

BODY WORN CAMERAS

Frequently Asked Questions

The St. Thomas Police Service is currently conducting a pilot project for Body Worn Cameras. STPS supports building public trust, community support and enhancing officer safety and public safety. This is an example of our clear commitment to ensuring we have an accountable police service to those who we serve.

How long will the pilot last?

The pilot project will last 120 days ending in January of 2021.

Is every officer wearing a body camera?

No. STPS has twelve cameras for use during the pilot project. Six cameras will be deployed every shift while the other half recharge and download data. Preference will be given to the Traffic Unit, Foot Patrol Unit and Kg Unit to wear the body camera.

Is the Camera always recording?

Yes, the camera is always turned on and recording however there is only a thirty-second buffer. What that means is although the camera is always recording, it will re-record over itself every thirty seconds until the camera is activated by the officer. Once activated the camera will record and store the entire recording (including the thirty second buffer) until the officer deactivates the unit. While in buffering mode the camera is not recording audio – and this is in order to protect both public and our officer's privacy.

When will the body-worn camera be turned on and turned off?

The officer will power on the camera at the beginning of shift and leave it on for the entire shift. The officer will then activate the body-worn camera prior to arriving at a call for service or when they start investigating an individual. A police officer will deactivate the body-worn camera when the call for service or investigation is complete or when the officer determines that continuous recording is no longer serving its intended purpose.

How will I know if a body worn camera is “on” during my interaction with an officer?

You will see the camera on the front of the officer's uniform where it will be worn in plain view. If you are interacting with an officer wearing a body worn camera that officer will tell you that a body worn camera is in operation

Can I ask to have the recording turned off?

The only time a request to turn off a body-worn camera will be allowed is when a police officer has been given permission to enter a private home and the person granting permission has made the request. This can happen before the officer enters the private home or at any time during the officer's presence in the private home.

Can I ask to see the recording?

At the time of recording, the data cannot be accessed, reviewed, edited or deleted. Any request to view or edit the data must be made through the relevant provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)

How will the data from the body-worn cameras be downloaded?

At the end of every shift, a police officer will take their body-worn camera and dock it at one of the porting stations. Once docked, the data will automatically be uploaded to the AXON secure servers located in Canada. All of the videos are encrypted and only authorized members of the St. Thomas Police Service have access to these videos.

Question? Email tcalvert@stps.on.ca

