with students and staff. They also often have impromptu interventions with students to deescalate arguments and/or conflicts. It is with this understanding that the Brooklyn Park Police Department provides special regulations to SRO's and their use of Body Worn Cameras (BWC).

The recorder should be activated in any of the following situations:

- (a) When summoned by any individual to respond to an incident where it is likely that law enforcement action will occur when you arrive.
- (b) Any self-initiated activity where it is previously known that you will make a custodial arrest.
- (c) Any self-initiated activity where it is previously known that your questioning/investigation will be used later in criminal charges
- (d) When feasible an SRO shall activate the BWC when the contact becomes adversarial or the subject exhibits unusual behaviors.

Nothing in this policy undermines the fact that in many instances SRO's are suddenly forced to take law enforcement action and have no opportunity to activate the BWC. It is also recognized that SRO's often have private (confidential) conversations with juveniles. It is not appropriate to record these conversations as it diminishes the trust between the individual and the SRO.

### 424.5.2 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. Recording may be stopped during significant periods of inactivity such as report writing or other breaks from direct participation in the incident.

Officers may turn off their portable recorder when entering into the booking vestibule at the Hennepin Co. Detention Center per their policy. Officers should state they are turning the portable recorder off because they are entering the jail. This area is recorded by the Hennepin County Sheriff Department's camera system.

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### 424.5.3 SURREPTITIOUS RECORDINGS

Minnesota law permits an individual to surreptitiously record any conversation in which one party to the conversation has given his/her permission (Minn. Stat. § 626A.02).

Members of the Department 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.

### 424.5.4 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.

### **424.6 DOWNLOADING OF VIDEO AND IDENTIFICATION OF RECORDINGS**

A member should download all video from their portable recorder to the L3 system via the established docking stations at the end of their shift.

In certain critical incidents such as an officer involved shooting a supervisor will secure the portable recorder device and will be responsible for download or transfer of data into the L3 storage system.

A member shall document the existence of a recording in their report in accordance with SOP 424. 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.

### **424.7 REVIEW OF RECORDED MEDIA FILES**

When preparing written reports, members should review their recordings as a resource (See the Critical Incident Response and Investigation Policy #304 for guidance in those cases. 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, use of force reviews, pursuit reviews, 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) Upon approval of the Inspector in charge of training, videos can be viewed by training staff to create curriculum or address department training needs.

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- (c) Pursuant to lawful process or by court personnel who are otherwise authorized to review evidence in a related case.
- (d) In compliance with the Minnesota Data Practices Act request, if permitted or required by the Act, including pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13.82, Subd. 15, and in accordance with the Records Maintenance and Release Policy.
- (e) Detectives may view all videos related to cases they are assigned to investigate.

All recordings should be reviewed by the Custodian of Records or a member of the Command Staff prior to public release (See the Records Maintenance and Release Policy). Recordings that are clearly offensive to common sensibilities should not be publicly released unless disclosure is required by law or order of the court (Minn. Stat. § 13.82, Subd. 7).

### **424.8 COORDINATOR**

The Chief of Police or the authorized designee should designate a coordinator responsible for (Minn. Stat. § 626.8473; Minn. Stat. § 13.825):

- (a) Establishing procedures for the security, storage and maintenance of data and recordings.
  - 1. The coordinator should work with the Custodian of Records and the member assigned to coordinate the use, access and release of protected information to ensure that procedures comply with requirements of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA) and other applicable laws (Minn. Stat. § 13.01 et seq.) (See the Protected Information and the Records Maintenance and Release policies).
- (b) Establishing procedures for accessing data and recordings.
  - 1. These procedures should include the process to obtain written authorization for access to non-public data by BPPD members and members of other governmental entities and agencies.
- (c) Establishing procedures for logging or auditing access.
- (d) Establishing procedures for transferring, downloading, tagging or marking events.
- (e) Establishing an inventory of portable recorders including:
  - 1. Total number of devices owned or maintained by the Brooklyn Park Police Department.
  - 2. Daily record of the total number deployed and used by members and, if applicable, the precinct or district in which the devices were used.
  - 3. Total amount of recorded audio and video data collected by the devices and maintained by the Brooklyn Park Police Department.
- (f) Preparing the biennial audit required by Minn. Stat. § 13.825, Subd. 9.
- (g) Notifying the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) in a timely manner when new equipment is obtained by the Brooklyn Park Police Department that expands the type or scope of surveillance capabilities of the department's portable recorders.

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### **424.9 PROHIBITED USE OF AUDIO/VIDEO 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.

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 Patrol Lieutenant. 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.

### **424.10 RETENTION OF RECORDINGS**

All recordings shall be retained for a period consistent with the requirements of the organization's records retention schedule but in no event for a period less than 180 days.

If an individual captured in a recording submits a written request, the recording may be retained for additional time period. The coordinator should be responsible for notifying the individual prior to destruction of the recording (Minn. Stat. § 13.825).

#### **424.10.1 RELEASE OF AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDINGS**

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

Portable Recording device data is private or nonpublic unless:

- A police officer discharges a firearm in the course of their duties. (training and killing of animals not included)
- The use of force by a police officer results in substantial bodily harm.
- When the subject of the data requests the data be made accessible to the public. (Redaction of undercover officers and those not consenting will be done)
- When BWC data documenting the basis for discipline is part of a personnel data in a final disposition of discipline

#### **424.10.2 ACCESS TO RECORDINGS**

Except as provided by Minn. Stat. § 13.825, Subd. 2, audio/video recordings are considered private or nonpublic data.

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Any person captured in a recording may have access to the recording. If the individual requests a copy of the recording and does not have the consent of other non-law enforcement individuals captured on the recording, the identity of those individuals must be blurred or obscured sufficiently to render the subject unidentifiable prior to release. The identity of on-duty peace officers may not be obscured unless their identity is protected under Minn. Stat. § 13.82, Subd. 17.

### **424.11 ACCOUNTABILITY**

Any member who accesses or releases recordings without authorization may be subject to discipline (See the Standards of Conduct and the Protected Information policies) (Minn. Stat. § 626.8473).

### **424.12 TRAINING**

All users of body worn cameras will be trained on the cameras operation and this policy prior to deploying with one.