

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

Chief Brad Nestegard
St. James Police Department
715 Third Ave. S., Box 70
St. James, MN 56081

Dear Chief Nestegard:

An independent audit of the St. James Police Department's Portable Recording System (body-worn cameras (BWCs)) was conducted on October 8, 2025. The objective of the audit was to verify St. James 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 St. James Police Department is located in Watonwan County and authorized for seven (7) peace officers. The St. James Police Department utilizes WatchGuard body-worn cameras and Evidence Library software. BWC data is stored on a local file server hosted by Watonwan County. The audit covers the time period September 16, 2023 through September 30, 2025.

Audit Requirement: Data Classification

Determine if the data collected by BWCs are appropriately classified.

BWC data is presumptively private. All BWC data collected during the audit period is classified as private or non-public data. The St. James 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 if the data collected by BWC's are appropriately retained and destroyed in accordance with statutes.

The St. James Police Department utilizes the General Records Retention Schedule for Minnesota Cities and agency specified retention periods in Evidence Library. At the conclusion of a BWC recording, a WatchGuard category type is assigned. Each WatchGuard category type has an associated retention period. Upon reaching the retention date, data is systematically deleted.

Created and purged event log reports consisting of all BWC data collected and deleted during the audit period were produced from Evidence Library. Records from the purged event log report were reviewed and the date the data was collected was verified against the purge date. Each of the records were deleted in accordance with the record retention schedule. All records were retained for at least the minimum ninety (90) days required by statute.

Active BWC data is accessible in the WatchGuard Evidence Library. The server maintains a listing of all active and deleted BWC data with associated meta data.

The St. James Police Department received no requests from data subjects to retain BWC data beyond the applicable retention period.

The Chief of Police monitors 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 St. James Police Department Data Request Form. During the audit period, the St. James Police Department had received neither requests to view nor requests for copies of BWC video from data subjects.

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.

St. James Police Department's BWC inventory consists of eight (8) devices. Device inventory is maintained in WatchGuard Evidence Library.

The St. James Police Department BWC policy governs the use of portable recording systems by peace officers while in the performance of their duties. The policy requires officers to conduct a function test of their issued BWC at the beginning of each shift to make sure the device is operating properly. Officers noting malfunctions during testing, or any other time, are required to report the malfunction to their supervisor.

Peace officers were trained on the use of BWCs by WatchGuard during implementation. 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 Evidence Library and the event log reports and confirmed that BWCs are being deployed and officers are wearing and activating their BWCs. A review of total BWC videos collected per quarter shows that BWC data is being consistently collected.

The total amount of active BWC data is accessible in the WatchGuard Evidence Library. Total amount of active and deleted data is detailed in the event log reports.

The St. James Police Department utilizes the General Records Retention Schedule for Minnesota Cities and agency specified retention in WatchGuard. BWC video is fully deleted upon reaching the scheduled deletion date. BWC data is available upon request, and access may be requested by submission of a St. James Police Department Data 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 St. James Police Department's BWC policy states that officers may use only department-issued BWCs in the performance of official duties for the agency or when otherwise performing authorized law enforcement services as an employee of the department.

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.

The Chief of Police conducts random reviews of BWC data to ensure BWC data is properly labeled and that BWCs are being used 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 group roles and permissions in WatchGuard. Permissions are based on staff work assignments. Roles and permissions are administered by the Chief of Police. Access to WatchGuard Evidence Library is password protected and requires dual authentication.

The BWC policy governs access to BWC data. Agency personnel may access BWC data only when there is a business reason for doing so and for legitimate law enforcement or data administration purposes. Access to data is captured in the audit log. The BWC policy states that the unauthorized access to or disclosure of BWC data may constitute misconduct and subject individuals to disciplinary action and criminal penalties pursuant to Minn. Stat. §13.09.

When BWC data is deleted, its contents cannot be determined. The St. James Police Department has had no security breaches. A BCA CJIS Security Audit was conducted in November of 2024.

No discrepancies noted.

Audit Requirement: Sharing Among Agencies

Determine if nonpublic BWC data is shared with other law enforcement agencies, government entities, or federal agencies.

The St. James Police Department's BWC policy allows for the sharing of data with other law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, courts, and other criminal justice entities as provided by law. Law Enforcement agencies seeking access to BWC data are required to submit a written request. Sharing of data is documented in the audit logs and the Records Management System.

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 Evidence Library and the event log reports document the date and time portable recording system data was collected and deleted. All BWC data collected during the audit period is classified as private or nonpublic data. The WatchGuard audit logs and the Records Management System 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.

St. James Police Department's BWC data is stored on a local file server hosted by Watonwan County.

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 St. James Police Department solicited for public comment by posting on the City's website and by newspaper public notice. The St. James City Council held a public hearing at their September 7, 2021, meeting. The body worn camera program was implemented on November 10, 2021.

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

No discrepancies noted.

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

Dated: November 12, 2025

Lynn Lembcke Consulting



Lynn Lembcke