



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

### Body Worn Camera/Dashboard Camera Grant Program Announcement

Date: 1/11/2024

#### **I. Recording Equipment Requirements**

Pursuant to section 29-6d(c)(1) of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS), each police officer shall use body-worn recording equipment while interacting with the public in such sworn member's law enforcement capacity, except as provided in subsection (g) of this section, or in the case of a municipal police department, in accordance with the department's policy adopted by the department and based on guidelines maintained pursuant to subsection (j) of this section, concerning the use of body-worn recording equipment.<sup>1</sup>

Pursuant to section 29-6d(c)(4) of the CGS, each law enforcement unit shall require usage of a dashboard camera in each police patrol vehicle used by any police officer employed by such unit in accordance with the unit's policy adopted by the unit and based on guidelines maintained pursuant to subsection (j) of this section, concerning dashboard cameras.<sup>2</sup>

Public Act 20-1 of the July Special Session made these requirements effective July 1, 2022.

#### **II. Grants-in-aid Program for Municipalities**

Several public acts have authorized the State Bond Commission to issue general obligation bonds to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) for providing grants-in-aid to municipalities for related equipment and service purchases by municipalities. Pursuant to section 7-277c(c) of the CGS, OPM shall distribute grants-in-aid during the fiscal years ending June 30, 2021 to June 30, 2025

Since 2016, following enactment of Public Act 15-4 and several subsequent public acts, OPM has administered the Body Worn Recording Equipment Grant Program ("BWRE Grant Program") to provide grants-in-aid to law enforcement agencies for approved expenses incurred as a result of equipment purchases.<sup>3</sup> With enactment of Public Act 20-1, OPM released a grant announcement in February 2021 created a new grant program based on the new statute.

##### **A. Eligible Costs**

Pursuant to section 7-277c of the CGS, OPM is required to provide, within available resources, grants-in-aid to eligible municipalities for costs associated with:

- i. The purchase of body cameras for use by the sworn members of such municipality's police department or for use by constables, police officers or other persons who perform criminal law enforcement duties under the supervision of a resident state trooper serving such municipality;
- ii. Digital data storage devices and equipment or one year of digital data services; and
- iii. A first-time purchase by such municipality of one or more dashboard cameras or the replacement of one or more dashboard cameras purchased prior to December 31, 2010, with one or more dashboard cameras with a remote recorder.

For further clarification on item ii. above, one year of digital services will only be funded if purchased in conjunction with new recording equipment.

#### **B. Minimal BWC Technical Specifications and Automatic Activation**

Pursuant to section 29-6d(j) of the CGS, the body and dashboard cameras must adhere to guidelines maintained by the Commissioner of Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) and the Police Officer Standards and Training Council. The technical specifications, last revised December 16, 2020, appear on the DESPP website.<sup>4</sup>

To be eligible for reimbursement under the BWC-DC Grant Program, equipment must be purchased that, when triggered, has an automatic activation feature that can be utilized either using the equipment itself or a separate accessory.

#### **C. Percent of Reimbursement for Costs Associated with Purchases**

Pursuant to section 7-277c(c) of the CGS, distressed municipalities (as defined by Section 32-9p of the CGS) shall be reimbursed for up to 50% of expenses, subject to OPM's approval, incurred as a result of purchases of body cameras, digital data storage devices or services, and dashboard cameras.<sup>5</sup> Non-distressed municipalities are eligible to receive up to 30% of the above expenses, also subject to OPM's approval. Pursuant to section 7-277c(b) of the CGS, OPM may further prescribe additional technical or procurement requirements as a condition. This program may not be used to replace any equipment reimbursed under the BWRE Grant Program.

### **III. Program Eligibility, Submission Process, and Deadlines**

The BWC-DC Grant Program is prioritizing available funds to help reimburse the costs of municipalities that have not participated in OPM body worn camera grant programs (including the BWRE Grant Program and BWC-DC Program).<sup>6</sup> In the future, subject to public acts and available funding, OPM may revise the program's specifications, including developing additional phases. Information on future phases and revised specifications of OPM's BWC-DC Grant Program will be posted the program's website.<sup>7</sup>

Municipalities not granted reimbursement for body cameras, dash cameras, or both under OPM's BWRE Grant Program are eligible to receive reimbursement for new purchases of body cameras, dash cameras, or both under the new BWC-DC Grant Program. For example, if a municipality was not granted reimbursement for any equipment under the former program, it would be eligible for reimbursement for new purchases of body cameras and dash cameras. Moreover, if a municipality received reimbursement under the former program for only body cameras, it would be eligible under the new program to receive reimbursement for dash cameras but not body cameras. (The same logic applies to a municipality granted reimbursement for only dash cameras under the former program.) A reminder that municipalities are also able to receive one year of digital services if purchased in conjunction with new recording equipment

The BWC-DC Grant Program continues to use a reimbursement process. For a municipality to be considered for reimbursement, required submissions must be received and approved by OPM. Application requests will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis subject to available funding. All activities and purchases, with checks dated by the assigned deadline, must be made prior to submission of an application to OPM under the grant program.

After all activities and purchases have been completed, eligible municipalities should submit the following to OPM:

- i. The application signed by the signatory authority of the municipality,

- ii. The Authorized Signature form (signed by the signatory authority of the municipality and attested to by the town clerk or legal office), and
- iii. Certification of Compliance with General Notice 20-08 to be signed by the Chief of Police and all copies of invoices and cancelled checks.

#### **IV. Capital Lease Packages**

To be eligible for reimbursement for lease packages, equipment must be purchased as a “capital lease” (i.e., the vendor leases the equipment to the municipality, which owns the equipment at the end of the lease agreement), not an “operating lease” (the vendor retains ownership of the equipment, and it is returned at the end of the lease agreement).

The capital lease agreement must be no more than five years in length. Moreover, the municipality shall satisfy the terms of the capital lease agreement. If the capital lease agreement is terminated before its expiration, the municipality shall notify OPM and may be subject to a prorated reimbursement.

To apply for reimbursement under the BWC-DC Grant Program for lease packages, the municipality shall submit: the capital lease agreement, documents demonstrating completed payment for the first year of the agreement, and other application documents posted on OPM’s website.

For approved applications, the BWC-DC Grant Program will reimburse 50% of eligible expenses for distressed municipalities, and 30% of eligible expenses for non-distressed municipalities, of the total cost of the capital lease agreement, provided the amount of reimbursement is equal to or greater than the municipality’s first-year expenses under the agreement.<sup>8</sup> Please note that, as covered under II (A) of this announcement, only the first year of digital data services, purchased in conjunction with new recording equipment, are eligible for reimbursement.

At the end of the capital lease agreement, the municipality may trade in the equipment to the vendor.

Because reimbursement for capital lease agreements has not been permitted in prior iterations of this grant program, OPM will review applications on a case-by-case basis to determine eligibility. As with all applicants for the BWC-DC Grant Program, OPM stands ready to assist with questions and review documents through the process.

#### **V. Contact information**

For more information on the BWC-DC Grant Program, please contact Emily Burnett, at emily.burnett@ct.gov or (860) 418-6365. Interested parties are encouraged to contact Ms. Burnett prior to making purchases for assistance regarding the BWC-DC Grant Program.

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<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to section 29-6d(a)(2) “police officer” means a sworn member of a law enforcement unit or any member of a law enforcement unit who performs police duties.

<sup>2</sup> Pursuant to section 7-294a "Law enforcement unit" means any agency or department of this state or a subdivision or municipality thereof, or, if created and governed by a memorandum of agreement under section 47-65c, of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe or the Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut, whose primary functions include the enforcement of criminal or traffic laws, the preservation of public order, the protection of life and property, or the prevention, detection or investigation of crime

<sup>3</sup> OPM’s archived website on the Body-worn Recording Equipment Grant Program is available at [https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/CJ-About/CJPPD-Grants-Portal/BWRE\\_Grant\\_Template](https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/CJ-About/CJPPD-Grants-Portal/BWRE_Grant_Template).

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<sup>4</sup> The DESPP website listing Minimal BWC Technical Specifications is available at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DESPP/files/BWC-Technical-Committee-Recommendations-for-Minimal-Specifications-FINAL-20201216.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> “Distressed municipality,” as defined in Section 32-9p under the Connecticut General Statutes. A list of distressed municipalities is available on the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development website here: [https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/About\\_DECD/Research-and-Publications/02\\_Review\\_Publications/Distressed-Municipalities](https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/About_DECD/Research-and-Publications/02_Review_Publications/Distressed-Municipalities).

<sup>6</sup> For a list of municipalities with approved applications, please visit OPM’s website: [Body Worn Recording Equipment \(BWRE\) Grant Program--Projects and Examples](#).

<sup>7</sup> OPM’s website on the Body-worn Camera and Dashboard Camera Grant Program is available at [Body Camera Grant Program under the Police Accountability Bill - Overview \(ct.gov\)](#).

<sup>8</sup> The reimbursement rate follows policy in Public Act 20-1 of the July 2020 Special Session, *An Act Concerning Police Accountability*.