

Jasper County Sheriff's Department  
Law Enforcement  
Policies and Procedures

Subject: Vehicle Audio/Video Recording Systems	Policy Number: 128
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Approval Authority Title and Signature: Sheriff Randy Johnson	

**POLICY:**

It is the policy of the Jasper County Sheriff's Department to make audio/video recording systems available in patrol vehicles and to provide for systematic protection and integrity of recorded video subsequent to the use of these recording systems.

**PROCEDURE:**

**Use of Recording System:**

All deputy sheriffs that are provided an in-car video recording system are expected to use these systems while on duty. Depending on the system, continuous recording may not be practical. However, due to the unpredictability of circumstances, deputies should ensure that the following situations be recorded:

- 1) Traffic stops
- 2) Vehicular pursuits
- 3) Travel while responding to emergency calls while using the vehicle's emergency equipment
- 4) Searching of detained or arrested person(s)
- 5) Any other call or situation where the video system may be able to be used for evidentiary purposes.

In all instances, when circumstances allow the deputy to safely do so, vehicles should be positioned in such a way to show all actions that could be used as evidence (e.g. searching a person in front of vehicle, traffic stops to show vehicle that has been stopped, etc).

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**Integrity of Video Evidence:**

All in-car video systems will be set so that the system will not overwrite any recorded media. No one may alter or erase any such recording without the approval of the Sheriff.

Recordings that are determined to be of evidentiary value will be secured and tagged as is any other items of evidence, and a chain-of-custody will be kept of them. These recordings should be protected against overwrite by breaking off the recording tab (VHS tapes) or by sealing (DVD.)

Recorded media that is/are evidence shall be kept for as long as is practical to the case as is any other evidence. Each should be disposed of in the same manner as with other evidence.

**Release of Recorded Media:**

All recorded media made by video recording systems owned by the department, or made with any video recording system of duty related situations by any employee of the department, become the property of the department, regardless of the owner of the individual media to which the recording is made (VHS tape, DVD.)

The release of any such recorded media will be solely at the discretion of the sheriff or subsequent to any legal court order or pursuant to law. In any event the sheriff shall be notified before any recorded media is released.

A copy of any request or order to release any recorded media of a case will be kept on file with the case relating to the recorded event.

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## **128 PATROL VEHICLE/BODY CAMERAS**

### **128.1. PATROL VEHICLE/BODY CAMERA POLICY**

A policy to guide and regulate the Jasper County Sheriff Department in the use of Patrol Vehicle and Body Camera Equipment.

This section will dictate procedures and guidelines that must be followed in order for us to better protect and serve our citizens as well as any person or persons who may be found within our jurisdiction. Due to the nature of our profession, it has become necessary to adopt this video/audio recording policy. This will enable our supervisors and the Jasper County Sheriff Department Administrative Staff to prove the facts when dealing with any allegations and complaints that are filed against our deputies. It is imperative that this audio/video recording policy be strictly followed. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action against deputies who fail to comply or deviate from this policy.

### **128.2. DAILY OPERATION OF PATROL VEHICLE CAMERAS**

The Patrol Shift Supervisor (Lt.) or designee (Sgt.) will be responsible for the issue and retrieval of the video data cards to each member of their squad. The individual officer will be responsible for the installation and removal of the data card in the patrol vehicle camera system. In the event the camera system malfunctions and will not operate, the deputy will immediately notify his/her supervisor who will arrange for the maintenance or repair of the unit. In the event that a video card runs out before the deputy's tour of duty is complete, the officer will immediately notify his/her supervisor and a fresh card will be installed to complete the shift.

### **128.3. PATROL VEHICLE CAMERA STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

The Patrol Vehicle Camera will be activated during any vehicle pursuit, emergency (code 3) run, at any time anyone is placed in the rear seat of the patrol vehicle and at any time the deputy feels the vehicle camera could be used to capture valuable video evidence.

Whenever an deputy has a prisoner, suspect or any member of the public in the rear seat of the patrol vehicle, the rear-facing camera will be activated along with the vehicles audio equipment.

At the end of each shift, the supervisor will collect the deputy's video data cards and turn them over to the Patrol division commander for review and disposition.

#### **128.4. DAILY OPERATION OF PATROL BODY CAMERAS**

Each Patrol officer of the Jasper County Sheriff Dept. will be assigned a Taser Axon body or flex camera which will be labelled with the deputies number. These cameras will be kept in the patrol office and will be stored, when not in use, in a docking port. The docking port serves to upload all audio/video data captured by the device and as a battery charger.

While preparing for duty, each deputy will retrieve his/her body camera from the docking port in the patrol office and will wear and utilize the body camera throughout the shift. At the end of the shift, the deputy will place his/her body camera into a docking port for upload of data and recharge of the battery.

In the event a deputy's body camera fails to operate or malfunctions, he/she will notify the shift commander immediately. If spare camera systems are available, any the sheriff or chief deputy can temporarily assign a spare camera to the deputy until such time as repair or replacement can be effected.

Turn in of cameras for repair/replacement will be made through the sheriff or chief deputy.

Deputies will be held liable for any damage to, or loss of, body cameras, which occurs through Negligence on the part of the deputy.

#### **128.5. PATROL BODY CAMERA STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

Deputies assigned body cameras shall record all contacts with the public which are made while on duty in a law enforcement role. Meal breaks, restroom breaks, re-fueling vehicles etc. should not be recorded.

Unauthorized use, duplication, and/or distribution of sheriff department audio/video files are strictly prohibited.

Once activated, the recording shall not be intentionally terminated until the conclusion of the encounter.

Deputies shall not use the body camera to record any personal conversation of or between another member/employee without the recorded member/employee's knowledge.

As the cloud based evidence system only retains data for 90 days, it shall be the responsibility of the patrol deputy to download and burn to disk any audio/video data needed as evidence for court in misdemeanor cases. Video needed by the Criminal Investigation Division for use in felony prosecutions shall be downloaded and stored by the sheriff or chief deputy. Video evidence needed for investigations of complaints against deputy's shall be downloaded and stored by the Sheriff or Chief Deputy.

At no time should a deputy jeopardize his/her safety in order to activate a body camera.

**Revised: 8/18/16**