

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 First Reader

House Bill 349
 Judiciary

(Delegate Simmons, *et al.*)

Public Safety - Law Enforcement - Use of Body-Worn Cameras

This bill alters and expands the application of existing provisions that require specified law enforcement agencies to require the use of a body-worn camera (BWC) by each law enforcement officer employed by the law enforcement agency who regularly interacts with members of the public as part of the law enforcement officer’s official duties. Under the bill, these law enforcement agencies must require the use of a BWC by each *sworn* law enforcement officer, *regardless of rank*, employed by the law enforcement agency *while the officer is in uniform, in public, and conducting law enforcement related duties*.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by approximately \$1.2 million in FY 2027; future years reflect annualization, inflation, and the elimination of one-time costs. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	1,198,700	610,400	618,600	626,900	635,200
Net Effect	(\$1,198,700)	(\$610,400)	(\$618,600)	(\$626,900)	(\$635,200)

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: Expenditures for some counties increase, potentially significantly, to comply with the bill’s altered BWC requirements. Revenues are not affected. **This bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapter 60 of 2021 required, by July 1, 2023, the Department of State Police (DSP), the Anne Arundel County Police Department, the Howard County Police Department, and the Harford County Sheriff's Office to require the use of a BWC by each law enforcement officer employed by the law enforcement agency who regularly interacts with members of the public as part of the law enforcement officer's official duties, subject to the agency's policy on the use of BWCs. By July 1, 2025, a law enforcement agency of a county not mentioned above was required to meet these same requirements.

A BWC that possesses the requisite technological capability must automatically record and save at least 60 seconds of video footage immediately prior to the officer activating the record button on the device.

A law enforcement agency subject to the BWC requirements must develop and maintain a written policy consistent with the policy published by the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission for the use of BWCs. The policy must specify which law enforcement officers employed by the law enforcement agency are required to use BWCs. A law enforcement agency may not negate or alter any of the requirements or policies established in accordance with specified BWC-related provisions through collective bargaining.

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures for DSP increase by at least \$1.2 million in fiscal 2027, which accounts for the bill's October 1, 2026 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of purchasing additional BWC equipment as well as the cost of hiring one technician and one administrative specialist to manage DSP's expanded BWC program and handle related Public Information Act requests. It includes salaries, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses. The information and assumptions used in calculating the estimate are stated below:

- according to DSP, approximately 261 additional law enforcement officers within DSP require BWCs, and the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) within DSP needs 75 BWCs, at a cost of \$2,200 per device, including initial license, software, and storage costs;
- additional ongoing operating expenses are incurred for user management, licensing, and storage of BWC footage for OSFM; and
- one vehicle is needed for the technician to provide maintenance and support to officers using BWCs.

Positions	2.0
Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$130,997
BWC Equipment	1,004,200
Automobile Purchase	45,261
Other Operating Expenses	<u>18,282</u>
Total FY 2027 DSP Expenditures	\$1,198,740

Future year expenditures reflect full salaries with annual increases and employee turnover and ongoing operating expenses. To the extent that additional BWC maintenance and storage are needed, out-year expenditures increase further.

Local Expenditures: While some counties can comply with the bill’s expanded BWC requirements with existing resources, expenditures increase, potentially significantly, for other counties. Based on a limited survey of counties, the following information was gleaned regarding the anticipated costs to implement the bill:

- Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Charles, Dorchester, and Howard counties report that they can each handle the expanded BWC requirements with existing resources;
- Harford County estimates costs of approximately \$46,200 annually for the purchase of additional BWCs and related costs; and
- the Maryland Association of Counties advises that while some counties may be able to meet the bill’s requirements using existing resources, other counties could incur costs of up to \$200,000 for the initial purchase of additional BWCs and storage, with other potential costs.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See SB 661 and HB 707 of 2024.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Charles, Dorchester, Harford, and Howard counties; Maryland Association of Counties; Department of State Police; Department of Legislative Services

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me/lgc

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