

GENERAL ORDER

G.O. 5-418

SUBJECT: MOBILE DIGITAL VIDEO RECORDING



DATE EFFECTIVE: 01/01/07
DATE WRITTEN: 5/17/06 DAB AMMENDED: 7/9/12, 6/3/19
AMENDS: New
DISTRIBUTION: ALL PERSONNEL
A.S. 3.5.4
ADMIN: SIGNATURE ON ISSUE
SIGNATURE:
INDEX: MDVR, Purpose, Responsibility, Definitions, Policy, Equipment, Procedures For Use, Review Of Data

I. PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITY:

A. Purpose: To set the policy and establish the procedures for the operation of Mobile Digital Video Recording (MDVR) equipment installed in Monroe Police Department vehicles. The MDVR works in conjunction and is synced with the officers BWC at the beginning of each shift. The use of the MDVR will not conflict with General Order 5-419 Body Worn Cameras, and any discrepancy will default to General Order 5-419 Body Worn Cameras language.

B. Responsibility:

1. It will be the responsibility of all officers to operate the MDVR equipment installed in the Department's patrol vehicles in accordance with this General Order.
2. It will be the responsibility of the Patrol Division (PD) Commander to maintain and store digital data identified as Department recordings in accordance with all regulations governing the retention of such recordings.

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II. DISCUSSION:

This General Order addresses the use of MDVR units that have been installed in PD patrol vehicles. The proper employment of MDVR units can be very beneficial to the field officer, in that it creates a recording that becomes evidence in sustaining the enforcement action taken. MDVR will be used to capture evidence of impaired drivers, other traffic related offenses and to support other appropriate investigative efforts. The utilization of MDVR assist in the identification of training needs, evaluation of officer performance, protection from false allegations of misconduct and deterrence of misconduct. In addition, such recordings may be of value to Department personnel in refuting complaints filed by the subjects of enforcement action. The potential value of video/audio recordings is limited only by the manner in which the equipment should be directed to the Patrol Sergeant assigned to the officer's shift. If the issue is unable to be resolved, it shall be forwarded to the Patrol Division Commander or appropriate IT support personnel.

III. DEFINITIONS:

- A. MDVR: Mobile Digital Video Recording; a digital recording device installed in a Department patrol vehicle capable of making a video and/or audio recording of interaction between Department personnel and the public.

IV. POLICY:

- A. It will be the policy of the Monroe Police Department that the MDVR units will be activated in all contacts between officers and the public, in accordance with the guidelines established by this General Order.
- B. It will be the policy of the Monroe Police Department that the MDVR units will be employed only in a lawful manner, in accordance to applicable state and federal laws.

V. MOBILE IN-CAR RECORDING EQUIPMENT UTILIZATION:

- A. Traffic Stops: MDVR shall be used to capture the activities of traffic violators, their passengers and officers during the stop.

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- B. DUI Investigations: MDVR shall be started when an officer begins a potential DUI investigation. The MDVR will be in operation for the duration of the stop, including roadside sobriety tests. Prior to stopping the vehicle, indicators of impairment may be narrated for the recording.
- C. Pursuits: MDVR shall be activated when the officer is involved in a pursuit. The MDVR will be in operation for the duration of the incident.
- D. MDVR may be used to record other areas of enforcement, investigation and unusual events. Such uses include but are not limited To:
 - 1. Surveillance of suspected points of entry while conducting perimeter checks of buildings;
 - 2. Recording call for crowd control/security;
 - 3. Monitoring unruly prisoners and capturing prisoner conversation while being transported in police cruisers;
 - 4. Emergency response situations.
- E. An officer's BWC and the vehicle's MDVR will activate upon the utilization of the vehicle's emergency light bar.

VI. PROCEDURES FOR USE, RECORDINGS ACCESS, SECURITY, AND RETENTION:

Proper use, care, and security of MDVR equipment is the responsibility of the officers assigned the equipment. Officers will ensure that the MDVR is working properly and is synced with their BWC prior to each shift. Any problems with the MDVR equipment will be reported immediately. At the discretion of the on-duty supervisor, the vehicle may still be used if a spare is not available. Officers will not attempt MDVR repairs.

A. Watchguard 4RE

- 1. Officers assigned a vehicle equipped with a Watchguard 4RE system will log in at the beginning of every shift. The officer will sync their BWC with the Watchguard 4RE system by placing the BWC in the cradle and

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utilizing their identification from the MDVR drop down officer identification menu.

2. Once an officer is logged in, the system can be activated one of three ways:
 - a. Officer manual activation on display or BWC;
 - b. Light bar activation;
 - c. Automatically, if the vehicle sustains impact.

Note: Recording begins 30 seconds prior to activation with no volume.

3. Once the system has been activated, officers have to manually stop the recording. When the recording is stopped, a classification must be chosen. The three options are found in General Order 5-419, Body Worn Cameras III. (D), (E), (F).
4. The retention periods will be the same as found in General Order 5-419 Body Worn Cameras Section III. (D), (E), (F).
5. Record after event. (Feature used to create or support recorded events from within the video loop).
 - a. Can be utilized to add pre-event video to recorded video;
 - b. Can be used to review video for previous criminal activity or evidence in support of a crime;
 - c. Shall not be used for random review of officer conduct except as outlined in General Order 5-419 Body Worn Cameras, Section III. (C). 4.c.
6. At the end of shift, the officer will park the vehicle on or as close as possible to the designated police line to allow for uploading all video files to the secure server where they are saved.

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VII. REVIEW OF MDVR DATA:

- A. SUPPORT SERVICES COMMANDER: Shall be responsible for overseeing the implementation and training of the MDVR units.
- B. DAILY OPERATION: The Patrol Division Commander shall be responsible for overseeing the daily operation and use of MDVR units.
- C. EQUIPMENT CHECK: PD field officers shall check the operability of MDVR units, in accordance with the training instructions, at the beginning of each shift.
- D. MDVR INFORMATION REVIEW: The Chief of Police, on a evaluation cycle basis, will cause a random review of one or more MDVR videos for the purpose of identifying concerns regarding officer safety, MDVR unit operation, MDVR sound and picture quality and training issues.
- E. OFFICER SAFETY ISSUES: Officer and citizen safety are more important than obtaining recorded information. The following safety guidelines should be adhered to:
 - 1. WATCH THE ROAD: Field officers shall not view the monitor recording while the patrol vehicle is in motion. Officers wishing to review a recording will park the patrol vehicle safely prior to viewing the monitor. Officers should maintain awareness of their surroundings and not be preoccupied with viewing to the extent they become vulnerable to a possible hostile action.
 - 2. FOCUS: Officers are reminded to focus on their duties at hand and not be concerned over whether the MDVR unit is recording properly or capturing the right image.
- F. LEGAL ISSUES: Field officers of this Department will not, under any circumstances, activate the MDVR unit for the purpose of recording any non-custodial conversation between any persons to which the officer is not party. Any officer found to be in violation of this section of this general order will be subject to disciplinary action and the possibility of criminal prosecution (refer to Section 53a-189 of the Connecticut General Statute titled "Eavesdropping).

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- G. MDVR UNIT MAINTENANCE: The MDVR units require very little maintenance. The following procedures are to be used:
1. CAMERA LENS: The camera lens shall be cleaned as needed using only lens paper or a clean lint-free cloth. Paper towels, napkins, paper tissue, etc. will not be used to clean the camera lens, as this type of material may scratch.
 2. MONITOR SCREEN: The monitor screen and console buttons may be cleaned with any moist towel or cloth containing a mild soap formula. Do not use harsh chemicals or cleaners containing ammonia.

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HISTORICAL CHANGES TO POLICY -

July 9, 2012 – Several pages were changed to eliminate all wording that refers to video/audio tapes as we no longer use tapes, all digital.

June 3, 2019 - Entire General Order was changed to reflect new Watchguard 4RE usage.