

Urbana Police Department Body-Worn Camera System Overview

Monday, July 13, 2020
Chief Bryant Seraphin
Lieutenant Joel Sanders



History

2018

- **Urbana Police purchased three WatchGuard camera systems for \$219,130**
 - ❖ **Interview room**
 - ❖ **4RE in car video system (ICV)**
 - ❖ **VISTA body worn camera (BWC)**

2019

- Two systems hardwired into criminal investigation division interview rooms
- Early January, UPD issued a BWC to all officers
- UPD installed 4RE into squads as part of new vehicle up-fit

Purpose of Body-Worn Cameras



- **Body-Worn Cameras are effective tools used for:**
 - Evidence
 - Transparency
 - Accountability
 - Police/Community Relations
 - Complaint Investigation

In 2019

- UPD reviewed data during seven formal citizen complaint investigations
- UPD submitted video to the State's Attorney for 514 events

Technical Information



All Patrol squad cars have an in-squad camera system that syncs to body –worn cameras - The in-car camera activates the body-worn and vise-versa

Command and Investigations squad cars do not have an in-squad camera

Body-worn and in-squad cameras have 30 second pre-record (no audio)

Body-worn camera memory can hold up to 12 hours of HD video

When recording High Definition Video the body-worn battery can last up to 19 hours on standby and 7 continuous hours when “activated”

Technical Information



Battery life exceeds a 12-hour shift: Body-worn camera charges during the download process and every squad car as a magnetic charging cord

Body Cameras are battery operated electronic tools: even the best equipment may periodically fail

Captured data is securely stored on a local server

Expectations



Squad car and body-worn camera data:

- Show a specific view of the larger event
- May have diminished audio and video quality due to environmental factors or officer actions (running, taking cover, body position during event etc....)
- **Is only one part of a more complex and complete investigation**

Audit-Review Process



Body Worn Cameras offer sergeants and command staff a means to:

Ensure officer compliance to policy

Identify training needs

Recognize exemplary officers

Complete citizen complaint investigations

Every month sergeants and lieutenants review all department employees assigned to patrol

Illinois Body-Worn Camera Act and Urbana Police Policy



Illinois Body-Worn Camera Act (50 ILCS 706)

- **Provides specific direction regarding**
 - Camera's technical configurations
 - When an officer is to physically wear the camera
 - Camera utilization
 - Data retention rules
 - FOIA/public release of data

The Urbana Police Department Policy specifically follows the Body-Worn Camera Act

Officer Use of Body-Worn Camera



Definitions:

On - VISTA is powered and ready to be activated

Activated - The officer causes the VISTA to create an event file

Event file - The data collected when VISTA is activated

Officer Use of Body-Worn Camera



The Illinois Officer-Worn Body Camera Act (50 ILCS 706/10-1) and UPD Policy 421 requires any uniformed officer to:

- Wear the Body Worn Camera
- Keep the camera on at all times while on-duty
- Activate recording when performing any law enforcement activity

Exceptions to mandatory “on” position;

- Exigent circumstances preventing turning on or activation
- Victim or witness request de-activation
- Interactions with a confidential source

Officer Use of Body-Worn Camera



Body-worn activation is NOT required when an officer is engaged in

- Special event details
- Any department activity unrelated to the investigation of a crime or special event (community meetings, uniformed training, other community events)

Prior to going into service, uniformed employees are responsible for

- 1. making sure the issued body-worn camera is in good working order***
- 2. Ensuring correct synchronization when used in conjunction with a in-squad camera***

Officer Use of Body-Worn Camera



Mandatory notification recording:

The officer must provide notice of recording to any person *if the person has a reasonable expectation of privacy*

No obligation to notify:

Officers may use their discretion about whether to notify subjects/witnesses/victims of any recordings done in public areas or traffic contact situations

Video Retention



Retention Schedule is Mandated by Statute

“Recordings made on officer-worn cameras must be retained...for a period of 90 days”.

“Following the 90-day storage period, any and all recordings....must be destroyed, unless any encounter captured on the recording has been flagged”

“Under no circumstances shall any recording made with an officer-worn body camera relating to a flagged encounter be altered or destroyed prior to 2 years after the recording was flagged.”

Video Retention



An encounter is deemed to be flagged when:

1. a formal or informal complaint has been filed;
2. the officer discharged a firearm or used force
3. death or great bodily harmed occurred
4. arrest/detention; excludes traffic stops and business offenses
5. data is used for an internal investigation
6. data is deemed to have evidentiary value
7. The recording officer request the data get flagged for official purposes

Categories



| 4 RE SYSTEM | VISTA Wi-Fi |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• System Check• Accident• Arrest/Detention• Assist Motorist• Citizen Contact• Code Run• DUI Arrest• Misc. Activity• Long Gun Deployment• Search Warrant• Suspicious Activity• Traffic Stop• Transport (Arrest)• Transport (No Arrest)• Use of Force• Interview Room | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accident• Arrest• Citizen• DUI• Misc.• Search Warrant• Suspicious Act• Traffic Stop• Use of Force |

Red indicates categories that are automatically flagged and retained for two years

Citizen Access to Body-Worn Camera Files - Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)



A citizen who wishes to access body-worn camera footage must do so through the FOIA process

The Illinois Body-Worn Camera Act restricts access to most files:

“ Recordings made with the use of an officer-worn body camera are not subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, except that...”

Exceptions to the FOIA Restriction



- 1. The subject of the encounter has a reasonable expectation of privacy, and,**
 - A. the video has been flagged due to
 - I. Filing of a complaint
 - II. Discharge of a firearm
 - III. Use of Force
 - IV. Arrest
 - V. Officer action that resulted in death or great bodily harm and,
 - B. the subject of the video is a victim or witness and
 - C. the requestor has obtained written consent from the subject
- 2. The video has been flagged, (same as above) and the subject has no reasonable expectation of privacy**
- 3. The subject of the video is the requestor**

Exceptions to the FOIA Restriction



The entire casefile may not be accessible; “Only recordings or portions of recordings responsive to the request shall be available for inspection or reproduction.”

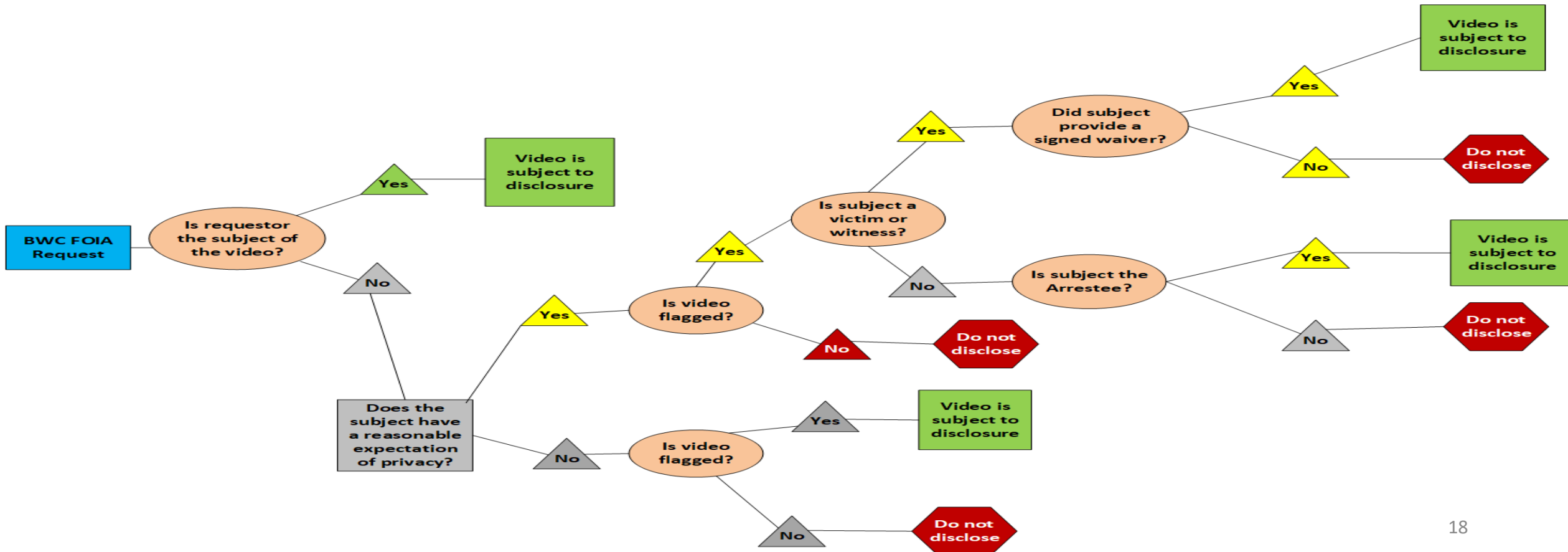
Redaction is required; “Any recording disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act shall be redacted to remove identification of any person that appears on the recording and is not the officer, a subject of the encounter, or directly involved in the encounter”.

An encounter that meets any of the three exceptions does not automatically require disclosure; Nothing in this subsection... shall require the disclosure of any recording or portion of any recording which would be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

Body Worn Camera FOIA Flowchart



Body Worn Camera FOIA Flowchart



Questions?

