



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STRATHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT DEPLOYS BODY WORN CAMERAS

The officers of the Stratham Police Department will now have a new piece of equipment to use while on-duty: body worn cameras. Starting January 9, 2023, body worn cameras will be required for all officers who regularly respond to calls for service and perform other law enforcement duties. Officers will wear and turn on their cameras when responding to a call, conducting a traffic stop, conducting a search, transporting someone in their vehicle and when involved in a pursuit or an interview.

The use of body worn cameras is an effective tool a law enforcement agency can use to demonstrate its commitment to transparency, ensure the accountability of its members, increase the public's trust in officers, and protect its members from unjustified complaints of misconduct. As such, the Stratham Police Department has committed to establishing a BWC program that reinforces its responsibility for protecting public and officer safety.

Body-worn cameras are relatively small devices that record interactions between police and community members. These video and audio recordings are intended to document statements, observations, behaviors and other evidence, and to deter unprofessional, illegal and inappropriate behaviors by both law enforcement and the community.

In 2020, the Commission on Law Enforcement Accountability, Community and Transparency (LEACT) recommended that New Hampshire "encourage all law enforcement agencies to use body and/or dash cameras." This recommendation stopped short of a statewide mandate on cameras, and right now there is no law that requires law enforcement officers to use body cameras in New Hampshire. "In an effort to be transparent and accountable to the public, we thought it was in the community's best interest to not wait for a possible mandate," said Chief Anthony King. "We have already created longstanding relationships within our community. This provides the opportunity to enforce and build upon that trust and confidence that this police department has earned, and the community deserves. It is a win-win situation as these devices can protect both the public and our officers." King said.

For the past year, the police department has researched, field-tested, and developed policy towards future acquisition and implementation of these devices. The purchase of (14) cameras with the chosen vendor, Watch Guard by Motorola, was made possible with grant funds received through the Small, Rural, and Tribal Body-Worn Camera Micro-Grant Program (SRTBWC), provided by the Bureau of Justice Assistance of the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice and Justice & Security Strategies.