


MONROE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

General Order

CHAPTER: 032-G		TITLE: In-Car Camera Video/Audio Recordings
EFFECTIVE DATE: March 23, 2011	NO. PAGES: 3	REVIEWED/REVISED: November 29, 2022
 Sheriff of Monroe County		

- I. **PURPOSE:** This directive provides guidelines for all Monroe County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) personnel assigned a vehicle equipped with an in-car video/audio recording system and establishes the following:

- A. Procedures for operation and control of video obtained on digital video systems.
- B. Procedures for the electronic storage of digital video obtained by this recording equipment.

- II. **POLICY:** It is the policy of the Monroe County Sheriff's Office to use in-car video/audio recording equipment to document contacts with citizens arising from traffic stops and other law enforcement events for the purpose of gathering recorded evidence to assist in court prosecution of violators of both traffic and criminal laws. In-car video/audio recording will also be used but not limited to the below:

- A. To help ensure deputy safety;
- B. As a training aid;
- C. For quality assessment of deputy/citizen contacts; and
- D. In response to complaints against personnel.

III. PROCEDURE

A. IN-CAR VIDEO/AUDIO RECORDING:

- 1. In-car video/audio recorders:
 - a. Shall be wired to automatically activate with the vehicle's emergency equipment (i.e. blue lights).
 - b. Shall have a manual activation switch for use during street encounters or during situations when emergency equipment is not required.
 - c. Are configured for a 30-second pre- and post-event record period which will capture video but not audio recordings. The speed trigger activates the in-car video/audio recording system when the vehicle speed reaches 70 mph.
- 2. In-car video/audio recordings, where possible:
 - a. Should be used to obtain information and evidence when investigating criminal cases

- b. Should be used in the investigations of driving under the influence (DUI) and other criminal investigations
 - c. Should be used during other law enforcement activities including, but not limited to, the recording of routine traffic stops, street encounters, pursuits and emergency responses
 - d. Every effort should, where possible, be made to document all street encounters on in-car video/audio recorders.
 - e. All deputies, whose vehicles have agency video/audio recording capability, should, where possible, use the systems during all traffic stops and street encounters from initial contact to the conclusion; including all back up/assist units.
3. Manual deactivation of in-car video/audio recording is permissible when recording times would be extended by the use of emergency lights such as rendering assistance with traffic control or non-enforcement contacts (e.g. stand-by, road hazard, special detail, etc.). Manual deactivation is also allowed when the video would no longer have evidentiary value.
 4. In-car video/audio recordings are used for official law enforcement purposes only. Deputies will not activate their wireless microphone while in MCSO buildings or other public/private venues not authorized by this written directive.
 5. No deputy sheriff shall use in-car video/audio recording equipment until he/she has been properly trained on use of such equipment. Training will be provided by Information Technology (IT) or a designee prior to use.
 6. Each deputy sheriff shall inspect his/her in-car video/audio recording equipment prior to the beginning of each shift. Any malfunction, damage, or change in operating condition of the in-car video/audio recording equipment shall be brought to the attention of the deputy's immediate supervisor. The supervisor shall determine if the in-car video/audio recording equipment should be placed out of service and submitted for repair. This will be documented by the supervisor in an email to their district/division commander.
 7. Only in-car video/audio recorders and accessories (i.e. cameras, microphones, cables etc.) approved by the IT director or designee shall be installed in agency vehicles. Temporary installation of surveillance equipment is excluded.
 8. Digitally recorded media on the in- car video/audio recording system will be uploaded to an authorized server on the MCSO network via wireless or cable transmission. Deputies should make every attempt to upload digitally recorded events during or at the end of their shift rotation. Digitally recorded events shall not be kept on any deputy's in- car video/audio system for longer than a 1-week period unless authorized by a supervisor. Supervisors shall periodically review the deputies upload audit reports to ensure compliance.
 9. Deputies should notify the Training Division of any recorded events that may assist in furtherance of officer safety or provide documentation for training purposes.
 10. Deputies shall note in the evidence section of their report (i.e. incident, arrest, etc.) that video/audio recordings were obtained. Deputies should also note if their audio/recording equipment malfunctioned in any way or if their recording unit has been placed out of service.
 11. Deputies are responsible for properly tagging all digitally recorded events to ensure proper retention periods in accordance with agency policy and state law. Categories such as DUI, felony, misdemeanor, pursuit, etc. will be utilized to tag events recorded on in-car video/audio recording equipment. Properly tagging events ensures that proper retention rates are set to

each recorded video. In addition, deputies are required to put the report number under the comment field when tagging the video.

12. Supervisors whose deputies utilize in-car video/audio recording equipment shall ensure that all deputies follow established procedures for the proper use and handling of all recording equipment and the proper uploading, retention and management of recorded events.
13. It is the responsibility of the deputy sheriff who is assigned an in-car camera video/audio recording system, to immediately notify his/her chain of command for notification to the State Attorney's Office (SAO) he/she becomes aware of lost or corrupted video evidence via email.

B. RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF IN-CAR CAMERA VIDEO/AUDIO

1. Digitally recorded events are managed for retention by back office automated software located on the MCSO network. These recordings are retained in adherence with this written directive and the statutory requirements pertaining to the storage of video/audio evidence. The back office server will be programmed to perform automated purges to delete any video/audio files set to expire as described in this written directive. If a digitally recorded event is required beyond the minimum retention period of each category, as required by statutory limits or this written directive, it is the responsibility of the originating deputy sheriff to request that the evidence be archived.
2. Only the Sheriff, Manager of the Records Division, the Public Information Officer or designee may satisfy request for copies for public use. Video/audio recordings obtained on agency in-car camera video/audio recording equipment shall not be released to the public without prior approval from an authorized person designated above. Request for copies of digital video which extend outside the agency or the SAO shall be subject to the provisions of F.S. Chapter 119.

C. REQUIREMENTS FOR DOCUMENTED REVIEW

1. The Professional Standards Division shall perform an annual review of MCSO's In-Car Camera Video/Audio Recording practices to ensure conformity with the agency's policies and procedures and shall conduct a documented annual review of at least 10 In-Car Video/Audio Recordings.
2. Recommendations for changes, training and/or further investigation will be made if any deficiencies or concerns are found.