

DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 04-23

OFFICE of the CHIEF OF POLICE
REPLACES: General Order 98-25
SOP 300.54.00

DATE: July 15, 2004

INTERNAL USE OF RECORDING DEVICES

I. PURPOSE.

The protection of basic privacy rights is generally a common expectation necessary to promote the inter-personal trust and open dialog necessary to the effective operations of the Police Department. As such, the use of recording devices shall be restricted to official applications only.

II. DEFINITIONS.

Recording Device – A machine or device such as a video camera, tape recorder, camera phones, disc camera, etc., designed to register visual and/or audio data by mechanical or electronic means

III. ACCEPTED USAGE.

There are several instances where the use of recording devices shall be employed by the department for official purposes. These are:

- A. In-car video camera systems will document both a visual and audio record of officer-initiated traffic/investigative stops, or provide a visual record each time the overhead visibar lights are activated. The purpose of the recordings are to promote officer safety.
- B. Video and audio recording systems shall monitor various sections of the Police Department to include the prisoner processing area, interior hallways,

exterior doors, and the parking facility. Again the purpose is to promote employee safety, while concurrently addressing facility security.

- C. Recording systems are installed on specific department telephones to automatically record conversations conducted via such equipment. The purpose is to provide a method to review phone dialogue received by this department for quality control.
- D. Recording devices may be openly or surreptitiously employed as part of a sanctioned internal affairs investigation specifically authorized in advance by the Chief of Police.

IV. PROHIBITED USAGE.

The use of one or more recording devices by department employees to mechanically or electronically record the conversation and/or physical image of another member of the department without that person's prior knowledge and permission is strictly prohibited.

However, the prohibition shall not apply to those types of official recordings listed above, nor is it intended to exclude those recordings that the department routinely uses in the normal course of operations.

V. DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

Employees found to be in violation of secretly or clandestinely recording department personnel via mechanical or electronic means shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

BY ORDER OF:

THOMAS J. BYRNE
Chief of Police

TJB:dld

CALEA Reference: 26.1.1/41.3.8
72.9.6