



BODY-WORN CAMERA FUNDING

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BODY-WORN CAMERAS

A 2012 DOJ report defines body-worn cameras as "mobile audio and video capture devices that allow officers to record what they see and hear. Devices can be attached to various body areas, including the head, by helmet, glasses or other means, or to the body by pocket, badge or other means of attachment

They have the capability to record officer interactions that previously could only be captured by in-car or interrogation room camera systems" (*A Primer on Body-Worn Cameras for Law Enforcement* (2012)

<https://www.justnet.org/pdf/00-Body-Worn-Cameras-508.pdf>).

enhance police interactions with the public and build community trust. The program will be administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) under DOJ's Office of Justice Programs.

DOJ says it expects to provide up to 50 awards. It is currently soliciting grant applications; the application deadline is June 16, 2015.

ISSUE

Status of the funding for a body-worn camera (BWC) program announced by President Obama in 2014.

SUMMARY

In an effort to strengthen community policing, President Obama, last December, proposed a \$263 million investment to increase police use of BWCs and expand training for law enforcement officers. The program would allocate \$75 million over three years to buy 50,000 BWCs. As part of that initiative, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) on May 1 announced a \$20 million pilot program to help law enforcement agencies throughout the country implement or enhance BWC programs. This includes \$19 million in competitive grants for buying BWCs, training, and other technical assistance, and \$1 million to develop evaluation tools to study best practices associated with BWC use.

According to DOJ, the intent of the program is to help law enforcement agencies develop, implement, and evaluate BWC programs to

DOJ BWC PILOT PROGRAM

DOJ, on May 1, 2015, announced a \$20 million BWC Pilot Partnership Program to provide funding to help local and tribal law enforcement agencies establish or enhance BWC programs.

The investment includes (1) \$19 million in competitive grants, of which \$17 million is for buying cameras and \$2 million is for training and technical assistance to help law enforcement agencies develop, enhance, and implement BWC programs, and (2) \$1 million for the Bureau of Justice Statistics to develop evaluation and survey tools to study best practices “regarding the evidentiary impacts of body-worn cameras.” The agencies are responsible for the long-term costs of storing BWC information.

The funding is targeted to large, mid-sized, and small law enforcement agencies. About one-third of the grants is available for smaller agencies. Successful applicants must provide a 50 percent in-kind or cash match. They must establish a strong BWC implementation and training plan before buying cameras. For more information on grant amounts available to agencies under the program, see the program solicitation at <https://www.bja.gov/Funding/15BWCsol.pdf>.

BJA has launched an interactive online toolkit ([National Body-Worn Camera Toolkit](#)) to provide resources for law enforcement professionals and their communities to help them plan and implement BWC programs. Users may submit feedback and questions, request training and technical assistance, and explore funding opportunities.

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