

UNION COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE			
LAW ENFORCEMENT DIRECTIVE			
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SUBJECT: BODY WORN CAMERA PERFORMANCE REVIEW PILOT PROGRAM			
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UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF: LYNDSAY V. RUOTOLO ACTING PROSECUTOR			

Several years ago, the Union County Prosecutor’s Office began work to ensure that every law enforcement agency within the County of Union was outfitted with body worn cameras. The process began with Prosecutor Park and was completed under the leadership of Prosecutor Monahan. The Union County law enforcement community has long-recognized the importance of transparency in law enforcement operations and worked to build each agency’s capacity for transformational policing through the use of the body worn cameras.

The National Institute of Justice reports that agencies who utilize body worn cameras experience greater officer accountability, heightened officer safety, and a quicker resolution of civilian complaints¹. The greatest benefit to agencies using body worn cameras, however, is the unique opportunity for management to examine an officer’s actions while performing their law enforcement duties within their work environment. This examination allows police command staff to conduct objective investigations, provide a mechanism to efficiently review operations, and ensure compliance with departmental policy, procedures, and best practices. Unfortunately, the majority of performance related data captured on the officer’s body worn camera is never reviewed, creating a missed opportunity for agencies to commend excellent performance, identify training gaps, and enhance their existing early warning system by identifying problematic behavior before it turns into misconduct.

With this in mind, the Union County Prosecutor’s Office, in conjunction with partnering Union County law enforcement agencies, will conduct a 90-day pilot program assessing police performance by viewing existing body worn camera videos. The Union County Prosecutor’s

¹ Brett Chapman “Body-Worn Cameras: What the Evidence Tells Us,” November 14 2018,, nij.ojp.gov: <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/body-worn-cameras-what-evidence-tells-us>

Office is extremely grateful to the Cranford Police Department under the leadership of Chief Greco, the Roselle Police Department under the leadership of Chief Barnes, and the Plainfield Police Division under the leadership of Director Burgess, for their participation in this pilot program.

Each partnering agency will perform a review of a select number of body-worn camera videos, ultimately comparing them to existing agency “best practices” in order to affirm existing training and supervisory practices, or to identify opportunities for improvement. The following incident response types will be reviewed; *mental health, driving while intoxicated, and motor vehicle/traffic investigations*. The incident selection is based upon the frequency of officer exposure, as well as the degree of risk associated with each incident type. Performance data will be recorded within a software database managed by the participating agency and shared with the Union County Prosecutors Office at the end of each 30-day period. Partnering agencies will respond to performance deficiencies by instituting counseling, training, or performance improvement plans, and record these steps within the database. Upon completing the pilot program, each agency will be presented with a comprehensive report outlining the performance observed, the mitigating steps taken by the agency, and what effects the intervention had on officer performance, if any.

The Union County Prosecutor’s Office recognizes its obligation to provide the residents of Union County with the best trained law enforcement officers in the country. The Union County Prosecutor’s Office and law enforcement leaders across this county also have an obligation to keep our officers safe as they carry out their duties. Performance monitoring, and early intervention work towards that end. Better trained, better performing, and better supervised law enforcement officers are more self-aware, safer and provide better service delivery to the public.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a mechanism for the review of police body worn camera video during the inter-agency pilot program established by the Union County Prosecutor, with the hope that upon the conclusion of the pilot program an expanded formal policy can be implemented county-wide.

POLICY

Police body worn cameras contain valuable performance related data that has historically been underutilized. It is the policy of the Union County Prosecutor’s Office to conduct a 90 day pilot program providing oversight over partnering law enforcement agencies as we collectively work to improve officer safety and provide for a better law enforcement service delivery to the residents of the County of Union.

PROCEDURE

I. Project Outline

Orientation Meeting. Prior to initiating the Body Worn Camera Performance Review Pilot Program, a meeting of all participating law enforcement executives will be hosted by the Director of County-Wide Police Policy, Planning, & Training, Chief of Detectives, and the Union County Prosecutor, where the following items will be discussed:

A. Project Goals and Objectives

1. Goal: improve police service delivery by improving police performance.
2. Objective: review police officer body worn camera videos by specific incident types based on frequency and risk.
3. Objective: compare officer performance to agency “best practices” and identify inconsistencies.
4. Objective: respond to performance inconsistencies by introducing counseling, training, performance improvement plans, or notification to Internal Affairs.

B. Project Timeline

1. Overall project time is 120 days.
 - a. Timeline begins with Orientation Meeting.
2. Analysis portion of project will last 90 days.
3. Stage Gate meetings set for every 30 days to review project progress.
4. Closeout meeting scheduled upon collection of the 3rd 30-day dataset.

C. Communications Plan

1. Agency executives will receive communication from project manager via email at critical stages of the project.
2. Agency liaisons will receive communication via email and phone from Project Manager weekly.
3. Agency liaisons will communicate with their respective chain of command at will.

D. Resources Needed

1. Agency Liaison
 - a. Each agency agrees to select one officer to serve as the Agency Liaison.
 - b. The Agency Liaison should serve within either the Training, or the Internal Affairs function within the agency.
2. Research Group
 - a. It is recommended that only a select group of officers are chosen to participate in the project.
 - b. Ideally, the research group should be selected from the patrol division, and be assigned to a steady shift, with consistent supervision.

3. Program Manager: The Director of County-Wide Police Policy, Planning, & Training, will serve as the Project Manager.
- E. Deliverables
1. Data Sharing
 - a. Agencies will be provided with a thumb drive with database software, user instructions, and a spreadsheet for collecting officer information.
 - b. Agencies will be required to forward data stored within the body worn camera database on a weekly basis.
 2. Comprehensive Review
 - a. At the culmination of the project, a comprehensive review of the data collected will be shared with each respective agency.
 - b. Specific officer information will be de-identified within the final report
- F. Security
1. The work product created from this program will be considered an internal affairs performance review and as such will be maintained within the Internal Affairs Unit.
- G. Next Steps
1. During the closeout meeting, or shortly thereafter, the Union County Prosecutor will make a determination as to whether the project should be expanded to additional departments, modified or discontinued.

II. Methodology

The following methodology will be utilized to implement the Body Worn Camera Performance Review Pilot Program:

- A. Information Pull
1. Each agency will have control of its own database containing the following agency specific information:
 - a. Agency size, jurisdiction type, supervisor-officer ratio.
 - b. Individual officer biographical data:
 - i. Officer name, assignment, and date of hire
 - ii. Completion of selected training courses (ex. Implicit bias, CIT, conflict de-escalation)
- B. Video Incident Type Selection
1. The following video incident types will be reviewed based upon their frequency of occurrence, and the risk of harm the incident type exposes to the officer and the public.
 - a. Motor vehicle investigations
 - i. Each agency will be asked to review 20 video recordings of motor vehicle investigations captured on officer body worn camera.
 - b. Driving while intoxicated.

- i. Each agency will be asked to review 10 video recordings of driving while intoxicated investigations captured on officer body worn camera.
 - c. Mental health responses.
 - i. Each agency will be asked to review 10 video recordings of incidents where police officers responded to mental health incidents, captured on officer body worn camera.
- C. Selection and development of key performance indicators
 - 1. Key Performance Indicators will be used as the performance standard when rating officer video.
 - 2. Agency Liaisons, along with Body Worn Camera Pilot Program Project Manager will select the key performance indicators for each incident type.
 - 3. Key performance indicators will remain consistent for all agencies participating in the pilot program.
 - 4. Additional key performance indicators may be added to the database at the request of the Agency Executive.
 - 5. Metrics established by the Union County Prosecutor will also be monitored. For the pilot program, the additional metric will include instances of officers unholstering their firearm. Additional metrics will be included in the expanded program, should it continue, to include, among other things, instances of officers using force.
- D. Selection of Rater/Reviewer
 - 1. Each agency will designate at least one supervisory officer the task of reviewing body worn camera video and completing a performance evaluation form within the database.
 - 2. Officers selected as Rater/Reviewer should be involved in the program from its onset.
- E. Familiarization with database software
 - 1. Each Rater/reviewer will practice with the software by viewing videos from each Incident Type and completing the performance evaluation form.
 - 2. The completed practice forms will be reviewed by the Project Manager to ensure at least 90% Rater/Reviewer accuracy.
- F. Mitigation responses
 - 1. Once the Rater/Reviewer has viewed the video and selected the key performance indicators, a follow-up response is required. The following responses are available as options:
 - a. No Action: the performance viewed was consistent with agency “best practices.”
 - b. Commendation: the performance is exemplary and should be given special recognition.

- c. Counseling: The officer's performance is inconsistent with best practices and requires counseling.
- d. Training Needed: The officer's performance falls short of agency standards and training is recommended.
- e. Forward to Internal Affairs: the officer has violated a departmental guideline, procedure, rule, or directive. The incident is to be referred to the Internal Affairs Division for follow-up.

G. Reporting Requirements

- 1. Agency Liaisons will be requested to submit weekly statistics to the project manager.
- 2. Data collected will be compared in the following manner
 - a. A comprehensive report will be prepared once all data has been collected and reviewed.
 - b. Each agency will receive two reports:
 - i. One report will contain agency specific information
 - ii. One report will contain de-identified information on the result of the program, to include data from all participating agencies

H. Closeout Meeting

- 1. Upon completion of the program, the Prosecutor will assemble a meeting with program stakeholders to discuss the following:
 - a. The results of the program.
 - b. Any issues or problems revealed during the program.
 - c. A determination on the value of the program and whether to increase the program's scope or discontinue the program.
 - d. Input from Agency Liaisons.

III. Aspirations and Intentions

In an ongoing effort to promote transparency and trust, it is the goal of the Union County Prosecutor's Office to release publicly a report on our findings and the steps we have initiated to address training deficiencies should same become evident through the pilot program.

It is further the goal of this office to identify a partner in the academic community to review the data we collect during the pilot program to assist us in workshopping ways in which our methodology and analysis can be improved upon before we enter an expanded version of this program.

It is our intention to expand the pilot program to include additional incidents and events to review, and include additional agency participants until every Union County law enforcement agency has an opportunity to participate in the program.

It is our pledge that we will work with law enforcement professionals and other qualified stakeholders to tailor and offer training to Union County law enforcement officers to address any training deficiencies identified during the pendency of this program.