

506.00 PORTABLE COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

506.03 OFFICER-WORN DIGITAL RECORDING DEVICES

- A. The guidelines in this order apply only to digital recording devices that attach directly to the officer's uniform or person. These guidelines do not apply to the use of the in-car audio/video recording systems that are permanently mounted in a vehicle.
- B. All digital multimedia evidence (DME) that is captured during the scope of an officer's duties is property of the Fort Worth Police Department and is subject to City, State and police department policies regarding viewing, release, retention and destruction. DME shall not be converted for personal use. Accessing, copying, editing or releasing recordings or depictions of recordings without proper authority and/or approval is strictly prohibited.
- C. Officers are prohibited from utilizing personally-owned digital recording devices while on-duty or while engaged in approved off-duty law enforcement and security-related (LE/SR) employment.
- D. The use of an officer-worn digital recording device by any officer is voluntary; however, if an officer elects to accept or is assigned a digital recording device, the officer is required to use the device as outlined in this order as well as corresponding standard operating procedures.
- E. Officers deploying an officer-worn digital recording device shall attend department-approved training on the device, review the standard operating procedures governing its use and demonstrate a working knowledge of the device prior to employing it in field operations.
- F. Supervisors of officers deploying an officer-worn digital recording device shall attend department-approved training regarding the device as well as the procedures for storing and retention of the DME.
- G. Officers shall inspect the digital recording device prior to each shift to confirm proper operation and sufficient battery life. Any problem with the digital recording device shall be immediately reported to the officer's supervisor and the officer shall contact the body camera program coordinator to secure a repair or replacement.
- H. In the event that a digital recording device is lost, upon discovery the officer shall immediately notify their supervisor. The officer shall complete an Equipment Replacement Request that will be routed through the chain of command. Once approved, the request will be forwarded to the body camera program coordinator for appropriate action.
- I. Officers may be subject to disciplinary action for reporting to duty without their assigned digital recording device and/or for the intentional or negligent loss of or damage to a device.
- J. Officers assigned a digital recording device may use the device at approved LE/SR employment but only for off-duty law enforcement action. If used for this purpose, the officer shall download all DME during their next regularly assigned on-duty shift.
- K. At the start of each shift, officers utilizing an officer-worn digital recording device shall indicate this by selecting "On-Officer Camera" from the selection box on the Visinet Mobile login screen.
- L. The officer-worn digital recording device should be activated under the following circumstances:
 - 1. Collection of evidence that can be used in the prosecution of criminal offenses;



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2. Recording contacts with the public in connection with investigations where law enforcement action will potentially be taken;
 3. Pursuits by vehicle and on foot;
 4. Execution of consent searches;
 5. Investigating calls involving mentally-distressed persons; and
 6. Documentation of accident or crime scenes, etc.
- M. Officers who conduct or supervise planned tactical entry operations shall ensure that at least one (1) digital recording device is worn and activated during its execution. This also applies to Fort Worth officers who are members of other task forces. Dynamic as well as deliberate operations are covered by this mandate.
1. Dynamic entry is defined as rapid entry and movement through a target location with the intent of quickly overwhelming any potential threats and/or preventing the destruction of contraband.
 2. Deliberate entry (Slow Clear) is defined as the entry into and methodical movement through a target location with the intent of identifying and securing potential threats.
- N. Officers may deactivate the digital recording device when the purpose for activation is no longer present. Officers shall verbally state why they are choosing to deactivate the digital recording device prior to doing so. Also, temporary deactivation may occur when:
1. Exchanging NCIC/TCIC, DPS or other law enforcement sensitive data either in person or via the police radio or MDC;
 2. Facilitating discussion of training issues or operation strategies;
 3. Sharing information such as telephone numbers or personal information with another officer;
 4. Conducting conversations containing privileged information (i.e. communication with Clergy and Police Alliance/Ministers Against Crime, Police Peer Counselors, Attorneys, Physicians, etc.); and
 5. When authorized by a supervisor or commander who determines that continued recording of an incident is not required to meet the objective of the Officer-Worn Digital Recording Device SOP that corresponds with this General Order. The authorizing supervisor or commander should be identified in the appropriate report narrative.
- O. Officers shall not:
1. Intentionally create digital recordings of other employees in areas where a reasonable expectation of privacy exists such as locker rooms, restrooms, etc.
 2. Knowingly record undercover officers or confidential informants.
 3. Use a departmentally-owned officer-worn digital recording device to record any type of personal activities.
 4. Allow non-sworn personnel to view the DME without permission from the officer's immediate supervisor. Governmental employees who are directly involved in the investigation and/or prosecution of a criminal case related to the DME or who work in Internal Affairs are exempt from this provision.
 5. Upload or convert digital recordings for use on any type of social media.
 6. Create recordings in patient care areas of medical facilities unless the recording is for official police business such as a criminal investigation, dying declaration, Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus (HGN) on injured drivers, or a specific call for police service.



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7. Intentionally record juveniles unless evidentiary in nature as authorized by the Family Code.
8. Wear an officer-worn digital recording device into a testing area, courtroom, arbitration hearing, or disciplinary meeting with chain of command.
 - a. Officers do not have to remove their digital recording device when in departmental and/or public meetings or when in classrooms unless testing will be included; however, the device shall be deactivated unless the instructor or facilitator has authorized the device to be activated during the meeting or class.
- P. If intentional recordings of juveniles are made, the investigator shall download the video to the appropriate media as soon as possible and request destruction of the DME as provided for in this General Order and/or corresponding standard operating procedures.
- Q. When an incident has been recorded and an offense/incident report is generated, the officer shall note in the first sentence of the report narrative that the incident or a portion of the incident was captured by an officer-worn digital recording device. If the officer recording the DME is not the reporting officer, the officer recording the DME shall notify the report officer of the DME and if necessary supplement the report to note this.
 1. If the citizen contact resulted in the issuance of a Class C misdemeanor citation, the officer shall note on the back of the citation that DME was captured and placed on Evidence.com.
- R. The officer shall label the recording with any applicable report number. In addition, the officer shall choose a category for the recording when appropriate. The two categories are Criminal (criminal offense related) or Administrative (use of force, pursuits, officer involved traffic accidents, etc.) if unrelated to a criminal event. These tasks can be accomplished via a mobile device or by accessing Evidence.com directly.

Note: In the event of a non-happening, the officer will simply not categorize a recording.
- S. Officers may use media captured via the officer-worn digital recording device to assist with the investigation and completion of reports.
- T. The decision when to allow officers involved in a Critical Police Incident to review media captured from an officer-worn digital recording device will rest with the appropriate investigator. However, officers should be permitted to review the media with their attorney.
- U. Officers may review media captured from an officer-worn digital recording device before making any statements in an Internal Affairs investigation.
- V. By the end of each duty day, if the officer's digital recording device is storing DME, the device shall be placed in an appropriate docking station and should not be removed until the download of data is complete. If the DME is recorded during off-duty LE/SR employment, the officer shall place the device in the docking station by the end of the officer's next scheduled on-duty shift.
- W. All DME captured by officer-worn digital recording devices shall be uploaded to Evidence.com for storage.
 1. DME on Evidence.com that was categorized as Criminal or Administrative will be kept for a minimum of two (2) years. Uncategorized DME will be destroyed after 180 days. In addition, a category entitled Until Manually Deleted will be utilized in those instances dictated by the City Attorney's office or the Risk Management office.
 2. Should DME be required for criminal cases or other litigation that requires the evidence to be retained for longer than two (2) years, it shall be the responsibility of the



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investigator to transfer the DME to the appropriate media for storage with the case evidence.

3. If a use of force, vehicle pursuit or other administrative personnel action related to misconduct cases is captured on an officer-worn digital recording device, the DME regarding the incident shall be uploaded to the administrative report by a supervisor for administrative review.
- X. Recordings may be shown for training purposes upon completion of a criminal case.
- Y. All stored DME is subject to release in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act.

