

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE	Transmittal # 17-11	Policy # 8.33
Applicability: <input type="checkbox"/> All DJJ Users <input type="checkbox"/> Administration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Secure Facilities (RYDCs and YDCs)	Related Standards & References: O.C.G.A. §§ 50-18-96, 50-18-99 ACA Standards:	
Chapter 8: Safety, Security, and Control	Effective Date: 11/15/17 Scheduled Review Date: 11/15/18	
Subject: Body Camera Operations	Replaces: 9/20/16 Secure Facilities	
Attachments: None	APPROVED:  <hr/> Avery Niles, Commissioner	

I. POLICY:

The Department of Juvenile Justice has the authority to assign recording devices such as on-officer recording systems or body cameras to sworn staff members. The body camera is designed to assist and complement officers in the performance of their duties.

II. DEFINITION

Body Camera: An electronic device worn on a person's body that records both audio and video data.

III. GENERAL PROCEDURE:

A. Officer operation requirements:

1. Prior to going into service, each officer will conduct an equipment check and ensure that the camera/recording device:
 - a) Is functioning properly;
 - b) Has an adequate power source; and
 - c) Is properly placed/affixed for optimal use.
2. At the end of the duty period, the body camera will be secured and charged in according to manufacturer specifications.
3. If at any time the body camera is not functioning properly, it will be removed from use and a report will be made to the supervisor as soon as reasonably possible.

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4. Once the body camera is activated it shall remain “on” and not be turned “off” until the incident prompting the activation has ended. Some incidents may not need to be documented with a body camera and some incidents may be recorded when the body camera is not needed. Officers will be expected to use discretion and common sense when activating and deactivating the body camera.
 5. Any incident that is recorded with either the video or audio system shall be documented in the officer’s report.
- B. Officers are required to activate their body cameras when responding to all calls and during all law enforcement related encounters that occur while the officer is on duty.
1. Activation of the body camera will arise where there is use of force, recovery of escapees and runaways, residence searches, civilian interviews or any other contact that becomes confrontational. When in doubt, officers should activate their recording devices.
 2. This policy is not intended to describe every possible situation in which the body camera system may be used. In addition to the required situations, an officer may activate the system any time the officer believes its use would be appropriate and/or valuable to document an incident.
- C. Officers shall be required to obtain consent prior to recording interviews with citizens. Cameras with a blinking red light while recording will satisfy this requirement.
- D. Because of the uniquely intrusive nature of officer recordings inside private homes, officers are required to provide clear notice of a camera when entering a home, except in case of an emergency. Officers shall ask residents whether they wish for a camera to be turned off before they enter a home in non-exigent circumstances. Citizen’s request for cameras to be turned off must be recorded.
- E. Officers shall have the discretion to keep their cameras turned off during conversations with crime witnesses and members of the community who wish to report any criminal activity. Some witnesses and community members may be hesitant to come forward if they know they will be recorded. This can undermine intelligence gathering efforts. Due to the evidentiary value of these statements, officers should make every attempt to record unless the person is unwilling to speak on camera. In some cases the community member may agree to only an audio recording so an officer may point the camera away from the person and record audio only.

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- F. Officers shall be required to articulate on camera or in writing their reasoning for not recording an activity that is required by department policy to be recorded. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action.
- G. It is critical to protect the integrity and security of video recording. Supervisors are required to download for review footage of an incident in which the officer was involved. Incident notification will be conducted in accordance with DJJ 8.5, Special Incident Report. Incident evidentiary footage will be included in the SIR package and subject to retention as established in DJJ 5.1, Records Management.
- H. Activation of the body camera system is not required during breaks, lunch periods, when not in service or when the officer is otherwise involved in routine or administrative duties.
- I. No member of this agency may surreptitiously record a conversation of any other member of this agency except with a court order or when authorized by the Commissioner or the authorized designee for the purpose of conducting a criminal investigation or as an administrative function (see DJJ 22.3, Internal Investigations).

IV. CLASSIFICATION AND RETENTION OF BODY CAMERA RECORDINGS

- A. When an officer has stopped the body camera device, the officer shall classify the footage. These classifications will serve to assist in locating the recording and establishing retention time. Footage can be changed from classification (and retention time's requirement) for the benefit of an investigation or organizational needs.
- B. Classifications, descriptions, and retention are as follows:
 1. Non Event – A miscellaneous activation of the body camera system which does not meet the requirements of any other classification. Retention period will be 180 days.
 2. Incident Only - Activation of the system where there may be some liability or possibility of a complaint or future action (e.g., citizen contacts) or other contacts in which there was a violation of the law. These recordings should be available for a period of time to address any complaints or issues that could be resolved by reviewing the recording. Retention period will be 30 months.
 3. Restricted - Any recording that documents an incident which is deemed sensitive in nature, whether evidentiary or mutual accountability in nature can have access restricted to select individuals. This status would be

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deemed necessary by a supervisor (e.g., cases involving use of force resulting in serious bodily injury, officer involved shootings, allegations of criminal actions by an officer or by a citizen with an officer as a victim, and investigations alleging misconduct). Access to restricted recordings must be approved by the respective Deputy Commissioner. These recordings are subject to DJJ 5.1, Records Management, and DJJ 8.5, Special Incident Reporting and shall be retained for a minimum of 10 years after completion of the investigation, if litigation commences during that period the recording will be retained until final adjudication of the litigation.

V. REVIEW OF RECORDINGS

- A. All recording media, recorded images and audio recordings are the property of DJJ.
- B. Dissemination outside of the agency is strictly prohibited, except to the extent permitted by policy or required by law.
- C. To prevent damage or alteration of the original recorded material, it shall not be copied, viewed or otherwise inserted into any device not approved by the agency.
- D. Recordings may be reviewed in any of the following situations:
 - 1. For use when preparing reports and statements;
 - 2. By a supervisor investigating an act related to officer conduct;
 - 3. By a supervisor to assess officer performance;
 - 4. To assess proper functioning of the body camera systems; or
 - 5. By an investigator who is participating in an official investigation such as a personnel complaint, administrative inquiry or a criminal investigation.
- E. An officer who is captured on or referenced in the video or audio data may review such data and use the data for any purpose relating to his/her employment, unless restricted at the time of request.
- F. Public release of video recordings will be in accordance with DJJ 1.10, Open Records Act. Release may also occur at the direction of the Commissioner or authorized designee.
- G. Recordings may be shown for training purposes.

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H. Officers with body camera equipment that are on the scene of a critical incident, but are not a subject or witness officer, will complete the reports and notify the supervisor that they have video that may be pertinent to their investigation.

I. No recording shall be used for the purpose of ridiculing or embarrassing any staff member.

VI. TRAINING

Training should be ongoing and include an overview of relevant laws, procedures for operating the equipment safely and effectively, and scenario based exercises.

VII. LOCAL OPERATING PROCEDURES: NO