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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Wheat Ridge Police Department Body Camera Program

WHEAT RIDGE, Colo., June 5, 2020 -- The Wheat Ridge Police Department received a \$90,000 grant from U.S. Department of Justice funding the purchase of Personal Video Devices (PVDs) or body cameras in 2017. The systems were deployed in 2019 and training was provided to all uniformed officers and sergeants whose primary function is the enforcement of state laws and local ordinances.

Body Cameras are worn at all times by officers in uniform, and are used by WRPD to collect audio-visual evidence of criminal activity and to record officer's interactions with the public in compliance with all laws and department policy.

These recordings can be used to assist with the prosecution of criminal offenses, enhance interactions with the public, and provide assistance with officer training. The goal of this program is to provide accurate and unbiased recordings of officers during their interactions with the public.

Body cameras are manually activated at the start of any interaction between an officer and a member of the public where there is potential for enforcement and/or criminal investigation or for the encounter to become adversarial. Once activated, the camera will remain on (with some exceptions outlined in the policy) until the incident has reached a conclusion or until the officer leaves the scene. The camera system has a feature that allows members to mute the audio while the camera is activated. Officers are permitted to use this feature when discussing investigative techniques with other officers or in discussion including victim family information, protected personal information, or personal medical information.

Examples of situations in which body cameras are activated include but are not limited to the following:

- Traffic stops (e.g. traffic violations, stranded motorists)
- Emergency response
- Vehicle pursuit
- Suspicious vehicles/persons
- Arrests
- Vehicle/person searches
- Physical or verbal confrontations or use of force
- Pedestrian contacts
- DUI investigations
- Crimes

Digitally encrypted data is stored in a highly secure environment that is accessible to police personnel. Accessibility is limited based upon the level of security clearance assigned to the officer or professional staff officer.

A System Administrator assigns and tracks equipment, controls passwords, conducts quality checks of uploaded data, coordinates data retention, and provides copies of requested data to requesting officers. The System Administrator is also responsible for the day to day managing of the project, completing reports and providing administrative support as necessary. [To learn more about the department](#)

[To review the entire policy](#)

The Wheat Ridge Police Department focuses on community policing where officers can gain skills, expand their knowledge, and become part of a team of officers and staff who know and trust each other. A department of 90 sworn and 24.5 non-sworn, WRPD serves a thriving community bordered on the east by Denver, on the west by Golden, on the north by Arvada, and on the south by Lakewood. The City of 9.5 square miles has a population of 31,000. New development is currently underway in a number of locations bringing new residents and businesses to this vibrant community.

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