

PITTSFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURE

POLICY & PROCEDURE: 40	SUBJECT: In-Car Video Recording System	
EFFECTIVE DATE: 04/01/2010	EXPIRATION DATE: Indefinite	
THIS POLICY RESCINDS ANY PREVIOUSLY ISSUED MEMORANDUM, DIRECTIVES, NOTICES, SPECIAL OR GENERAL ORDERS IN CONFLICT WITH THIS POLICY.		
AUTHORIZED BY:	Matthew E. Harshberger Director of Public Safety	
REVISIONS: 12-01-10, 01-01-13, 04-27-16, 01-26-18, 04-10-19		

POLICY:

This policy shall be followed by all Department Personnel. Adherence to any and all procedures related to this policy are required and hereby incorporated by reference for the purpose of determining compliance.

PURPOSE:

To establish a department policy on the use of in-car videos. This policy also establishes the procedures for handling and storing the recordings made.

The video and audio recordings, produced by the Departmental approved and installed system, fit a format that is admissible in court as evidence to the events that occurred. The procedure ensures the integrity of the system and its acceptance by the courts.

Recordings will be utilized to facilitate the effective and accurate investigation of criminal complaints, including evidentiary use for any judicial process. Additionally, the recordings will be utilized for professional standards purposes, as described in this policy. Except as indicated in this policy, recordings will not be routinely reviewed to monitor officer performance.

I. GENERAL PROCEDURES

- A. Officers will be trained in the use of the In-Car Recording System equipment prior to its usage.
- B. Officers will utilize the In-Car Video Recording System whenever they are assigned

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- to a patrol unit in which the In-Car Recording equipment is installed.
- C. Prior to beginning patrol, the officer will test the In-Car Video System to ensure that it is in proper working order and that the microphone is charged. Should the unit fail to operate or develop problems during the shift, the shift supervisor shall be advised as soon as possible.
 - D. Having determined that the unit is functioning properly, the officer shall log in his/her personal information onto the system for which they are operating.
 - E. The In-Car Video System shall be in the stand-by record position during all routine patrol activities throughout the shift, and the system shall be activated (both audio and video) for all citizen contacts.
 - F. Officers shall select either "Save 60 Days" or "Save 3 Years" when recording is stopped, depending on the incident type. A case number shall be entered for all recordings tagged as "Save 3 Years". These incidents include (but not limited to) all arrests, serious injury, use of force, citizen complaints or threatened litigation. Officers shall notify Records staff or their command officer when incidents need adjusted to the proper tag/classification.
 - G. A microphone shall be worn by the officer driving the unit in accordance with training.
 - H. The microphone shall be turned on whenever the officer makes a citizen contact. Examples of these situations include, but are not limited to the following:
 - 1. Traffic stops;
 - 2. Case & Crash Investigations;
 - 3. Response to any call for service involving contact with any citizen; and
 - 4. Questions from citizens, motorists, pedestrians, etc.

II. DUTIES OF SUPERVISOR IN CHARGE OF IN-CAR VIDEO SYSTEM

- A. Oversee the instruction of officers in the use of the In-Car Video Recording System.

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- B. Oversee maintenance and repair of the In-Car Video Recording System.
- C. Recommend any future upgrades to the units.

III. REVIEW OF RECORDINGS

- A. Command officers may review recordings for complaint and internal investigation purposes, case review, training, and compliance with the In-Car Video System policy. Violations of policy, procedure, rules, regulations, orders, directives, laws, ordinances, etc. found as a result of the aforementioned review process, shall be actionable per departmental disciplinary procedures. Personnel will be held accountable and corrective action will be taken for violations observed.
- B. Random review of recordings conducted for the purpose of finding unreported violations of policy (In-Car Video System policy not included), procedure, rules, regulations, orders, directives, laws, ordinances, etc. is not allowed under this policy, with the exception of the documented periodic review required by Policy & Procedure #65 "Fair and Impartial Policing", and the monitoring of probationary officers coordinated by the Field Training Unit Coordinator, as required by Policy and Procedure #26 "Field Training and Evaluation Program."
- C. Officers may review in-car video system recordings for purposes of report completion, case investigation, incident debriefing, and field training.
- D. Officers shall not use the in-car video recording system for the purpose of conducting a "show-up" for on-the-scene suspect identification.

IV. REVIEW OF INCIDENTS INVOLVING CITIZEN COMPLAINTS

- A. In the event that information is received indicating an officer has committed violations of policy, procedures, rules, regulations, orders, directives, laws, ordinances, etc., the command officer investigating the complaint shall retrieve and review any information available on the in-car video system.
- B. In such situations, the command officer shall provide notice to the Deputy Chief of Police and Director of Public Safety, or designee.
- C. If evidence reveals that the officer acted improperly, the incident will be forwarded for an internal investigation according to departmental disciplinary procedures.

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- D. If the evidence reveals that the complaint is unfounded and the officer acted properly, the complaint will be processed to hold the person who filed the complaint accountable. This includes presenting the case, when determined appropriate, to the prosecutor for review of criminal charges. This does not pertain to situations that result in unsubstantiated allegations; such situations will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

V. DIGITAL MEDIA RETENTION

- A. Officers shall categorize recorded events in accordance with Department training.
- B. Uploading of recorded files to the system server will occur automatically when the patrol car is at the police headquarters.
- C. The server is programmed with preset retention periods and preservation criteria, which allow for automatic preservation (only for incidents that meet the preset qualifications). For recorded incidents that do not trigger the preset criteria for long-term preservation, the officer shall notify Records staff or their command officer, if the incident needs to be appropriately tagged and the incident preserved, or recording made for attachment with the case file.
- D. Records staff will review recordings on a weekly basis to ensure they are preserved according to the retention schedule.

VI. USE OF MEDIA

- A. Use of in-car video system recordings are approved only for court and other official law enforcement purposes, except as mandated by law. Copying of recordings must be approved and performed by a command officer, the support services supervisor, or court/property room officer.
- B. Copies of In-Car Video System recordings shall remain the property of the Pittsfield Township Department of Public Safety and may not be used for purposes other than official police business, except as mandated by law.

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VII. REVISION RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Responsibility for the continuous updating and revision of this Order lies with the Director of Public Safety. Continuous shall mean when necessary or when mandated by law.
- B. In the event that this Policy conflicts with, or supersedes, any previous Departmental Order, Procedure, or Directive, to that extent, the conflicting or superseded Order is cancelled.



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