
Portable Audio/Video Recorders Procedure

450.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

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

450.2 DEFINITIONS

Body-worn cameras (BWC) - A device individually worn by officers that can capture audio and video when activated by the officer.

Digital audio recorder (DAR) - A device individually worn by officers that can capture audio when activated by the officer.

[REDACTED] - A management system designed to digitally collect, store, secure, disseminate, and purge recorded media. The digital recordings are accessible to authorized personnel and maintain an audit trail of member activity.

Signal Sidearm - Axon technology which activates a BWC when a firearm is drawn from a duty holster.

Event Mode - The mode where the BWC is actively recording and storing video and audio recordings.

Pre-Event Buffering - The mode during which the BWC is continuously but temporarily storing 30 seconds of the video (no audio) to be appended to a permanently stored recording upon activation of Event Mode.

BWC Mute Mode - The mode where a BWC will continue to record video without recording audio.

Event Recall - The mode where the BWC is temporarily storing up to 18 hours of audio-free footage that is saved on the internal storage of a BWC.

450.3 ACTIVATION OF THE BODY WORN CAMERA OR DIGITAL AUDIO RECORDER

Employees shall activate their BWC or DAC in accordance with the Portable Audio/Video Recorders Policy 450. Members shall keep their BWC powered ON whenever there is a likelihood that use of the BWC might be required as outlined in policy.

450.3.1 MUTE MODE

Per policy employees may deactivate their BWC or DAR when dealing directly with victims or witnesses during an active investigation when the recording would jeopardize or impede the employee from gathering relevant information or while planning tactical operations. Employees should consider using the Axon Mute Mode in lieu of turning the video recording off.

Union City Police Department

UCPD Procedures Manual

Portable Audio/Video Recorders Procedure

While a BWC is recording, members can activate Mute Mode by holding the Select Button down for approximately three seconds. To confirm the function is set, the BWC will beep, vibrate, and display the mute icon. Additionally, the LED light will begin to blink blue (if enabled). Mute Mode can be deactivated by holding the Select Button down again for approximately three seconds. To confirm deactivation, the BWC will beep, vibrate, and the mute icon will disappear. Additionally, the LED will blink red (if enabled).

450.4 FALSE SIGNAL CANCELLATION

If a BWC is unnecessarily and accidentally activated from Pre-Event Buffering Mode to Event Mode recording by an Axon Signal device (i.e. Signal Sidearm, CED Signal, Signal Vehicle), the member may utilize the “False Signal Cancellation” option built into the BWC. False Signal Cancellations should only be used when a BWC is unnecessarily and accidentally activated. Members may press the Select Button within ten seconds to report the signal activation as false. All False Signal Activations will automatically be categorized as “False Signal Activation.”

450.5 AXON SIGNAL

The “Axon Signal” accessories are intended to supplement and assist in compliance with BWC activation policies, particularly during high stress events. BWC members are ultimately responsible for compliance with procedures outlined in this policy.

450.5.1 SIGNAL SIDEARM

The Axon Signal Sidearm will send a signal to activate the BWC to Event Mode when a handgun is drawn from a holster. The Axon Signal Sidearm will activate any BWC in range of the signal device which has been activated. The range is based on Bluetooth technology and could activate devices up to 15 to 100 yards away. This activation includes any Axon BWC’s used by outside agencies that are powered on and signal ready. Under these circumstances, the employee does not need to complete any further action to activate their camera if their holster is equipped with the signal side arm device. It is important to note that once the camera is activated with Signal Sidearm, to cease recording, employees must manually stop the device from recording by pressing the select button.

Axon Signal Sidearm “Mute Mode” may be activated when a firearm is removed from a duty holster for inspection purposes, or when being temporarily stored. This is different from the above mentioned BWC “Mute Mode.” Members may activate Signal Sidearm Mute Mode by pressing the button on the holster device and holding it down for approximately three seconds. The sensor light will go from a solid green while being held down to intermittently blinking green. Members may withdraw their firearm while the sensor is intermittently blinking green. The window to withdraw the firearm without activating BWC’s is approximately thirty seconds. Signal Side Arm Mute Mode does not prevent the BWC from being manually activated to Event Mode recording.

450.5.2 CONDUCTED ELECTRONIC WEAPON (CEW) SIGNAL

The Axon Taser 7 CEW will send a signal to activate the BWC to Event Mode recording when the CEW is armed, when an arc is initiated, and when the trigger is pulled. The CEW signal will activate any BWC within range. The range is based on Bluetooth technology and could activate

Union City Police Department

UCPD Procedures Manual

Portable Audio/Video Recorders Procedure

devices up to 15 to 100 yards away. This activation includes any Axon BWC used by an outside agency that is signal ready.

When the CEW is in Function Test Mode, the signal device will not activate the camera. A complete guide on how to perform a proper Function Test may be found in UCPD's Conducted Energy Weapon procedure.

450.5.3 SIGNAL VEHICLE

The Axon "Signal Vehicle" is a device installed in most Patrol vehicles equipped with emergency equipment (lights and siren). The Axon Signal Vehicle will activate any BWC in range of the signal when the front and rear facing emergency lights of the vehicle are turned on. The range is based on Bluetooth technology and could activate devices up to 15 to 100 yards away. This activation includes any Axon BWC used by an outside agency that is signal ready. The signal will not be sent when the emergency lights are in "rear-only" or "patrol cruise" mode. Special purpose vehicles are not equipped with the Axon Signal Vehicle device.

450.5.4 SLEEP MODE

BWC members may use "Sleep Mode" to avoid unnecessary and accidental BWC Event Mode activations from Axon Signal devices. When the BWC is otherwise required to be powered on in Pre-Event Buffering Mode, members may put their BWC in Sleep Mode in situations where personal privacy (i.e. using the bathroom or changing clothes); or unintentional non-enforcement signal activation is a concern (i.e. at police facilities where equipment inspections or testing is occurring). BWC members are responsible for returning the BWC to Pre-Event Buffering Mode or Event Mode as required by policy. Members may activate Sleep Mode by pressing the Power Button and then the Select Button. The LED will ask if the employee wants to place their BWC into Sleep Mode and will indicate to press the Select Button a second time to confirm.

450.6 AXON RESPOND

"Axon Respond" works in conjunction with BWCs to allow personnel with permissions to view member's locations on a map and view live streams from BWCs, in real time. The BWC must be activated and in "Event Mode" for Axon Respond to work.

Access to Axon Respond should be limited to sworn supervisors and management or their designees. Those with access should only use this feature for safety purposes or with the approval/request of the officer wearing the camera. In the event this feature is activated for safety purposes, reasonable attempts must be made to notify the officer his/her camera is being tracked and/or live streamed. All personnel should be aware there is an audit log of activity within the Axon Respond application.

Any member who activates Axon Respond shall author a memo which outlines the circumstances surrounding the activation. This memo should be authored as soon as feasible after the event and routed to their supervisor and the Professional Standards Unit.

Union City Police Department

UCPD Procedures Manual

Portable Audio/Video Recorders Procedure

450.7 EVENT RECALL

The “Event Recall” feature enables BWCs to capture audio-free, lower-resolution video when the BWC is powered on but not actively recording. Under certain circumstances, video evidence from a period within the last 18 hours of active camera use may be recalled if a BWC was not activated during an incident. The use of Event Recall must be approved by the Division Captain and should only be used for investigative purposes, including criminal, civil, and internal investigations.

450.8 BWC CHARGING

- (a) Employees may use docking stations, vehicle charging cords, computer charging cords, or wall charging cords to charge their BWC.
- (b) Employees shall send the IT Unit a Track-IT email when docking stations, computer charging cords, or wall charging cords are damaged or missing.
- (c) Employees shall note on the vehicle accountability form if a vehicle’s BWC charging cord is missing or damaged.

450.9 BWC MALFUNCTIONS, REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT

Employees shall adhere to the following steps to replace a damaged BWC, a lost BWC, or a BWC that is malfunctioning:

- (a) Employees shall author an e-mail and/or a memorandum detailing how and/or why the BWC was damaged, lost, or malfunctioning. The e-mail and/or memorandum shall be submitted to the employee’s supervisor. A copy of the documentation should be forwarded to the P&T Sergeant to be maintained in the employee’s equipment and training file.
- (b) Employees shall send a Track-IT email to the IT Unit. The email shall indicate if the BWC was damaged, lost, or malfunctioning. The email should include the BWC’s serial number.
- (c) Employees shall place the damaged BWC in the IT Unit’s mailbox.
- (d) Employees shall obtain a spare BWC from the Sergeant’s office and log the serial number on the appropriate form.
- (e) Employees shall have their supervisor register the spare BWC to them on the VIEVU website.

450.10 DOWNLOADING BWC VIDEO

Employees shall use the docking stations and associated Axon applications to download BWC video footage to [REDACTED]. Withstanding exigent circumstances or prior supervisory approval, BWC videos shall be docked daily, prior to securing from duty. BWCs should remain in the docking station until the employee's next workday. Cameras in docking stations should not be removed unless it is removed by the assigned officer, supervisor, or IT personnel. Cameras should be docked at the end of each shift to download stored videos as well as charge the device and upload periodic software updates.

Union City Police Department

UCPD Procedures Manual

Portable Audio/Video Recorders Procedure

450.11 META-DATA

██████████ has the ability to automatically retrieve CAD data and auto-tag downloaded videos with the appropriate category and meta-data. Employees are responsible for ensuring auto-tagging accuracy and should manually enter the data, if necessary. Audits are conducted to ensure compliance with direction outlined in this procedure and in policy.

Members may also manually categorize recordings when additional categories need to be applied to the recording based on evidence retention, nature of the incident, etc.

If a report number is associated to any video, the report number shall be entered into the ID field when a category field other than "Routine" is selected. Additional metadata such as names may be added to downloaded videos to assist with identification.

450.12 BWC CATEGORIES AND RETENTION

All videos will be retained and/or purged based on our city's retention schedule. All videos must be categorized using one of the below listed Axon category codes accessible in the meta-data drop down menu. As listed above, it is the responsibility of the employee to ensure a video is properly categorized regardless of if the video was auto-tagged.

BWC Categories:

- Uncategorized
- 5150
- Accidental Activation
- All incidents involving death
- Animal Bite
- Child Sex Crimes
- Civil
- Felony: Person/Property/ Sex Offense/ Society/Drug
- Misdemeanor: Person/Property/Sex Offense/Society/Drug
- Missing Persons
- Officer Involved: Shooting/Battery/UOF
- Pending Review
- Registrations: Gang/Drug/Sex
- Routine
- Search warrant/warrant arrest
- Traffic: Citation/Warning/Accident with no or minor injury.

Union City Police Department

UCPD Procedures Manual

Portable Audio/Video Recorders Procedure

450.13 TROUBLE SHOOTING

Employees shall use the "UCPD Tech Troubleshooting Guide" on the [REDACTED] to assist with triaging any additional technical issues.

450.14 AUDIO RECORDER REPLACEMENT

Employees shall adhere to the following steps to replace a damaged or lost audio recorder:

- (a) Employees shall author an e-mail and/or memorandum detailing how and/or why the audio recorder was damaged or lost. The memo shall be submitted to the employee's supervisor.
- (b) Employees shall give the damaged audio recorder to the P&T Sergeant.
- (c) Employees shall obtain a new audio recorder from the P&T Sergeant.
- (d) The P&T Sergeant shall place a copy of the email and/or memorandum documenting the replacement of equipment in the employee's equipment and training files.

450.15 DOWNLOADING AUDIO FILES

Employees shall only download audio files to department computers or department storage devices.

450.16 SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The System Administrator is designated by the Chief of Police and has oversight responsibilities to include, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) Operation and user administration of the system
- (b) System evaluation
- (c) Training
- (d) Policy and procedure review and evaluation
- (e) Coordination with IT regarding system related issues
- (f) Ensure recorded files of evidentiary value are secured and maintained pursuant to the City's Records Retention Policy and Statute of Limitations, however, no less than one year and a day (366 days). Ensure all other routine files are secure and maintained for one year and a day (366 days) in accordance with the City's Records Retention Policy.
- (g) Ensure recorded files are reviewed and released in accordance with federal, state, and local statutes and the City of Union City retention policy.

450.17 IT SYSTEMS COORDINATOR

The Chief of Police or the authorized designee shall appoint a member of the Department to coordinate the use and maintenance of BWC and DAR recording devices and the storage of recordings, including (Penal Code § 832.18):

- (a) Establishing a system for downloading, storing, and security of recordings.
- (b) Designating persons responsible for downloading recorded data.

Union City Police Department

UCPD Procedures Manual

Portable Audio/Video Recorders Procedure

- (c) Establishing a maintenance system to availability of operable portable audio/ensure video recording devices.
- (d) Establishing a system for tagging and categorizing data according to the type of incident captured.
- (e) Establishing a system to prevent tampering, deleting, and copying recordings and ensure chain of custody integrity.
- (f) Working with counsel to ensure an appropriate retention schedule is being applied to recordings and associated documentation.
- (g) Maintaining logs of access and deletions of recordings.

450.18 REVISIONS

Revised: November 22, 2021