



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Honorable Phil Mendelson  
Chairman  
Council of the District of Columbia  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Room 504  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

In accordance with the *Body-Worn Camera Regulation and Reporting Requirements Act of 2015*, Title III Subtitle A of the *Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Support Act of 2015* (Act 21-0148), please find attached Metropolitan Police Department's (MPD) data on the Body-Worn Camera (BWC) program. The report provides responses to the following reporting requirements pursuant to D.C. Official Code § 5-116.33 for the time period of July 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019.

- How many hours of body-worn camera recordings were collected;
- How many times body-worn cameras failed while officers were on shift and the reasons for the failures;
- How many times internal investigations were opened for a failure to turn on body-worn cameras during interactions;
- How many times body-worn camera recordings were used by MPD in internal affairs investigations;
- How many body-worn cameras are assigned to each police district and police unit for the reporting period;
- How many Freedom of Information Act requests the Metropolitan Police Department received for body-worn camera recordings during the reporting period, and the outcome of each request; and
- How many recordings were assigned to each body-worn camera recording category.

The BWC program has been an invaluable asset for building trust with the community by promoting transparency and accountability. MPD is pleased to be at the forefront of major city police department in using BWCs. To that end, this reporting period reflects 3,228 assigned body-worn cameras throughout the Department.

Please contact Robert J. Contee III, Acting Chief of Police, at 202-727-4218 or [robert.contee@dc.gov](mailto:robert.contee@dc.gov), if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Contee III  
Acting Chief of Police



A Report on MPD's Use of

# Body-Worn Cameras

July 1 – December 31, 2019



Robert J. Contee, III  
Acting Chief of Police



GOVERNMENT OF THE  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

Pursuant to the *Body-Worn Camera Regulation and Reporting Requirements Act of 2015*, Title III, Subtitle A of the *Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Support Act of 2015* (Act 21-0148), the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) is required to publish data on its Body-Worn Camera (BWC) program bi-annually. This report is provided in compliance with the Act.

## MPD Body-Worn Camera Program

The use of body-worn cameras (BWCs) benefits members of the community and the Department by improving police services, increasing accountability and transparency for individual interactions, and strengthening police-community relations. As of December 2019, more than 3,200 BWCs were deployed to full-duty officers and sergeants in public contact positions in all police districts and other specialized units, and lieutenants and captains in patrol.

The BWC program is invaluable in building trust with the community by promoting transparency and accountability. The videos are essential to reassuring communities that MPD is accountable in policing. We are committed to ensuring our presence is supportive of our vibrant communities. The cameras also support training efforts and help improve efficiency in internal investigations as there is documented evidence present to support or refute claims.

The MPD is pleased to be at the forefront of major city police departments using BWCs. Our officers have been eager to use this new technology. The willingness of MPD officers to be early adopters of this technology demonstrates their strong commitment to safeguarding and providing the best service to our residents.

## Data

### Data Responses (July 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019)

- 1. How many hours of BWC recordings were collected?** (D.C. Official Code §5-116.33(a)(1))

There were 270,586 hours of BWC recordings collected during the reporting period.

- 2. How many times did BWCs fail while officers were on shift and what were the reasons for the failures?** (D.C. Official Code §5-116.33(a)(2))

The exact reasons BWCs fail and the timing of the failure cannot always be determined. MPD policy requires that officers conduct a test shot with the BWC at the beginning of their shift to ensure it is functioning. The below chart represents the Body Worn Camera Coordinator's best interpretation after assessing each BWC processed for failure or damage.

To reduce down time due to BWC failures, unassigned BWCs are positioned at all major deployment locations. The Department purchased replacement batteries to address those cameras with known charging issues.

Reasons for Failure <sup>1</sup>	#
Battery charging Issues	34
General hardware failure	17
Physical damage	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>

**3. How many times were internal investigations opened for failure to turn on BWCs during interactions?** (D.C. Official Code §5-116.33(a)(3))

There were 141 internal investigations opened for failure to turn on BWCs during interactions between July 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019. The outcomes of the investigations during this reporting period are noted in the table below.

Outcomes	#
Exonerated <sup>2</sup>	13
Sustained <sup>3</sup>	113
Insufficient Facts <sup>4</sup>	0
Incident Summary Numbers Cancelled <sup>5</sup>	8
Unfounded <sup>6</sup>	1
Open Investigation	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>

**4. How many times were BWC recordings used by MPD in internal affairs investigations?** (D.C. Official Code §5-116.33(a)(4))

There were 12,801 BWC video recordings used for internal investigations during this reporting period. Some videos may also be used in investigations addressed under question 5.

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this question, failure accounts for when an officer is on shift and the body-worn camera does not work, is not activated, or does not record the event because of a specific camera related issue.

<sup>2</sup> Where a preponderance of the evidence shows that the alleged conduct did occur, but did not violate MPD policies, procedures, or training. G.O. 120.23 Serious Misconduct Investigations.

<sup>3</sup> Where the person’s allegation is supported by a preponderance of the evidence to determine that the incident occurred and the actions of the officer were improper. G.O. 120.23 Serious Misconduct Investigations.

<sup>4</sup> Where there are insufficient facts to decide whether the alleged misconduct occurred. G.O. 120.23 Serious Misconduct Investigations.

<sup>5</sup> Occurs when an internal investigation is initially started but then cancelled; for example, because the incident summary numbers were duplicative.

<sup>6</sup> When the investigation determined that there are no facts to support the incident complained of actually occurred. G.O. 120.23 Serious Misconduct Investigations.

**5. How many times were BWC recordings used by MPD to investigate complaints made by an individual or group? (D.C. Official Code §5-116.33(a)(5))**

There were 1,435 BWC video recordings used by the Office of Police Complaints (OPC) to investigate external complaints during this reporting period.

Pursuant to the *Neighborhood Engagement Achieves Results Act of 2016* (D.C. Law 21-125, D.C. Official Code § 5-1104), OPC is now responsible for handling almost all external complaints.

**6. How many body-worn cameras were assigned to each police district and police unit for the reporting period? (D.C. Official Code §5-116.33(a)(6))**

As of December 31, 2019, there were 3,228 body-worn cameras assigned to the following units.

Unit	#
1D	347
2D	328
3D	336
4D	343
5D	351
6D	374
7D	377
<b>District Total</b>	<b>2,456</b>
Criminal Investigations Division	31
Joint Strategic & Tactical Analysis Command Center	35
Metropolitan Police Academy	28
Narcotics and Special Investigations Division	145
Other <sup>7</sup>	182
School Safety Division	112
Special Operations Division	176
Strategic Change Division	22
Youth and Family Services Division	41
<b>Non-District Total</b>	<b>772</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT TOTAL (as of 12/31/19)</b>	<b>3,228</b>

**7. How many Freedom of Information Act requests did MPD receive for body-worn cameras recordings during the reporting period? What was the outcome of each**

<sup>7</sup> Includes but not limited to members in the Corporate Support Bureau and members in administrative roles.

**request, including any reasons for denial? What was the cost to the department for complying with each request, including redaction? (D.C. Official Code §5-116.33(a)(7))**

Between July 1 and December 31, 2019, MPD received 192 FOIA requests. The outcomes of each request are noted in the table below.

Disposition	#
<b>Closed</b>	<b>151</b>
Granted in full <sup>8</sup>	0
Granted in part <sup>9</sup>	49
Denied in full <sup>10</sup>	35
No responsive video found <sup>11</sup>	15
Duplicate request <sup>12</sup>	3
Referred to other agency <sup>13</sup>	0
Withdrawn <sup>14</sup>	49
<b>Open (12/31/2019)</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>

Between, July 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019, the total cost of outsourcing BWC redactions associated with all FOIA requests was \$184,704.

**8. How many recordings were assigned to each body-worn camera recording category? (D.C. Official Code § 5-116.33(a)(8))**

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<sup>8</sup> There were no redactions made to the requested video footage.

<sup>9</sup> Some redactions were made to the requested video footage.

<sup>10</sup> The footage pertained to ongoing investigations, juvenile records, sexual assault , domestic violence or the video was from inside a personal residence.

<sup>11</sup> Video responsive to the request may not have existed or may be outside the Department's retention schedule.

<sup>12</sup> The requestor made an identical request under a different FOIA reference number that is already in process.

<sup>13</sup> Sometimes requests are referred to other agencies because the footage pertains to access to information under their purview.

<sup>14</sup> The Department's FOIA office may have requested additional information from the requester to which the requester did not respond and/or the requester decided they are no longer interested in receiving the video and advise the FOIA office of such.

The number of recordings represents the number of times a BWC video has been categorized between July 1 and December 31, 2019. Each video is required to be tagged with the most serious offense but may carry multiple categories. The event type category represents MPD member interactions with the community. Administrative tracking assists with identifying and categorizing specific tasks related to police events.

Category	# of Recordings
<b>Event Type</b>	
Incident, No Arrest	617,462
All Other Misdemeanors	140,968
All Other Felonies	73,065
Contact / Stop	66,862
Traffic Stop	61,697
Search or Arrest Warrant	9,003
Murder / Manslaughter	3,045
Death Report / Suicide	1,456
Warrantless Search	1,300
First and Second Degree Sexual Assault	1,276
All Other Sexual Offenses	1,261
First Amendment Assembly	1,008
Forcible Entry	261
Found Shell Casings	235
Consent Search	158
Crime Involving a Public Official Misdemeanor	80
Crime Involving a Public Official Felony	61
<b>Administrative Tracking</b>	
Video Testing	138,674
Vehicle Inspection	72,645
Pending Warrant/Papered Case/Ongoing Criminal	38,182
Court Liaison Division	31,504
Internal Investigations	11,758
Office of Police Complaints	1,435
Youth & Family Services Division	1,190
Internal Affairs Division	1043
Freedom of Information Act	512
Citizen Viewing	453
Redaction	278
Civil Litigation	150
Recruit Training	141
Pending/Supervisory Review	62

Category	# of Recordings
Training	31