

**Benefits of body-worn cameras**

- Provide compelling evidence in criminal prosecutions by recording events, statements, searches and other key moments in the early stages of a case;
- Promote accountability and transparency about law enforcement agencies and the work of their officers, thereby enhancing community relations;
- Improve the behavior of both citizens and officers when they know their conduct is being recorded – thereby increasing safety and reducing “use of force” incidents;
- Debunk frivolous complaints about officer misconduct;
- Reduces the number of investigations and lawsuits, saving police departments time and money;
- Facilitates quicker resolution of complaints;
- Increases the likelihood of more accurate documentation of police accounts and improves accuracy of reports;
- Allow police departments to monitor the work of their officers, both for training purposes and in situations where an officer’s performance requires review;
- Provides useful information related to assessing and improving policies or protocols;
- Assists in documenting chaotic and complex scenes.

**Concerns of body-worn cameras**

- The large financial investment needed for hardware, software, storage, personnel, and training;
- The onerous job of managing, storing and providing discovery of any video recordings generated – particularly for medium to large departments handling thousands of hours of footage;
- Intrusions into the privacy rights of people being recorded – especially when incidents occur inside of homes or involve non-investigatory/enforcement situations;
- Intrusions into the privacy rights of law enforcement officers wearing the cameras;
- The public availability of body-worn camera recordings pursuant to state and federal open-records laws;
- The potential chilling effect on interviews with sensitive witnesses and informants;
- The complexities of handling encounters involving privileged information – such as medical, mental health, attorney-client, religious or marital communications;
- Inadvertent capturing of personal, embarrassing or irrelevant comments/events when officers mistakenly leave a camera on or forget the camera is on;
- Public misconceptions – potentially carried into the jury pool – that video will always be present and/or will always resolve factual disputes; and
- Public misconceptions that body-worn cameras are always equal to or better than humans at capturing events.

## ATTACHMENT A

Despite the fact body-worn cameras are a new and emerging technology and there are clearly challenges associated with implementing the cameras, many police departments are moving forward with programs to implement them. There are logical reasons to do so. The cameras make a visual and audio evidentiary record in criminal or other law enforcement matters and can help officers correctly document the incidents during their shifts. Due to highly publicized national events – like the Ferguson and Garner cases – there is strong public and government pressure to employ cameras because of this documentary function. The cameras also can help officers deflect frivolous complaints about their conduct, saving the officers from the ordeal of an internal investigation and saving agencies precious budget dollars.

### **Survey of Law Enforcement in Colorado**

In a recent survey by the Colorado Peace Officers Standards and Training Board (POST), law enforcement agencies across the state were asked if their officers are equipped with body-worn cameras; of the 170 agencies that responded, 47 agencies (27.7%) said they are currently using the cameras. Another 93 agencies (55%) are considering using body-worn cameras in the near future.

In Douglas County, Lone Tree Police Department has deployed body-worn cameras, Parker Police recently implemented body-worn cameras and the Douglas County Sheriff's Office is currently researching and evaluating body-worn cameras.