



SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT
155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

MEDIA RELEASE



DATE/TIME: Wednesday, July 26, 2017

LOCATION: City of Santa Cruz

TOPIC: Santa Cruz Police Department Set To Test Body-Worn Cameras

INFORMATION:

Santa Cruz Police Launches Body-Worn Camera Field Test

(SANTA CRUZ, CA) – Santa Cruz Police Department today announced the launch of a body-worn camera pilot test program.

“We are excited to finally bring this body-camera initiative to our department,” said Deputy Chief Rick Martinez. “It speaks directly to our desire to be transparent with our community.” The overall goal of the body worn camera program is to enhance community trust by documenting law enforcement encounters with the public while advocating accountability, transparency, and professionalism.

A group of 11 patrol officers volunteered to wear the body-worn cameras during a month-long trial period. The field-testing phase will allow officers to assess the effectiveness of the body camera equipment. The test group of officers will participate in a mandatory training session before patrol use. The cameras are to be tested on officers who work in both urban and suburban patrol units, including specialized units like Traffic Enforcement and Bike Patrol. The strategy will provide a variety of video footage and the accompanying data generated by officers who work in a variety of assignments and environments.

The test period is also an opportunity to examine the department’s proposed policy on body-worn cameras. A work group of members of the Santa Cruz Police Department has spent time researching lessons learned at other agencies (Santa Cruz County Sheriff, Capitola PD, Salinas PD, Gilroy PD and San Jose PD) and studying federal directives in preparation for the implementation of body cameras in the City of Santa Cruz.

The implementation of a policy for body worn cameras is a “working document” during the field-testing phase. It is subject to change depending on our assessment of the equipment’s effectiveness. The Chief’s Advisory Committee, composed of community members, reviewed the policy in May 2017. The department considered the suggestions and comments provided by the community stakeholders. Where legally possible, amendments were made to the document.

Video footage generated during the test period is considered the same as the police dashboard camera video. It is subject to the provisions of the Evidence Codes and the Public Records Acts and cannot be released if it is evidentiary.

Full implementation and deployment will be contingent on the assessment of the vendor's equipment culminating the field-testing stage. The approximate cost to outfit the entire department with body-worn cameras is \$390,000.

Santa Cruz Police Department encourages feedback from the community as it continues to become familiar with this new technology and refine best practices incorporating body-worn cameras.

Questions and comments regarding SCPD Body-Worn Camera can be submitted [here](#)

[Santa Cruz Police Department Body-Worn Camera Policy](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions - English](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions -Spanish](#)

For more information, please visit [SCPD Community Policing](#)

For additional information, contact: Joyce Blaschke

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Anonymous tips can also be sent to the police department through our Tip Line (831) 420-5995, or from our Website; www.santacruzpolice.com. Tipsters can also submit an anonymous tip via our smartphone app or from an SMS text. Visit our Website for instructions.

Photo
- SCPD Officer with body-worn camera

