

# INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

Chief Maier  
Baxter Police Department  
13190 Memorywood Dr.  
Baxter, MN 56425

Dear Chief Maier:

An independent audit of the Baxter Police Department 's Portable Recording System (body-worn cameras (BWCs)) was conducted on July 16, 2025. The objective of the audit was to verify Baxter Police Department 's compliance with Minnesota Statutes §§13.825 and 626.8473.

Data elements the audit includes:

## Minnesota Statute §13.825

- Data Classification
- Retention of Data
- Access by Data Subjects
- Inventory of Portable Recording System Technology
- Use of Agency-Issued Portable Recording Systems
- Authorization to Access Data
- Sharing Among Agencies

## Minnesota Statute §626.8473

- Public Comment
- Body-worn Camera Policy

The Baxter Police Department is located in Crow Wing County and employs sixteen (16) peace officers. Baxter Police Department utilized WatchGuard BWCs and software until April, 2024 and Axon BWCs and Evidence.com cloud-based evidence management storage for the remainder of the audit period. The audit covers the period July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2025.

## **Audit Requirement: Data Classification**

*Determine that the data collected by BWCs are appropriately classified.*

All BWC data collected by the Baxter Police Department during the audit period is classified as private or non-public data. The Baxter Police Department had no instances of the discharge of a firearm by a peace officer in the course of duty, use of force by a peace officer that resulted in substantial bodily harm, requests from data subjects for the data to be made accessible to the public or court orders directing the agency to release the BWC data to the public.

*No discrepancies noted.*

### **Audit Requirement: Retention of Data**

*Determine that the data collected by BWC's are appropriately retained and destroyed in accordance with statutes.*

The Baxter Police Department utilizes the General Records Retention Schedule for Minnesota Cities and agency-specified retention periods in WatchGuard and Evidence.com. At the conclusion of a BWC recording officers assign metadata, including a WatchGuard or Evidence.com category, to the recording. Each WatchGuard/Evidence.com category has an associated retention period. Upon reaching the retention date, data is systematically deleted.

WatchGuard event log reports and an Evidence Created Report consisting of all BWC data collected and deleted during the audit period were produced. Randomly selected records from the WatchGuard event log reports and the Evidence Created Report were selected and the created date of the BWC data was verified against the purge date. All records were maintained or deleted in accordance with the record retention schedule. All records were maintained for at least the minimum ninety (90) days required by statute. Randomly selected audit trail reports were verified against the Evidence Created Report and each of the records was deleted or maintained in accordance with the record retention schedule.

The Baxter Police Department received no requests from data subjects to retain BWC data beyond the applicable retention period during the audit period.

Sergeants monitor BWC data for proper categorization to ensure BWC data are appropriately retained and destroyed.

*No discrepancies noted.*

### **Audit Requirement: Access by Data Subjects**

*Determine if individuals who are the subject of collected data have access to the data, and if the data subject requests a copy of the data, other individuals who do not consent to its release must be redacted.*

BWC data is available to data subjects and access may be requested by submission of a General Data Access Request form. During the audit period, the Baxter Police Department received no requests to view but did receive and fulfill requests for copies of BWC data from data subjects. Data subjects who had not consented to the release of data were redacted. Requests for BWC data are documented in a Microsoft Teams file.

*No discrepancies noted.*

## **Audit Requirement: Inventory of Portable Recording System Technology**

*Determine the total number of recording devices owned and maintained by the agency; a daily record of the total number of recording devices actually deployed and used by officers, the policies and procedures for use of portable recording systems by required by section 626.8473; and the total amount of recorded audio and video collected by the portable recording system and maintained by the agency, the agency's retention schedule for the data, the agency's procedures for destruction of the data, and that the data are available to the public.*

Baxter Police Department's BWC inventory consists of fifteen (15) devices. An inventory report produced from Evidence.com detailed the total number of recording devices owned and maintained by the agency. The inventory included the device model, serial number, device name, the officer assigned to the device, date of last upload, device status, error status, firmware version, warranty date, date last docked, and camera state.

The Baxter Police Department's BWC policy governs the use of portable recording systems by peace officers while in the performance of their duties. The policy requires officers to make sure their BWC is in good working order prior to going into service. If their BWC is not in working order or the member becomes aware of a malfunction at any time, they are required to promptly report the failure to their supervisor and obtain a functioning device as soon as reasonably practicable.

Peace officers were trained on the use of the BWC system by WatchGuard during implementation and by Axon trained trainers when transitioning to Axon. Newly hired officers are trained as part of their field training program.

Officers working on randomly selected dates, and randomly selected calls for service, were verified against the WatchGuard event log reports and the Evidence Created Report and confirmed that BWCs are being deployed and officers are wearing and activating their BWCs. The number of BWC videos created consistently exceeds the number of incidents/calls for service for the same time periods.

The total amount of active and deleted WatchGuard data is documented in the event log reports. Evidence.com queries detail the total amount of BWC data created, stored/maintained, and deleted.

The Baxter Police Department utilizes the General Records Retention Schedule for Minnesota Cities and agency-specified retention periods in WatchGuard and Evidence.com. BWC video is fully deleted upon reaching the scheduled deletion date. Metadata and audit trails are maintained in Evidence.com after deletion of BWC audio and video. BWC data is available upon request, and access may be requested by submission of a General Data Access Request form.

*No discrepancies noted.*

### **Audit Requirement: Use of Agency-Issued Portable Recording Systems**

*Determine if peace officers are only allowed to use portable recording systems issued and maintained by the officer's agency.*

The Baxter Police Department BWC policy states that officers may use only department issued BWCs in the performance of official duties.

*No discrepancies noted.*

### **Audit Requirement: Authorization to Access Data**

*Determine if the agency complies with sections 13.05, Subd. 5, and 13.055 in the operation of portable recording systems and in maintaining portable recording system data.*

Sergeants and the Assistant Chief conduct monthly random reviews of BWC data to ensure BWC data is being properly labeled and that BWCs are being utilized in compliance with policy.

Nonpublic BWC data is only available to persons whose work assignment reasonably requires access to the data. User access to BWC data is managed by the assignment of roles and permissions in WatchGuard and Evidence.com. Permissions are based on staff work assignments. Roles and permissions are administered by the Chief and Assistant Chief of Police. Access to Evidence Library and Evidence.com are password protected and require dual authentication.

The BWC and Records Maintenance and Release policies governs access to BWC data. Agency personnel may access BWC data only when there is a business need for doing so and pursuant to lawful process and in accordance with policy, statute, and the Minnesota Data Practices Act. Access to data is captured in the audit trail. The BWC policy states that any member who accesses or releases recordings without authorization may be subject to discipline.

When BWC data is deleted from WatchGuard and Evidence.com, its contents cannot be determined. The Baxter Police Department has had no security breaches. A BCA CJIS security audit was completed in July of 2023. A security audit was underway at the time of this audit.

*No discrepancies noted.*

### **Audit Requirement: Sharing Among Agencies**

*Determine if non-public BWC data is shared with other law enforcement agencies, government entities, or federal agencies.*

The Baxter Police Department's BWC and Records Maintenance and Release policies govern the sharing of data with other law enforcement agencies and government entities. BWC data may be

shared with other law enforcement agencies only for legitimate law enforcement purposes that are documented in writing at the time of the disclosure. BWC data shall be made available to prosecutors, courts and other criminal justice entities as provided by law. Agencies seeking access to BWC data are required to submit a written request. Sharing of data is documented in the Evidence.com Sharing Audit Report and in a Microsoft Teams file.

*No discrepancies noted.*

#### **Audit Requirement: Biennial Audit**

*Determine if the agency maintains records showing the date and time the portable recording system data were collected, the applicable classification of the data, how the data are used, and whether data are destroyed as required.*

WatchGuard event log reports and Evidence.com queries document the date and time portable recording system data was collected and deleted. Audit trails, the Sharing Audit Report and a Microsoft Teams file document how the data are used and shared.

*No discrepancies noted.*

#### **Audit Requirement: Portable Recording System Vendor**

*Determine if portable recording system data stored in the cloud, is stored in accordance with security requirements of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation Criminal Justice Information Services Division Security Policy 5.4 or its successor version.*

Baxter Police Department's remaining WatchGuard BWC data is stored on storage drives. Axon BWC data is stored in the cloud.

An Axon CJIS Compliance White paper outlines the specific security policies and practices for Evidence.com and how they are compliant with the CJIS Security Policy. Axon has signed the CJIS Security Addendum in all states and has performed statewide CJIS-related vendor requirements in Minnesota. Axon has incorporated the CJIS Security Addendum by reference into the Axon Master Services and Purchase Agreement. Axon maintains signed CJIS Security Addendum certification pages for Axon personnel. Authorized Axon personnel are required to complete Level 4 CJIS Security Training upon assignment and biennially thereafter.

*No discrepancies noted.*

#### **Audit Requirement: Public Comment**

*Determine if the law enforcement agency provided an opportunity for public comment before it purchased or implemented a portable recording system and if the governing body with*

*jurisdiction over the budget of the law enforcement agency provided an opportunity for public comment at a regularly scheduled meeting.*

The Baxter Police Department solicited for public comment. Notice was posted on the City website, and the City Council held a public hearing at their December 19, 2017 Work Session. The body worn camera program was implemented in May of 2019.

*No discrepancies noted.*

#### **Audit Requirement: Body-worn Camera Policy**

*Determine if a written policy governing the use of portable recording systems has been established and is enforced.*

The Baxter Police Department established and enforces a BWC policy. The policy was compared to the requirements of Minn. Stat. § 626.8473. The policy includes all minimum requirements of Minn. Stat. § 626.8473, Subd. 3(b). The Baxter Police Department's BWC policy is posted on the agency's website.

*No discrepancies noted.*

This report was prepared exclusively for the City of Baxter and Baxter Police Department by Lynn Lembcke Consulting. The findings in this report are impartial and based on information and documentation provided and examined.

Dated: September 11, 2025

Lynn Lembcke Consulting

*Lynn Lembcke*

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Lynn Lembcke