

# St. Joseph, Missouri Police Department



DIRECTIVE TYPE: GENERAL ORDER		INDEX NUMBER: GO9903
SUBJECT: Mobile Video Recording		
EFFECTIVE DATE: December 10, 1999	REVISED: 01/08/07, 03/22/10, 09/30/11	AMENDS/RESCINDS: M1003
REVISIONS CONTINUED: 10/16/13, 03/21/14, 01/10/17		DISTRIBUTION: A

## I. PURPOSE

To establish Departmental procedures relating to the collection, preservation, proper handling, and disposition of audio and video recordings utilizing mobile video recording equipment.

## II. POLICY

Mobile video recording (MVR) equipment has proven to be a valuable law enforcement tool in the prosecution of traffic violations and related criminal offenses. Department vehicles may be MVR equipped and officers may be directed to utilize the equipment due to specialized assignments or for evaluation purposes. Members may also request to utilize vehicles that are MVR equipped. Members using MVR equipment shall abide by the policies contained in this order.

## III. PROCEDURE

### A. MVR Security/Access

1. MVR equipment shall be used only for legitimate law enforcement purposes in accordance with applicable Federal and State Statutes and departmental policy.
2. Video/audio recordings (or portions thereof) that record events surrounding a violation of the law (which includes a crime or offense prosecutable in the criminal courts in this State or in the United States or an infraction) will not be considered public record except as provided for by Article XI of the Administrative Code of the City of St. Joseph and the Missouri Sunshine Law.
3. Any portion of a video/audio recording that may be used to subject an employee to departmental disciplinary action is considered a part of that employee's personnel file and is open to inspection only as provided by federal and state statutes.

## **B. MVR Operators**

1. Only those officers who have received orientation regarding the use of MVR equipment shall operate such equipment for enforcement purposes.
2. The care and security of MVR equipment is the responsibility of the officer assigned to that vehicle and such equipment will be maintained and operated according to manufacturer's recommendations and departmental training.

## **C. MVR Equipment**

1. No MVR equipment (audio or video) shall be used in any St. Joseph Police Department vehicle unless authorized by the member's supervisor.
2. MVR equipment shall be activated when the vehicle's emergency warning devices are in operation. MVR equipment can also be manually activated.

## **D. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

1. Prior to beginning a tour of duty, officers utilizing MVR equipment shall determine if the equipment is working properly, and shall promptly notify their supervisor of any malfunction or problem. If a problem is detected and cannot be immediately corrected, a vehicle repair request form will be completed by the officer and forwarded to the Support Services Division so the problem may be fixed.
2. Officers should observe the following general procedures to ensure that the MVR equipment will properly record traffic stops or other enforcement actions undertaken in the field:
  - a. Make sure that the video camera is properly positioned and adjusted at the correct viewing angle to visually record the events.
  - b. The MVR should not be deactivated until the vehicle stop or other enforcement action is completed (may include prisoner transport).
  - c. The wireless microphone shall be turned on in order to provide audio recording as well as video recording during MVR activation.

## **E. GUIDELINES FOR USE**

1. Officers using MVR equipment will record all traffic stops, pursuits, and any emergency response situations. Officers may also use the MVR equipment to record the reason for their current or planned enforcement action such as DWI observations. Where possible, officers may use the MVR equipment to:
  - a. Record the actions of suspects during interviews, sobriety checks or when placed in custody if the recording would prove useful in later judicial proceedings.
  - b. Record the circumstances at crime and accident scenes or other events such as the confiscation and documentation of evidence or contraband.

Officers shall submit a Mobile Video Recording Request (with a copy placed in the Evidence mailbox) in these situations and note in his/her report that the video was recorded and will be available. If no video is available, that will also be noted in the report with the reason why.

2. Officers are encouraged to inform their supervisors of any videotaped sequences that may be of value for training purposes.
3. Events that have been recorded with MVR equipment that would prove useful in later proceedings will be copied from the MVR computer server to either a compact disk (CD) or digital video disk (DVD) by the evidence officer and retained in evidence storage. Officers or supervisors shall request a copy of the event from the evidence officer.
4. Recording storage device access is limited to the Fleet Maintenance Sergeant, fleet maintenance personnel, the Professional Standards Sergeant and the Patrol Division Commander. No other personnel are authorized to unlock, remove or replace these devices.

**F. VIDEO RECORDING CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT**

1. The Evidence Officer will store MVR recordings as listed below:
  - a. The Evidence Officer will receive and store all recordings for the ninety day retention period.
  - b. In the event that an MVR recording involves an internal investigation, the Evidence Officer will retain a copy of the recording and the copy will be made available reference the internal investigation.
2. MVR recordings may be erased after the ninety day retention period and the evidence officer will be responsible for erasing recordings.

**G. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Personnel assigned to supervise officers authorized to utilize MVR equipment are responsible for the following:

1. Ensuring that officers follow established procedures for the use and maintenance of MVR equipment, including handling of video recordings.
2. Ensuring that faulty or nonfunctioning MVR equipment is brought to the attention of the Support Services Division.
3. Ensuring that the Professional Standards Officer is notified of all video recordings of events involving motor vehicle pursuits, officer use of force situations, and police vehicle involved accidents for their review.

---

Chris Connally, Chief of Police

---

Date