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RESOURCES

[Implementing a Body-Worn Camera Program: Recommendations and Lessons Learned - Police Executive Research Forum \(Perf\)](#)

[Bureau of Justice Assistance \(BJA\) Body-Worn Camera Toolkit](#)

[Penal Code 832.18](#)

QUESTIONS

[Email PRISM Risk Control](#)
or call 916.850.7300

Body-Worn Camera Program Implementation

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Law enforcement operations continue to be a major loss driver for public agency liability and worker's compensation claims. Many departments have turned to body-worn cameras (BWC) due to calls for increased transparency with the public. They have also found the cameras reduce the rate of complaints and use of force incidents. Additional benefits include; improving officer safety, increasing evidence quality, and reducing agency liability. While there are many benefits to BWCs, they can only be realized with a strong program in place. Before signing a contract or buying cameras, consider the following:

Cost Considerations

Cost continues to be one of the main reasons that departments do not move forward with implementing a body-worn camera program. Before making the decision a detailed accounting of all costs associated with the program should be in place and funding secured. The following costs (both initial and ongoing) should be included in the budget:

- **Hardware** – cameras, docking stations and computers
- **Equipment Storage** – must be securely housed
- **Data Storage** – cloud based or on-site server
- **Program Administration** – policy development, evidence management, and officer time
- **Available Grant Opportunities**



Hardware Considerations



Where will officers mount the cameras? Most commonly departments utilize a center of mass mount camera that is attached at the chest of the officer. But there are several other options including collar mount, ballcap mount, epaulette mount, and helmet mount. Determine what camera features are important to the department. Some features to consider include:

Recording Resolution	Still Image Capture	Angle of View
Battery Life	Pre-Record Capability	Size/Weight
Data Storage Capability	Infrared (Night Vision)	Mobile Application Integration
Wireless Connectivity	GPS Geolocation	Integrated Push-to-Talk

Data Management Software Considerations

Ease of use is often top of mind when looking at any new software, but take into account the following body-worn camera software specific features:

- Tagging/chaptering capabilities
- Video review interface
- Automatic data retention management
- Export and reporting capabilities
- Customizable roles and permissions
- Data security and chain of custody

Data Storage Considerations

Before implementing, departments must estimate data storage needs. If the estimate is well over what

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is needed, the department often has a contract in place and must pay for unused storage space. If the estimate is less than what is needed, overage fees can become a problem as well. When considering how much storage is needed, video resolution and retention must be weighed against storage capabilities and cost. There are 2 main data storage options, each with their own benefits and disadvantages:

On-Site Server Storage

- Freedom from vendor/3rd party
- High startup cost
- Physical space requirement
- Lack of scalability
- Redundancy and security concerns
- Maintenance is an agency responsibility

Cloud Based Storage

- Subject to terms of vendor contract
- Reduced management/maintenance cost
- Reliant on Internet (connection speed)
- Cloud reputation for the technology skeptic

Policy Considerations

The success of the program will rely on a comprehensive policy. When drafting the policy ensure it addresses the following:

- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities
- How cameras are to be used (when, where, how)
- How data is to be used (and not used) by the department
- How and when data can be accessed by the public
- Data retention timelines

For any additional questions regarding this topic or related regulatory requirements, contact the [PRISM Risk Control Department](#).