



Office of Mayor Lawrence J. Morrissey  
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## PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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**DATE : March 4, 2016**

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### *INFORMATION RELEASE*

On Monday March 7, 2016, the Rockford Police Department will deploy a pilot body worn camera program that has been in development since June 2015. The Department is committed to protecting both the safety and welfare of the public as well as its own officers. Recordings from the Body Worn Camera (BWC) can provide the Department and the community with an invaluable instrument to assist the department in achieving its goal of police legitimacy through the practice of procedural justice, which gives the citizen a voice, shows neutrality, respect and trustworthiness by providing objective documentation of police interactions with the public.

The Department has selected 13 volunteer officers from various shifts to test and evaluate cameras provided by Taser's Axon camera system for a period of 60 days, with plans of testing other vendors in the future. Use of this technology provides for video and audio documentation of a police officer's citizen contacts and enforcement and investigative activities from the perspective of the officer's person. The Department has designed policy intended to achieve an appropriate balance between the benefits of BWC devices and civilians' and officers' reasonable expectations of privacy.

Video and audio recordings of enforcement or investigative actions are evidence and public record, and, therefore, subject to rules of evidence and laws of disclosure. By policy, BWCs must be on at all times when an officer is in uniform, and is responding to calls for service or engaged in any law enforcement related activity. The officers involved in the pilot program have all received training regarding legal aspects, policies and procedures, voice recording equipment, camera equipment, and data file management.

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