



NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL

CHAPTER: 41.3.8

TITLE: IN CAR CAMERA

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PURPOSE

This Chapter governs the use of In-Car camera systems, including activation, operation, and retention, as well as system maintenance. This Chapter does not alter a members' responsibility to comply with **Chapter 41.3.10 - Body Worn Camera**, nor does compliance with **Chapter 41.3.10 - Body Worn Camera** satisfy a members' obligation to comply with this Chapter.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. The New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) is committed to the belief that video/audio documentation of an officer's enforcement and investigative activities is an important and valuable resource for law enforcement. NOPD also is committed to respecting individuals' reasonable privacy expectations, including but not limited to medical and health privacy.
2. All Departmental vehicles primarily utilized for calls for service, self-initiated activity or prisoner transport shall be equipped with the In-Car Camera system. Use of this technology provides for video/audio documentation of a police officer's enforcement and investigative activities. The In-Car Camera can objectively document officer and community member conduct during individual interactions, provide powerful evidence of criminal activity, and protect both the public and officers from false allegations of misconduct. This Chapter is intended to achieve an appropriate balance between the benefits of In-Car Camera devices and an individual's reasonable expectations of privacy.
3. Audio or video recordings of enforcement or investigative actions may be evidence and subject to Departmental policies, municipal, state, and federal laws regarding disclosure.
4. The In-Car Camera system is designed to assist and complement officers in the performance of their duties. The In-Car Camera system records certain activities by creating an objective visual and/or audio record of the event and a possible supplement to the officer's report (La. R.S. 32:365(B)).
5. NOPD members shall complete authorized training regarding In-Car cameras and Department policy on their use prior to using an In-Car Camera in an operational setting. This training shall be conducted by the Education & Training Division for new members and by the District/Division System Administrator (DSA) for any member transferred from a unit without the required training.

6. The In-Car Camera system will be used to capture events and preserve recordings in a digital storage facility. NOPD shall not alter the original recordings.
7. NOPD has adopted the use of In-Car Camera technology to accomplish the following objectives:
 - (a) To promote officer safety;
 - (b) To document statements and events;
 - (c) To enhance the public trust by documenting officer interactions with the public;
 - (d) To preserve visual and audio information for use in current and future investigations, as well as courtroom preparation and presentation;
 - (e) To provide an objective means for self-critique and field evaluation during officer training;
 - (f) To assist supervisors with close and effective supervision; and
 - (g) To be utilized by the Education & Training Division to enhance training.

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this Chapter, the following terms are defined as:

Activate—Any process that causes the In-Car Camera system to transmit or store video or audio data.

Audio Recording—The electronic recording of conversation, spoken words, or other sounds.

Case or Folder—The placement of related recording(s) into a single "folder" or "case" file.

Case Number—NOPD incident Item Number associated with the event that was recorded using an In-Car Camera.

Continuous Recording—The constant streaming of live video to the In-Car Camera's internal buffer. This buffer is not retained until an event trigger has activated, causing the buffered period to be retained and made a part of the active recording.

Display Name—The geographic location (i.e. municipal address) where an event has occurred, which corresponds to the location associated with the item number for the event referenced.

District/Division System Administrator ("DSA")—Supervisor assigned to the district or division who is responsible for inventory control and operational maintenance of the In-Car Camera system equipment at a District/Division level.

Master System Administrator ("MSA")—Supervisor(s) authorized by NOPD and assigned to the Information Systems Section with full access to user rights; he/she assigns and tracks master inventory of equipment; controls passwords and end-user security access rights; is responsible for quality checks of video and sound quality; coordinates with District/Division System Administrators; and serves as liaison with representatives on operational and equipment related matters.

Media or Data—For the purposes of this Chapter, references to media or data include photographs, audio recordings and video footage captured by the In-Car Camera device. The media are stored digitally and encrypted.

Trigger—An action that causes the In-Car Camera to begin saving video/audio recordings, such as activating emergency lights, the vehicle collision sensor, or by manual activation.

Video Recording—The electronic recording of visual images with or without audio component.

Wireless Upload—The transfer of recordings from a vehicle's In-Car Camera to an assigned In-Car Camera server.

IN-CAR CAMERA MODES OF OPERATION

8. **Pre-Event Buffering Mode**—Device feature in which the camera continuously records and holds the most recent portion of video prior to record activation. With this feature, the initial event that causes the officer to activate recording is likely to be captured automatically, thereby increasing the capability of recording the entire activity.

Event Record Mode—The system is designed to automatically activate during certain activation triggers. However, officers may manually activate the recording.

9. Officers shall manually stop the recording once the event has concluded. The type of event must be manually classified by the officer based on the training specific to whichever ICC system the vehicle is equipped with.

REQUIRED ACTIVATION OF THE IN-CAR CAMERA

10. This Chapter is intended to achieve an appropriate balance between the benefits of In-Car Camera devices and civilians' reasonable expectations of privacy. Although this Chapter identifies those situations in which activation of the In-Car Camera is required, an officer has discretion to manually activate the system any time the officer believes it would be appropriate or valuable to document an event. The In-Car Camera shall be activated only for legitimate law enforcement purposes.

11. The In-Car Camera system is designed to activate whenever the unit's emergency lights are used. The system remains on until it is turned off manually.

12. While the system is designed to activate automatically, officers shall ensure the activation has occurred by manually verifying the system is recording as soon as the circumstances permit the officer to safely do so.

13. Officers shall ensure that the In-Car Camera system is activated in the following situations:

(a) All field contacts involving law enforcement activity within video or audio range, including, but not limited to:

- Emergency responses;
- Arrests;
- Suspicious vehicles;
- Terry Stops;
- Victim and witness interviews, including, but not limited to, missing persons and child welfare;
- Traffic stops (to include, but not limited to, traffic violations, stranded motorist assistance, suspicious vehicles and all crime interdiction stops);
- Vehicle pursuits, including when NOPD is supporting another agency's pursuit;
- Vehicle searches (includes requests for consent and deployment of drug-detection canines);
- DWI investigations including field sobriety tests;
- Transportation of non-Department members and/or prisoners;
- Any other contact that becomes adversarial after the initial contact in a situation that would not otherwise require recording; and

- Anticipated physical or verbal confrontations or use of force in view of the in-car camera.
- (b) Any situation in which the officer, through training and experience believes that the recording of an event would serve a legitimate law enforcement purpose. In exercising this discretion, officers should be aware of and sensitive to the individual's reasonable privacy expectations.

PROHIBITED IN-CAR CAMERA RECORDINGS BY EMPLOYEES

14. The In-Car Camera may not be used for the purpose of intimidating an individual or to discourage an individual from observing police activity, making appropriate inquiries of an officer, or making a complaint.
15. The In-Car Camera shall not be used to make recordings of members of the public that do not have a legitimate law enforcement purpose or are designed to embarrass or otherwise harass any individual.
16. The ICC shall not be used to record non-work-related personal activity.
17. Department members shall not use the ICC to make covert recordings of conversations with other Department members except with a court order, when necessary in the course of a criminal investigation, or for Department administrative investigations; **and** only with the express consent of the Superintendent of Police or the Deputy Chief of PIB.

CESSATION OF RECORDING

18. Once the In-Car Camera system is activated it shall remain on and shall not be turned off until the event has concluded. **For purposes of this Chapter, conclusion of an event has occurred when all arrests have been made and arrestees have been transported, or the officer has cleared the scene of a reported incident.**
19. In any instance in which cessation of the recording prior to the conclusion of the event may be required, the officer shall seek and obtain supervisory approval prior to deactivating the In-Car Camera. If supervisory approval cannot be reasonably obtained, officers must document on the In-Car Camera system the reason for termination of the recording prior to deactivation of the In-Car Camera and efforts made to obtain supervisory approval.

OWNERSHIP OF IN-CAR CAMERA RECORDINGS

20. All recording media, recorded images and audio records are the property of NOPD. Dissemination outside of NOPD is strictly prohibited, except to the extent permitted or required by law. In no event shall any recording be used or shown for the purpose of embarrassing or otherwise harassing any individual.
21. NOPD members are prohibited from copying or reproducing any In-Car Camera recordings for any purpose not allowed by NOPD regulations. NOPD personnel are prohibited from using a recording device (such as a phone camera or secondary video camera) to record In-Car Camera media without authorization from the Superintendent or his or her authorized designee. NOPD personnel shall not post any In-Car Camera video recordings in any computer system, server, or web site, including social media without authorization of the Superintendent or his / her authorized designee.

OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

22. Officers assigned a vehicle with an In-Car Camera system shall test the equipment prior to use according to the manufacturers guidelines and testing procedures. Each officer shall check that the previous recordings were transferred from the In-Car Camera system to the server such that the officer will have adequate recording media for the entire duty assignment. In the event the previous recordings were not transferred, the officer shall contact his/her supervisor.
23. Officers, while conducting their pre-tour inspection of their vehicles, must activate the system and create a brief recording, categorizing this video as a Test Video. Officers shall document the use of the In-Car Camera system on their daily activity report and on any written reports including electronic police reports and use of force reports.
24. It is the responsibility of the officer to ensure the In-Car Camera is working properly throughout the entire shift. This includes ensuring the In-Car Camera is connecting to the network for download.
25. Officers shall relocate their vehicles to designated parking areas of their district/unit station whenever they return including at the end of their tour of duty where the In-Car Camera will wirelessly transfer recordings to the In-Car Camera server.
26. Whenever an NOPD member believes that a recorded event may lead to a citizen complaint, he/she shall bring the recording to the attention of his/her immediate supervisor as soon as possible.
27. Officers shall immediately report malfunctioning, missing, or damaged In-Car Camera equipment to his/her supervisors
28. Officers shall immediately report when any event required to be recorded by this Chapter is not recorded or when an accidental recording takes place to his/her supervisor.

DESIGNATING IN-CAR CAMERA RECORDINGS FOR USE AS EVIDENCE

29. Department members shall properly categorize each In-Car Camera video made, according to their training and the system being utilized.
30. Department members shall categorize all In-Car Camera videos uploaded to "Evidence.com" as follows:
 - (a) **ID:** NOPD item number utilizing the corresponding alphabetic character for the month (A-L), followed by a hyphen (-), followed by a five digit incident number (use zeroes to form the five digit number if necessary), followed by a hyphen (-), followed by the year Indicator which is the last two digits of the current year (EXAMPLE: A-12345-14).
 - (b) **CATEGORY:** Choose the applicable category(s) from the dropdown list (miscellaneous shall be used only where the activity does not reasonably fall within another category).
 - (c) **EVENT:** Replace the "AXON Fleet Video" label with the address of the incident.

SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

31. Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that officers under their command use In-Car Cameras as required by this Chapter. Supervisors shall also be responsible for ensuring that officers under their command accurately document the use of the In-Car camera system on their daily activity report and any other written reports as appropriate,

including electronic police reports and use of force reports.

32. Supervisors shall immediately report non-functioning or full memory storage for In-Car Camera systems by departmental email to their respective District/Division System Administrator (DSA) and copy the District/Division Captain. In addition, the supervisor shall document the In-Car Camera malfunction on his/her daily activity report.
33. Supervisors shall determine whether vehicles with non-functioning or full In-Car Camera systems should be placed into service. If these vehicles are placed into service, the supervisor shall complete an interoffice correspondence (Form 105) and transmit that memo to the supervisor's respective District/Division System Administrator (DSA) with a copy forwarded to the District/Division Captain. If the vehicle is not placed into service, the supervisor shall ensure the vehicle is available for needed repairs.
34. Supervisors shall review all In-Car Camera recordings of officers listed on any report involving injuries to detainees/prisoners or officers; uses of force; vehicle pursuits; or misconduct complaints, as well as any recordings related to an event the officer believes may result in a misconduct complaint. The supervisor shall conduct any further investigation that he/she deems appropriate. If no incident report or supplemental report directly related to the possible citizen complaint is warranted, the supervisor shall document details of the contact via Interoffice Correspondence (Form 105). The NOPD member's supervisor shall be responsible for ensuring a copy of any report or correspondence related to the contact is forwarded to their respective District/Division Captain, Bureau Deputy Superintendent, and the Deputy Superintendent of the Public Integrity Bureau.
35. Supervisors shall regularly perform a random review of their subordinates' ICC recordings to assess officer performance and ensure proper use of the ICC is enforced, including the proper categorization of any videos. Reviews shall be conducted according to **Appendix A – BWC and ICC Review Guidelines**.
36. In addition to any review for investigatory or audit purposes, supervisors shall regularly review the In-Car Camera recordings of their subordinates to incorporate the knowledge gained from this review into the Supervisors' ongoing evaluation and supervision of officers.
37. Supervisors shall maintain a log at the platoon/unit level that shall contain:
 - (a) The date and name of the supervisor conducting the review;
 - (b) The name of the NOPD member whose recording was reviewed; and
 - (c) The identifying video number (item number or otherwise);
 - (d) The date and time the recording was produced.
38. Supervisors shall re-direct, counsel or recommend disciplinary actions for any officer found to fail to properly use or care for their assigned In-Car Camera.
39. When a situation arises that requires the immediate retrieval of an In-Car Camera recording (e.g., serious crime scenes, officer-involved shootings, NOPD vehicle crashes), a supervisor from the involved member's chain of command or the assigned investigator shall notify the MSA. In the event a vehicle equipped with an In-Car Camera is involved in a crash (20X) the recording shall be reviewed by the supervisor handling the "Supervisor Report of Accident." The Supervisor handling the accident can obtain a "certified copy" of the video by submitting a request, in writing, to the MSA. The duplicated copy shall be made part of the administrative report.

DISTRICT/DIVISION SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR

40. The DSA shall ensure all NOPD officers that use an In-Car Camera in their District/Division have proper training and are using the equipment according to this Chapter. The DSA shall be responsible for coordinating maintenance or repairs issues with the Master System Administrator (MSA) assigned to the Information Technology Section.
41. In the event of a malfunction preventing wireless transfer of the videos, the DSA will submit a request through the In-Car Camera repair log, requesting repair of the In-Car Camera.
42. When the DSA has been notified of a malfunctioning In-Car Camera system or component, he/she shall notify the MSA within 24 hours, using the In-Car Camera Repair log, and make arrangements to have the equipment repaired. The DSA shall follow up on any vehicles that have been sent for repairs.
43. The DSA shall monitor the operation of the In-Car Camera system(s) at the district/unit level, ensuring officer compliance for training and integrity purposes, including:
 - (a) Monitoring video for correct video classification;
 - (b) Ensuring officers are following proper usage guidelines for the system; and
 - (c) Ensuring officers are stopping recordings at the end of events.
44. The DSA shall maintain the inventory and current status for all In-Car Camera equipment in his/her District/Division. The DSA shall provide the Field Operations Bureau and the Mobile Video Unit (MVU) with a monthly inventory report (Form 203), that will include In-Car Camera equipment listed by vehicle, with its current location, current working status, and action taken if repairs are needed.
45. The DSA shall notify the ICC System Administrator and MSA, in writing, when In-Car Camera equipment is physically moved from one location to another, or when there is a change in physical inventory requiring alteration of records.
46. When a vehicle has been involved in a crash, the DSA or designee shall, within 24 hours, notify the Mobile Video Unit of the crash and the current location of the involved vehicle via the In-Car Camera repair log. The DSA shall ensure every effort is made to prevent further damage to the In-Car Camera by its exposure to the elements, until the exposed equipment can be removed. The DSA or a designee may remove the In-Car Camera DVR if this can be completed without damaging the In-Car Camera equipment.

FLEET SERVICES SECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

47. The NOPD Fleet and Equipment Services section shall be responsible for recovery of the entire In-Car Camera system from a permanently out of service vehicle within 96 hours of being notified of the vehicle's deletion. Once the In-Car Camera system is removed from the vehicle, the Information Systems Section shall notify the MSA that they have removed the system from a deleted unit by sending a brief report to the Mobile Video Unit indicating the vehicle A# and Car#, along with an inventory of the In-Car Camera equipment removed from the vehicle.
48. The Fleet Services Section shall notify the MSA in advance of deleting vehicles from NOPD inventory by sending a brief report to the MSA, listing the A#, as well as Car# of the deleted vehicle.

MASTER SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR (MSA)

49. NOPD's Master System Administrator ("MSA") assigned to the Information Systems Section shall coordinate access requests to the recorded events for officers and investigators for legitimate law enforcement purposes or as directed by the Superintendent of Police or his/her designee. In addition, the MSA shall be responsible for the storage, management, and duplication of all recorded media.
50. The MSA shall also be responsible for the following:
 - (a) Long-term storage of media deemed to be of evidentiary value consistent with the NOPD's storage protocols and retention schedule;
 - (b) Creating Cases or Editing Cases for districts/units where there are mechanical or technical malfunctions;
 - (c) The removal and storage of In-Car Cameras and their components from damaged and wrecked vehicles, once notified;
 - (d) Providing recording to the Accident Review Board;
 - (e) Ensuring access controls are in place;
 - (f) Assigning and tracking inventory of equipment;
 - (g) Password control;
 - (h) End-user security access rights;
 - (i) Quality checks of video and sound quality;
 - (j) Coordinating with the District/Division System Administrators;
 - (k) Serving as liaison to manufacturer's representative on operation equipment related matters; and
 - (l) Providing data pursuant to a court order and other authorized release or distribution.

DUPLICATING AND RETAINING RECORDS

51. Duplications belong to NOPD and no duplications will be made or released to the public without approval of the Superintendent of Police or in compliance with the law. Video recordings shall be made publicly available consistent with Louisiana Public Records Law (La. R.S. 44:1 *et seq.*). Where Louisiana Public Records Law does not require that a recording be made publicly available, NOPD shall balance privacy concerns against the need for transparency in determining whether to make the video publicly available.
52. Duplication of the recordings may be compiled to become part of a criminal investigation, officer training purposes, administrative investigations, or as specified by the Superintendent of Police. All In-Car Camera recordings are subject to review by the Public Integrity Bureau, and any relevant recording shall be made part of the investigative file per PIB guidelines.
53. Any requests for a certified copy of a video must be submitted on an ICC Request Form (Form 204) and be forwarded to the Mobile Video Unit. Any requests from outside NOPD must also be submitted through the NOPD Records Section.
54. Digital recordings shall be preserved in a manner consistent with the **City of New Orleans Chief Administrative Office Policy Memorandum No. 127, Records Management** unless a written request is made to store them for a longer period of time for a legitimate law enforcement purpose determined by the Superintendent of Police or his/her designee.

APPENDIX A – BWC and ICC Review Guidelines

These guidelines do not address a supervisors' mandatory obligations to review videos required by Departmental policy on such matters as reviewing uses of force, misconduct investigations, vehicle pursuits, and injuries to a prisoner or an officer.

Clarifying the **discretionary review** process for BWC and ICC will help the Department accomplish the following goals:

- Making sure supervisors conduct timely, accurate and complete performance evaluations of their subordinates;
- Facilitating supervisors' ability to provide helpful feedback to their officers concerning their performance;
- Making sure officers "are working actively to engage the community and increase public trust and safety" (See, Para. 306, Consent Decree); and
- Making sure supervisors "review recordings regularly... to incorporate the knowledge gained from this review into their ongoing evaluation and supervision of officers" (See, Para. 328(f), Consent Decree).

Sergeant's Responsibilities:

- Each platoon sergeant should review at least one in-car or body-worn camera video of officers under his/her supervision, on average, each work day, for a total of at least 21 per month. Circumstances may prevent sergeants from reviewing video on a daily basis, but supervisors may make multiple reviews on less busy days in order to meet the monthly goal.
- The video reviews should not be solely of one category (BWC or ICC) but should be a combination of the two.

Lieutenant's Responsibilities

- Each platoon lieutenant should review at least one BWC or ICC video, on average, each work day, for a total of at least 21 per month.
- At least six of these reviews should be of their subordinate sergeants' interaction with persons other than officers. The other reviews should be of videos already reviewed by sergeants of officers' activities. This ensures that lieutenants are exercising close and effective supervision of the subordinate sergeants and officers the lieutenants are charged with supervising.

Suggested Topics of Discretionary BWC/ICC Reviews:

- Quality of officer interaction with persons (non-enforcement related);
- Terry Stops/Investigatory Stops;
- Crisis Intervention incidents;
- Arrests; and
- General Officer Performance.

Length of Video Reviews (on average):

- It is not necessary to review an entire video of a particular call for service. The length of the review should be long enough for lieutenants to meaningfully assess the quality of the issue under consideration (quality of Terry Stop or arrest; quality of officer interaction with citizens, etc.).

- The review should not include an assessment of the sergeant's or officer's travel time, unless the lieutenant is critiquing the sergeant's or officer's driving habits or involves a mandated review of alleged misconduct.
- The video review should assess the officer's actions once he or she has arrived on the scene.

Additional General Comments

- District Captains may direct their subordinates to review additional BWC/ICC videos over the course of a month.
- All reviews of BWC/ICC videos must be logged in the Department's "L" Drive in compliance with Department policy.
- District Platoon and DIU supervisors are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that all platoon personnel are initiating BWC and ICC videos as outlined in Chapters 41.3.8 (In-Car Camera) and 41.3.10 (Body-Worn Camera).