Body Worn Camera (BWC) & Mobile Video System (MVS) Operations

441.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE
The purpose of this policy is to provide the requirements, responsibilities, and procedures for the use and deployment of Body Worn Cameras (BWC) and the in-car Mobile Video System (MVS) by Department personnel.

BWC and MVS are effective tools for capturing video and audio evidence for use in criminal and administrative investigations, assisting officers with completing written reports and providing testimony in court, and resolving complaints and allegations of misconduct against Department personnel. Audio-visual recordings afford the employee and the Department the opportunity to review interpersonal skills and officer safety matters. BWC and MVS recordings are to be regarded as an important training tool providing the opportunity for review and constructive instruction by Department supervision. Audio-visual recordings also produce valuable information for developing and evaluating Department-wide training.

As with any form of video or audio, evidence captured with a BWC or MVS provides a limited perspective of, and information about, an incident or encounter. Technology is unable to record the precise view, understanding, and interpretation of visual and auditory information received by an individual employee. Thus, it is important to keep in mind that the value of BWC and MVS evidence in determining the facts and circumstances of a recorded encounter is fully realized only when it is considered in context and in conjunction with all of the available reports and testimony of the Department employee, witness statements, forensic analyses, and any other video, audio, and digital evidence.

This policy outlines the requirements of the BWC and MVS systems including data processing and storage. It also articulates Department mandates, guidelines, and restrictions of personnel assigned to use this equipment.

441.2 POLICY
It is the policy of this Department that an audio-visual recording shall be made by every employee who has been issued a BWC and who operates a vehicle equipped with MVS during all designated contacts with members of the community.

BWC and MVS systems will be used in compliance with the manufacturer's operational guidelines, Department training, and this policy.
441.3 DEFINITIONS

Activate: When the BWC or MVS is turned on and actively recording video and audio of an event.

Body Worn Camera (BWC): A mobile audio and video capture device that is worn on an employee’s person to record what is seen and heard. A BWC does not include surreptitious recording devices used in investigative and undercover operations.

BWC Coordinator: A sergeant assigned to the Office of Professional Standards is responsible for the coordination and maintenance of the BWC program.

Critical Incidents: For the purposes of this policy, critical incidents are those involving:

(a) the use of deadly force by a Department employee.
(b) the use of force by a Department employee resulting in serious bodily injury or death.

Deactivate: When the BWC is placed in standby mode, which ends the active audio and video recording session.

Malfunction: When the MVS is not functioning properly. Also, when the BWC is not functioning properly after an attempt to reboot.

Mobile Video System (MVS): An in-car camera system that captures video from the front of a patrol vehicle and the rear seats. Audio is captured from an in-car microphone and an associated BWC.

Power-Off Mode: This mode is achieved when the camera shut down process has been initiated and ends when the device is fully powered off. During this process, the camera buttons will not function.

Pre-Activation Buffer: A 30-second video-only recording captured while in standby mode and preserved when the BWC is activated.

Standby Mode: The mode in which the BWC is turned on but not actively recording audio of an event.

441.4 DEPLOYMENT

The Irvine Police Department shall equip personnel assigned to field duties, and other positions as determined by the Chief of Police, with BWCs capable of recording video and audio footage of the activities specified in this policy.

The Department will also equip all marked patrol vehicles, and other designated vehicles, with MVS.

441.5 DEPARTMENT-ISSUED EQUIPMENT

Employees shall wear their assigned BWC and not use any other non-Department issued video or audio equipment, such as personally owned video or audio recorders, to record the activities required in this policy unless expressly authorized by the Department.

441.6 TRAINING

Any employee deploying a BWC must complete Department training on the proper use and
maintenance of the device, associated hardware, and software. The training shall include the following topics:

(a) Operation of the BWC and related hardware and software.
(b) Proper placement of the BWC.
(c) Categorizing, tagging, and uploading of BWC recordings.
(d) Access, storage, and retention of BWC recordings.
(e) Proper handling of digital evidence.
(f) Proper sharing of BWC recordings with investigators, prosecutors, and as otherwise required by law.
(g) Department policies and procedures related to BWC.

Department personnel will not use the MVS until they have completed training in the proper use of the system. Training will consist of:

(a) A review of this Department policy on the use of the MVS equipment.
(b) A review of the MVS functions.
(c) An orientation and practical demonstration of the system and its associated components.

441.7 DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO MVS
All Department personnel subject to mandatory use of the MVS equipment shall adhere to the provisions below:

(a) Personnel shall use the MVS when operating a Department vehicle equipped with the system. Department personnel must obtain permission from a supervisor to use a patrol vehicle that is not equipped with a MVS, or to use a vehicle in which the MVS is not functioning.
(b) It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure the MVS system is functioning properly before starting a shift.
(c) If the MVS system is found to be malfunctioning before or during the employee’s shift, the employee shall place the vehicle out of service as soon as practicable.
(d) Personnel shall log into the MVS via the Mobile Digital Computer.
(e) After completing their shift, personnel shall log off of the MVS so as to render it available for the next operator.

441.8 ACTIVATION OF THE MOBILE VIDEO SYSTEM
The MVS is designed to activate either automatically or manually by the operator. The employee’s BWC will serve as the microphone for all MVS video when the employee is outside of the vehicle.

(a) The system is automatically activated when the emergency lights are turned on (position two and three), when the shotgun and/or patrol rifle are removed from the secure rack, when the Taser is armed or fired, or when the crash sensor is activated.
(b) The system is also activated when a vehicle’s speed meets or exceeds 90 miles per hour. If the MVS activates due to speed, the officer must not turn off the system until
the vehicle is traveling slower than 90 miles per hour, can be done so safely, and no
designated contact exists.

(c) Recording is mandatory when driving with emergency lighting equipment activated
(Code-3).

(d) Whenever an incident is recorded by the MVS and a Department Record (DR)
number is issued for that incident, the fact that the incident was recorded shall be
noted in the narrative section of the report.

441.9 ACTIVATION OF BWC
The BWC is designed to be activated either automatically or manually by the operator. The BWC
is activated manually when the employee depresses the activation button twice. The BWC will
activate automatically when the MVS is activated as described in section 441.7.

441.10 PROPER POSITIONING OF BWC
Department personnel assigned a BWC shall place the BWC in a position that captures the best
audio and video recording based on the circumstances of the activity or encounter. It is
recommended the BWC be affixed to the front of the employee's outermost garment, at chest
level and centered, consistent with Department training and in a manner that enables a view
unobstructed by clothing or other equipment.

441.11 DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO BWC EQUIPMENT
Prior to going into service, each employee trained to operate and issued a BWC is responsible
for making sure the device is in proper working order by inspecting and testing the BWC. If the
camera is not in working order or the employee becomes aware of a malfunction at any time, the
employee shall promptly report the failure to his or her supervisor and obtain a functioning device
as soon as reasonably practicable. The employee's supervisor will be responsible for ensuring
the employee receives a functioning device and the malfunctioning device is returned to the
Department's Technology and Innovation Unit for repair.

Employees using a BWC shall upload data by docking the device in the docking station. All BWC
recordings and data shall be uploaded by the end of the employee's shift unless otherwise
authorized by a supervisor.

If the recording was inadvertently left running or captured information unrelated to the incident,
the employee shall submit a written request to redact the unrelated portions of the video.

Whenever an incident is recorded by a BWC and a DR number is issued for that incident, the fact
that the incident was recorded shall be noted.

441.12 DESIGNATED CONTACTS DEFINED
Personnel shall activate their BWC or their MVS/BWC in accordance with the criteria below:

(a) Personnel shall use their BWC or MVS/BWC to record all dispatched calls for service,
unless it is clear there will not be any contact with members of the public, except as
described in section 441.12.

(b) Personnel shall use the BWC or MVS/BWC to record investigative interviews of
involved persons in criminal investigations.

(c) Personnel shall activate the BWC or MVS/BWC during all field contacts initiated from a police vehicle. Examples would include vehicle stops, vehicle pursuits, foot pursuits, arrests, DUI observations, including field sobriety testing, traffic enforcement, and pedestrian stops.

(d) Personnel shall activate the MVS/BWC (or continue recording an event) when transporting subjects, whether in-custody arrestees or community members, in the rear seat of the vehicle.

(e) Personnel shall activate the BWC or MVS/BWC during all detentions (e.g., pedestrian stops away from a police vehicle) and arrests not otherwise described in this section.

(f) Sections (a) through (e) above apply to not only the employee assigned to or handling the designated contact, but all other employees or supervisors present who are assisting on the designated contact.

(g) Supervisors and managers shall use their BWC when interviewing members of the public who are lodging a citizen complaint against any member of the Department.

(h) Personnel shall not record conversations between a person in the custody of Department personnel and the person’s attorney, religious advisor, or licensed physician without the consent of all parties. Personnel shall also not record conversations between persons on Department property and their attorney, religious advisor, or licensed physician without the consent of all parties.

(i) There is no such requirement for employees to activate their BWC or MVS/BWC for casual or social contacts. Such contacts may include conversations with the public:

1. During a meal break.
2. During public relations contacts (e.g., during a presentation to a community group).
3. During brief encounters for greetings or directions.

(j) BWC video recordings shall be made in all instances of a blood sample being drawn from an arrestee. It is the responsibility of the arresting officer and supervisor to ensure any involuntary blood sample is collected in a medically acceptable, lawful manner.

(k) A BWC recording is not required to record a telephone conversation when speaking to any party on a recorded line.

(l) In those instances where a BWC or MVS/BWC is not activated, due to reasonable mitigating factors, the officer shall activate the BWC or MVS/BWC during the official contact as soon as the event stabilizes and it is practical to do so.

441.13 INVESTIGATIVE AND ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES WHEN MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY NOT BE PRESENT

Department personnel assigned BWCs shall also activate, when practical and safe, the audio and video recording functions when a member of the public may not be present while conducting investigative and enforcement activities, including:

(a) Vehicle, building, or other physical searches.
(b) Searching for and recovering evidence.
(c) A use of force involving an animal.
(d) Other investigative or law enforcement activities where, in the employee’s judgment, a video recording would assist in the investigation or prosecution of a crime or when a recording of an encounter would assist in documenting the incident for later investigation or review.

441.14 PUBLIC PROTESTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS
The Irvine Police Department recognizes that all persons have the right to exercise their constitutional rights of free speech, association, petition, assembly or other applicable laws. Employees should not use BWCs or MVS to record members of the public engaging in lawful protests or demonstrations except under the following conditions:

(a) When the employee believes there is risk of physical harm to a member of the public, an employee, or property damage appears reasonably likely based on the objective facts and circumstances confronting the employee.
(b) When necessary to document lawful orders being issued prior to anticipated enforcement action or to document the failure to follow previously issued lawful orders.
(c) While marching to, or standing in, a skirmish line or maintaining a crowd control position.
(d) When otherwise required as specified in this policy (e.g. when an employee is engaging in an enforcement or investigative activity with a member of the public).

441.15 NOTICE TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC
Department employees are not required to notify or obtain consent from a member of the public to record an encounter when the Department employee is lawfully in an area where the recording takes place and is not otherwise prohibited by law.

441.16 DEACTIVATION
Department employees shall deactivate the recording of a BWC when:

(a) The employee has completed his or her part of the investigative or enforcement activity.

(b) The employee is no longer in contact with a member of the public involved in the event.

After transporting a person in the care, custody, or control of a Department employee to a jail or treatment facility, the BWC should be deactivated after the employee leaves the custody facility.

Department employees shall reactivate the BWC if unexpected contact with a member of the public occurs again at the end of an investigation or enforcement activity.

441.17 DEACTIVATING OR DIVERTING BWC VIDEO FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES
In limited and extenuating circumstances, when the use of a BWC impedes or limits the cooperation of a victim or witness, an employee may deactivate the BWC recording. An example is where a victim or witness declines speaking on video and that declination is captured on the
initial BWC footage.

Department employees, however, should consider whether an audio-only recording is feasible under the circumstances by diverting the view of the BWC.

When an employee has objective reasons to believe such circumstances exist, the employee should, when practical and safe, state on the recording the reasons for deactivation or diverting the camera view and then may deactivate or divert the BWC.

441.18 DOCUMENTATION OF BWC AND MVS USAGE

The Department recognizes there may be legitimate instances in which activating the BWC or MVS/BWC is unreasonable, based upon the totality of circumstances surrounding the official contact. In instances where the BWC or MVS/BWC was not activated during an official contact, supervisors and managers shall consider the following mitigating factors in determining reasonableness:

(a) Whether or not activating the BWC or MVS/BWC would have placed the employee's safety at risk, or the safety of a fellow officer, or member of the public.

(b) How rapidly an official contact evolved requiring immediate action to preserve life or property, prevent injury, apprehend a suspect, or stabilize or maintain a safe scene.

Department employees shall document the existence, absence, or delayed activation of the BWC or MVS/BWC recordings in an associated Department report. Documentation must include an explanation for the absence or delay in recording with a BWC or MVS/BWC.

If an employee elects to divert the BWC camera as described in section 441.16, the diversion shall be noted in the appropriate Department report.

Any deactivation of the BWC as described in section 441.16 shall be reported to a supervisor as soon as practicable and documented in the appropriate Department report.

When an employee is required to activate the BWC and fails to do so, the employee shall immediately, after the conclusion of the event, notify a supervisor.

The failure to activate a BWC or MVS/BWC, or the absence of a BWC or MVS/BWC recording in circumstances required by Department policy shall be evaluated based on the objective facts and circumstances facing the employee at the time. The failure to activate the BWC or MVS/BWC, the delayed activation, or the deactivation, when recording is required by policy, may be the basis for discipline.

441.19 WHEN BWC RECORDING IS NOT PERMITTED

Employees shall not activate a BWC in the following circumstances:

(a) Department meetings including, but not limited to, briefings, administrative meetings, supervisory meetings, committee meetings, mediations, counseling, any testing environment, and in-service training.

(b) While on break or otherwise engaged in personal, non-enforcement, or non-investigative activity.

(c) At pre-planning meetings, while planning operations with other law enforcement personnel, unless specifically authorized by the incident commander or supervisor.

(d) While inside an incident command post, unless specifically authorized by the incident
commander or supervisor.

(e) While in the presence of a Confidential Informant (CI) or Undercover Officer, unless during a tactical operation that is otherwise recorded.

(f) While in any magistrate, commissioner, or judge's chambers, or in any courtroom except when conducting an investigative or enforcement activity with a member of the public as specified in this policy.

(g) While discussing Department-related issues with other members of the Department or City unless otherwise required by this policy. No member of this Department may surreptitiously record a conversation of any other member of this Department without the expressed knowledge and consent of all parties. Nothing in this section is intended to interfere with an officer's right to openly record any interrogation pursuant to Government Code §3303(g).

(h) While in a medical facility and specifically directed by a physician to cease recording during medical treatment to protect a patient's right to privacy under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Employees are otherwise required to activate their BWC consistent with the requirements of this policy.

(i) While in a jail facility that requires removal or deactivation of BWCS and during strip searches of persons in custody.

(j) While in restrooms, locker rooms, or other locations where individuals may be undressed and no investigative or enforcement activities are reasonably anticipated or occurring, an employee may power off the BWC.

441.20 IDENTIFICATION OF RECORDS
For each incident recorded on a BWC or MVS/BWC, employees shall identify the event type and other information using the BWC equipment and software that best describes the content of the video (i.e. arrest, traffic stop, report). BWC or MVS/BWC recordings, however, are not a replacement for written reports or other required documentation.

441.21 CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF BWC AND MVS RECORDINGS AND DATA
The BWC and MVS/BWC captures video and audio evidence for use in criminal investigations, administrative reviews, and other proceedings protected by confidentiality laws and Department policy.

Employees shall comply with all applicable laws and policies regarding confidential information. Unauthorized use or release of BWC or MVS/BWC recordings or images may compromise ongoing criminal and administrative investigations or violate the privacy rights of those recorded. Therefore, any unauthorized use or release of BWC or MVS/BWC recordings, or other violation of confidentiality laws and Department policies, is considered serious misconduct and subject to disciplinary action.

All BWC and MVS equipment and all data, images, video, and metadata captured, recorded, or otherwise produced is the sole property of the Department and any unauthorized release is strictly prohibited.
441.22 PROHIBITION AGAINST MODIFICATION OF RECORDINGS AND TAMPERING WITH BWC
Department employees shall not copy, edit, alter, erase, tamper with, or otherwise modify in any manner BWC or MVS/BWC recordings except as authorized by law or Department policy. Any violation of this provision is considered serious misconduct and subject to disciplinary action.

Except as authorized, employees shall not manipulate the camera equipment or otherwise knowingly impair its ability to record required activities. Employees shall not remove, dismantle or tamper with any hardware or software component or part of the BWC or MVS.

441.23 ACCESS AND REVIEW OF BWC AND MVS/BWC RECORDINGS
The accuracy of police reports, officer statements, and other official documentation is essential for the proper administration of justice and complying with the Department’s obligation to maintain full and complete records of enforcement and investigative activities. Investigators, supervisors, prosecutors, and other officials rely on complete and accurate records to perform their essential duties and responsibilities. Employees and supervisors are therefore authorized to review BWC or MVS/BWC recordings on their assigned device or authorized computer prior to documenting an incident, arrest, search, interview, use of force, or other enforcement or investigative activity to ensure that their reports, statements, and documentation are accurate and complete.

Employees should view their own digital recording prior to providing testimony at hearings, trials, or depositions.

Access to BWC and MVS/BWC recordings shall be limited to those employees with a legitimate criminal investigative or administrative purpose. The BWC Coordinator shall place access restrictions on BWC and MVS/BWC recordings to both facilitate necessary access and also limit opportunity for misuse.

Employees with an authorized need may view BWC and MVS/BWC recordings for the following purposes:

(a) When the employee is the employee who made the recording, subject to the exceptions set forth in this policy.
(b) An employee may view another employee’s BWC or MVS/BWC recording if the employees were on the same call, or involved in the same incident, subject to exceptions set forth in this policy.
(c) By authorized Department personnel participating in, or reviewing, an official investigation, such as a personnel complaint, administrative inquiry, or criminal investigation.
(d) By the BWC Coordinator when performing an audit for quality control purposes.
(e) When necessary regarding pending or anticipated litigation including review by assigned counsel.
(f) Use of force review or investigations.
(g) Vehicle or foot pursuit reviews or investigations.
(h) Requests pursuant to applicable state and federal laws and the Department’s Records Maintenance and Release policy.
441.24 PROCEDURES AFTER CRITICAL INCIDENTS
Upon stabilization of a critical incident and after obtaining a public safety statement from the involved employees, a supervisor shall take custody of any BWC devices which may have captured any portion of the critical incident. Upon completion of the video or data transfer, the BWC shall be returned to the employee.

Employees involved in a critical incident shall be permitted to review all relevant BWC and MVS/BWC recordings, privately with the employee’s representative, prior to completing any related reports or submitting to any interviews with Department investigators or investigators from the Orange County District Attorney’s Office.

Unless necessary to conduct an investigation of a critical incident or otherwise permitted by this policy, uninvolved employees shall not view a critical incident BWC or MVS/BWC recording or data without the express permission of the Chief of Police or an authorized designee.

Any release of BWC or MVS/BWC recordings or data related to a critical incident shall be in coordination with the Office of the Chief of Police.

441.25 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES
Supervisors assigned to any unit with BWC or MVS/BWC equipped employees shall:

(a) Ensure that employees assigned BWC equipment have completed Department-required training and are familiar with applicable policies and procedures.

(b) Conduct periodic inspections of employees assigned BWC equipment and ensure that the BWC cameras are properly affixed to the employee’s uniform and fully operable.

(c) Review relevant BWC or MVS/BWC recordings prior to submitting any administrative reports or conducting an administrative review of a contact or call for service (e.g., use of force investigations, pursuits, employee-involved traffic collisions, service complaints, etc).

(d) Supervisors shall evaluate any deactivation, delayed activation, or failure to activate BWC or MVS/BWC to ensure compliance with this policy.

(e) If any of the BWC equipment is found to be defective, the supervisor must ensure that the equipment is removed from service and immediately replaced. The supervisor must also notify the BWC Coordinator.
441.26 REQUESTS FOR RECORDINGS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC
Members of the public should be advised that Public Record Requests for BWC recordings may be made online. Release of recordings will be governed by applicable state and federal laws and the Department’s Records Maintenance and Release policy.

Any decision regarding a request to release BWC or MVS/BWC recordings involving active or pending criminal investigations shall be made in consultation with the Orange County District Attorney’s office or other applicable prosecutorial agency.

Requests by media representatives shall be referred to the Office of Public Relations.

441.27 BWC COORDINATOR
The Chief of Police shall designate a member of the Department to coordinate the use and maintenance of BWC devices and shall be responsible for the following:

(a) Coordinating the distribution of operational and properly functioning BWCs and related equipment to Department personnel.

(b) Maintaining an up-to-date database of all equipment and to whom the equipment is assigned.

(c) Coordinating warranty service and maintenance through Department-approved vendor(s).

(d) Providing technical assistance and subject matter experts related to investigations.

(e) Coordinating the replacement of inoperable, malfunctioning, or damaged equipment or systems.

441.28 AUDIT AND COMPLIANCE PROCESS
The BWC Coordinator shall develop and maintain written protocols to ensure appropriate audit processes and ongoing training.

Key elements of an audit program should include, but not be limited to:

(a) Verify employees have been trained on the use and deployment of BWC.

(b) Document all employees who have been trained on the use of BWC into training records.

(c) Ensure the maintenance of approved lesson plans for BWC training.

(d) Conduct ongoing training on use and maintenance of the BWC equipment.

(e) Ensure all BWC issues identified by employees are appropriately addressed and any appropriate documentation is completed.

(f) Ensure inspections of BWC recordings and equipment are being conducted and documented.

(g) If field inspections are not properly documented, take appropriate action to correct the deficiency and appropriately document the findings.

(h) Review employee’s reports documenting inoperable equipment and facilitate the equipment’s repair.

(i) Ensure appropriate actions are taken in the event that it appears that BWC equipment...
has been tampered with, damaged, or lost.

(j) Implement a risk management and risk mitigation process to ensure ongoing review of policy and procedure compliance with observed employee behavior during video audits.

(k) Ensure ongoing review of policies, procedures, forms, and other program elements to ensure compliance with generally accepted best practices and any applicable standards.

(l) Make appropriate notifications and generate any necessary reports documenting audit processes. Implement other procedures to ensure success of the Department BWC program.

(m) Review this policy, as necessary, to ensure compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws and the needs of the Department.

441.29 DIGITAL AUDIO AND AUDIO/VIDEO SYSTEM INTEGRITY

All data and recordings created using these systems shall be processed, stored, and disseminated in accordance with the Department’s Records Maintenance and Release policy and the provisions below:

(a) All recordings shall be kept in accordance with the City records retention schedule unless a specific request is made to store them for a longer period. If any member of the Department determines that an audio/video recording should be kept beyond the City records retention schedule period, the Custodian of Records shall be notified and it shall be flagged accordingly. The reason for the hold shall be indicated. Only the officer requesting the hold, or in the case of evidence, the investigator handling the case, or the Chief of Police (or his/her designee), may release the hold.

(b) All recordings shall be maintained with limited and restricted access only to authorized personnel.

(c) If a member of the Department requests a copy of a recorded incident for court purposes, the request shall be made to the Custodian of Records or designee. If needed for court, the request should be made at least seven court days in advance. The Custodian of Records shall determine if the request to obtain a copy of the digital recording is permitted by policy.

(d) The Custodian of Records shall maintain a file of all requests for copies of audio/video recordings.

(e) Under no circumstance shall a recorded event be provided to, in any manner, any person outside the Department, or members of the judicial system, without an order from the court, or the expressed consent of the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

(f) Under no circumstances shall Department personnel make unauthorized copies of any digital recording medium.
(g) Once a recording has been captured on the BWC or MVS/BWC, that segment shall not be manually erased. All events captured on the BWC or MVS/BWC shall be uploaded to evidence.com in accordance with this policy.

(h) Department personnel are reminded that a detailed log is created for each recorded digital video and an entry is made every time a video is viewed or shared. This log serves as a chain of evidence for the given video file.