



Guide to Body Cameras for Campus Security

**Get a complete understanding from the benefits
and important product features to implementation guidance.**

Body-worn cameras are gaining traction as an essential tool for campus security teams. With a myriad of choices in the market, it can be daunting to pinpoint the ideal body-worn camera for your campus environment. However, here is a comprehensive guide to inform you about all things body-worn camera related.

Benefits of Bodycam Implementation

Ensuring Safety

The primary motive for integrating body cameras is to ensure the safety of everyone on campus. The mere presence of a body camera can discourage potential aggressive behaviors toward a security officer on duty. Similarly, having body cameras encourages campus security to adhere to protocols. Campus security aims to maintain a trusting and transparent relationship with its community, and equipping security personnel with body cameras is a testament to this commitment.

Refute False Claims

Incidents on campus can unfold rapidly, and it can be challenging for security staff to remember every moment precisely while managing and defusing a situation. With body cameras, officers can document incidents, and the footage can be revisited, clearing them from any false allegations. Body cameras also alleviate the pressure on the officer to remember every single detail.



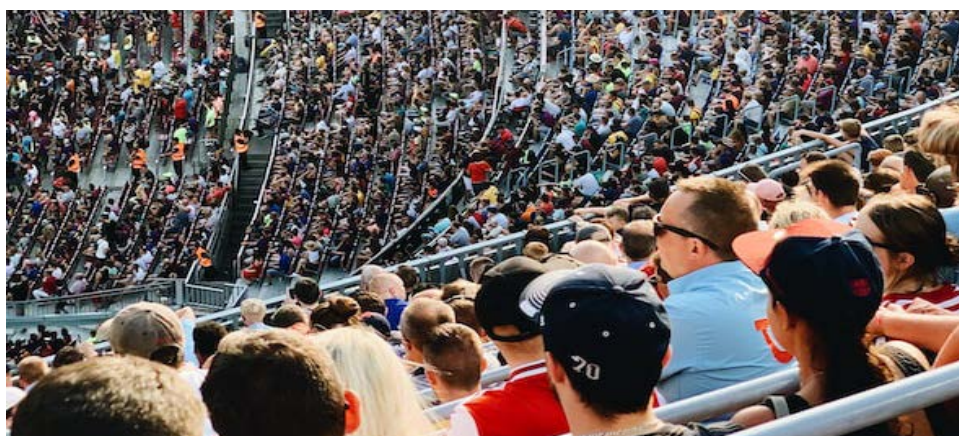


Upholding Integrity

Campus security aims to uphold the integrity of their personnel. With body-worn cameras in place, incidents are documented transparently. If a security employee oversteps boundaries, campus security leadership is responsible for taking appropriate action.

See the Complete Story

Most campuses likely have some fixed indoor and outdoor building video surveillance coverage. It may cover much of the campus, but those camera views don't cover everything and lack the officer's perspective. Officers won't have a top-down view of situations that CCTV systems capture, so the body camera perspective is crucial when reviewing footage. If multiple security personnel are involved in an incident, their cameras capture various perspectives, simplifying the process of understanding how a situation unfolded.



What Bodycam Features Matter Most?

There are many features you'll find with body cameras. Many cameras were initially designed only with traditional patrol policing in mind and aren't quite as relevant to campus safety or are equipped with features that are rarely needed or used. It can be overwhelming trying to determine which ones matter the most.

Camera Perspective and Mounting

Camera placement is crucial for campus security personnel, as it directly impacts the quality of footage obtained. A too-low placement might only capture the ground instead of the actual event. While there are options to attach cameras to sunglasses or hats, these can be dislodged during confrontations and can be quite shaky, even with image stabilization on the device.

A preferred location is on the chest, but the mounting choice may vary depending on the uniform. Be sure to try out the mounting on your uniforms and find a vendor that offers a variety of mounting options.





RFID Integration

RFID login simplifies the assignment process for campus security personnel. Simply select a camera, scan, and you're set for your patrol. This feature removes the need for designated cameras for specific personnel.

Extended Battery Life

The ideal body camera will last through an officer's entire shift without any problems. So, whether you run 8, 10, or 12-hour shifts, opt for a body camera that can accommodate 14 or more hours of recording time. Just like a cell phone, body camera batteries will not last as long as they did when they were new in future years, so ensuring you have one that will last a full shift in year 3 or 4 is a smart choice. Additionally, single and multi-camera docking stations that recharge the device and facilitate the automatic upload of video footage for review are better for streamlining that process instead of multiple steps to offload the data.



Replaceable Battery

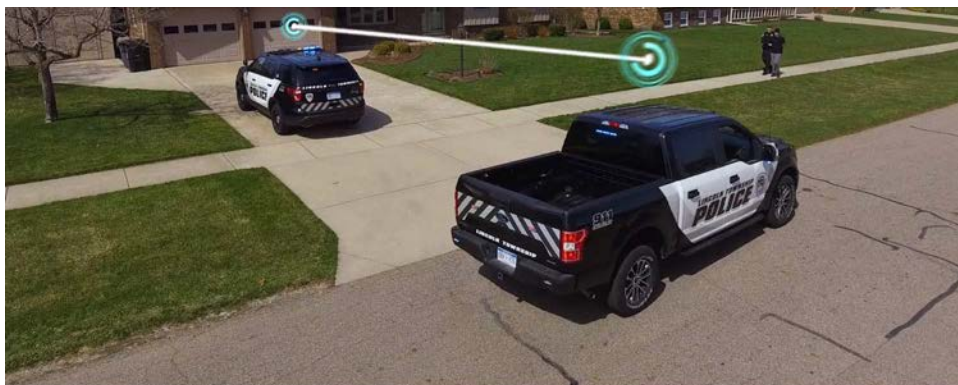
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Proximity Activation

Proximity activation ensures that body cameras are automatically triggered when within a 30-foot range of another body camera or patrol vehicle — regardless of whether that vehicle has an onboard video system. Rapid developments on a campus setting can escalate without warning, and security staff shouldn't have to be concerned about whether their camera is recording in critical moments. This feature allows campus security personnel to remain focused on emergent situations.



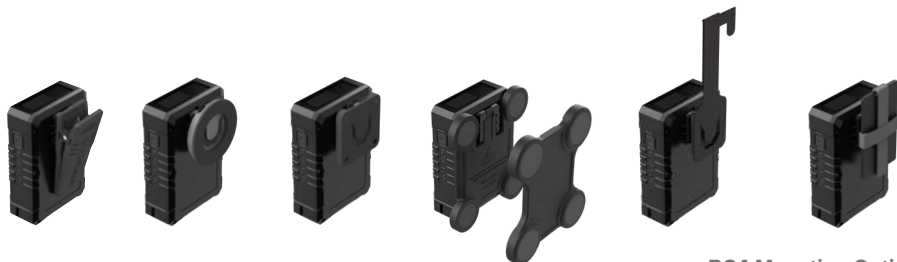
Durability

Given the diverse environments campus security personnel operate in, it's crucial for body cameras to be robust and durable. When considering a body camera, it's important to inspect how durable they are and check to see if its waterproof, shock, temperature specifications meet your expectations. Don't forget to evaluate the quality of the desired mounting solution.

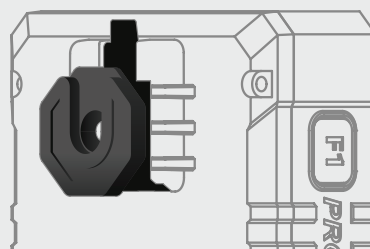
Many vendors offer a host of mounting options, but they aren't all equally durable. A minute difference in the thickness of a polycarbonate composite material used in a mounting clip could be the difference between having to repeatedly reorder mounting clips and cameras falling off while in the field.

Ease of Use

From user-friendly devices that are simple to operate to intuitive software solutions, it's imperative that the body camera solution doesn't become a burden and will ensure consistent usage and buy-in. Seemingly little details can make a big difference, from simple one-touch recording activation to intuitive recording status indication from audible and visible alerts. Also, the integration between vehicle cameras and body cameras can be helpful and save time in activation and in the evidence management system.



BC4 Mounting Options



Data Management

With body-worn cameras comes the need to store all their data. An evidence management system, especially a cloud-based one, is vital to the success of your institution. A cloud-based system alleviates the hassle of servers and complicated IT infrastructure to house video files. It is also generally more secure due to maintaining CJIS compliance that includes geographic redundancy, among other benefits. Officers can review, redact, tag, add meta data, manage, and securely share data as needed from an internet browser. Customizable permissions, audit trails, and user groups ensure the right permissions are shared with users and all activity is recorded.



Stabilized Video Capture in Motion

When an officer has to run full speed in pursuit or chase, video on most body camera options is shaky to the point where viewers can experience nausea trying to follow along. The lack of stability can be mitigated with the implementation of the recent Electronic Image Stabilization (EIS) technology.

Acknowledge Limitations

It's important to note that every technology will have some sort of limitations. Body cameras are limited, like any other camera, based on lighting, weather, and where they are mounted. For example, the picture quality and detail seen on a sunny summer day will be better than on a cold winter evening during a snowstorm. If an officer's chest faces one direction, and he/she turns their head to face another, the camera won't be able to show what they saw. Recognizing this fact when reviewing is important.

Purchase & Implementation

Check for Funding Assistance

As noted previously, there's an increasing trend in campuses around the country to adopt body cameras for security personnel. Often, there are opportunities to seek grants or funding assistance for body cameras. Check to see what funding is available at the state level as many states are providing this funding.

Create an Implementation Plan

Determine where the docking stations will be mounted. How many docking stations are needed, and what departments need to be involved to install them? What's the timeframe for rolling them out? Will it be all at once or at a certain interval?

Getting the IT team involved early to ensure proper infrastructure is in place for the hardware to connect to the network and be able to quickly upload footage to the cloud is crucial. Part of implementation is sharing the details and timing of the implementation with internal and external teams, so everyone is prepared. This can even include a press release that local media can use to get the word out.





Develop & Publish the Policy

Take note of state laws on retention, policies, when cameras need to be on, how/where public requests are to be made, etc. Seek guidance from legal experts and be aware of any other legal or ethical considerations, including privacy and consent laws.

Once completed and the program is up and running, publish it to your organization's website to ensure transparency. Here are some examples from Penn State and Loyola University.

Prioritize Training

From how to use the cameras and software, policies, state laws, and privacy considerations, training needs to be a priority for a successful program. Many agencies also require annual refresher training along with training related to deescalation and use of force.

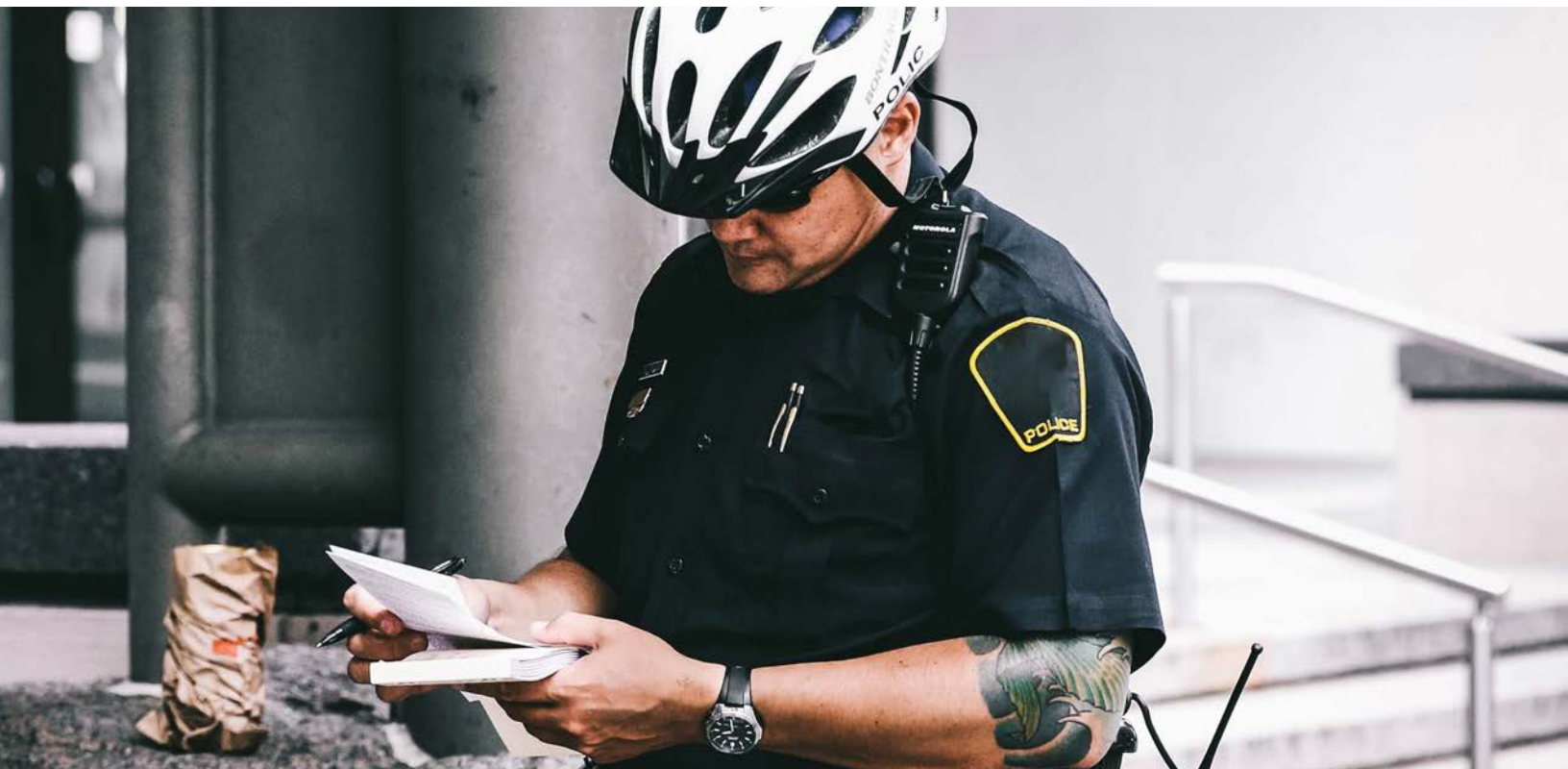
Measure Success

Review any quantifiable changes from use-of-force incidents to officer complaints. Has there been a decrease or increase since the implementation? Given that these measures are one of the greatest reasons to adopt body cameras, it's important to review the before and after effects.



The Efficacy of Body-Worn Cameras

Body-worn cameras can significantly enhance the effectiveness and transparency of campus safety organizations. When used thoughtfully, ethically, and in compliance with relevant laws, they can help create safer and more accountable campus environments. However, it is essential to regularly reassess and adapt policies and procedures to address evolving challenges and technology.



Questions?

Do you have more questions that we haven't covered here or in our other industry-specific articles? Contact a sales representative to help get your questions answered and find a mobile video solution that fits you.

Pro-Vision's mobile video solutions protect your personnel and give them the tools they need to do their jobs effectively.

About Pro-Vision

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