



Body Worn Camera Recording Redaction Fee Study, Revised September 2024

Purpose

The Public Records Act permits law enforcement agencies responding to public records requests for Body Worn Camera (BWC) recordings to charge requestors the reasonable costs of redacting videos prior to disclosure. The purpose of this cost study is to:

- ✓ Determine those reasonable costs.
- ✓ Identify requestors exempt from paying the City the reasonable costs to redact BWC recordings.
- ✓ Determine a fee structure staff will use in estimating redaction costs for requestors.

Guiding Principles

- ✓ Requestors will not be charged for the following costs associated with redacting BWC recordings: software/hardware, miscellaneous supplies, training fees, and office space utilized by staff redacting BWC footage.
- ✓ Requestors will be charged the actual staff time (salary and benefits) spent redacting BWC recordings.
- ✓ The City will charge staff time (salary and benefits) for no more than the lowest paid employee assigned responsibility for redacting videos.

Findings

- ✓ The cost of staff time for redaction, including salary and benefits, ranges from \$0.82 to \$1.06 per minute. See Appendix 1. *The city will adopt \$0.75 per minute for determining the cost of staff time redacting BWC footage. Using \$0.75 per minute, instead of \$0.82 per minute, will make it easier to calculate the cost.*
- ✓ The average time to redact 1 minute of BWC footage took slightly more than 5 minutes of City staff time. See Appendix 2. *The was determined by City staff tracking their time redacting BWC footage over a six month period.*

Estimating Redaction Costs for the Purposes of a Ten Percent Deposit

The City of Olympia may require payment of a deposit in the amount of 10% of the estimated total redaction cost prior to making BWC recording redactions pursuant to RCW 42.56.120(4).

Based on the results of the cost study, City of Olympia, public records staff will calculate the estimated redaction costs as follows:

$(\text{Estimated minutes of raw footage needing redactions}) \times (5 \text{ minutes of staff time to make redactions per minute of raw footage}) \times (\text{per minute redaction cost of } \$0.75) = \$ \text{ Estimated Redaction Cost}$

An example calculation is below:

$30 \text{ minutes of raw footage needing redaction} \times 5 \text{ minutes of staff time per minute of raw footage} \times \$0.75 \text{ per minute} = \112.50 . The 10% deposit would be \$11.25.



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Estimates may not necessarily reflect the actual final cost of production; the City of Olympia will charge requestors redaction costs reflecting the actual time it takes to redact a particular video.

Requesters Exempt From Paying Costs to Redact BWC Recordings

Per [RCW 42.56.240](#), the following individuals can request BWC recording at no cost:

- ✓ A person directly involved in an incident recorded by the requested body worn camera recording.
- ✓ An attorney representing a person directly involved in an incident recorded by the requested body worn camera recording.
- ✓ A person or his or her attorney who requests a body worn camera recording relevant to a criminal case involving that person.
- ✓ The executive director from either the Washington state commission on African-American affairs, Asian Pacific American affairs, or Hispanic affairs.
- ✓ If relevant to a cause of action, an attorney who represents a person regarding a potential or existing civil cause of action involving the denial of civil rights under the federal or state Constitution, or a violation of a United States department of justice settlement.

Next Steps

- ✓ The City will revise it’s Public Records Policy to incorporate the new fee structure for redacting BWC recordings.
- ✓ City Staff will be trained on how to implement the fee structure.

Staff Contacts

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City Manager Approval

Approved By: _____ Date _____

Steven J. Burney, City Manager



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Appendix 1: Actual Cost of City Staff Time

In calculating the actual cost of staff time per minute, the City used the following numbers:

Annual Staff Cost (Salary + Benefits)

Program Assistant-Teamster Step 1

- Annual Salary: \$ 66,169.91
- Annual Benefits: \$ 37,235.00
- Total Annual Salary/Benefits = \$ 103,404.91

Police Records Supervisor

- Annual Salary: \$ 94,408.75
- Annual Benefits: \$ 50,376.00
- Total Annual Salary/Benefits = \$144,784.75

Minutes Worked by Staff Per Year

2080 hours x 60 = 124,800 minutes

Actual Cost Per Minute of Staff Time

Program Assistant-Teamster Step 1 = \$0.82

Police Records Supervisor Step 5 = \$1.16

Appendix 2: Average Time to Redact BWC Footage

The City conducted a stopwatch style study to determine the amount of time it takes City staff to redact BWC recordings. The study was:

- ✓ Conducted over the course of six months.
- ✓ Included footage of officers pulling over vehicles and responding to incidents – including suspected theft, assault, driving while under the influence (DUI), domestic violence, and vehicle accidents.

The average time for City staff to redact one minute of footage was five minutes and one second.