



# LEGISLATIVE COVER MEMO

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**Introduction:** March 2, 2026

**Agenda Item:** Police Record Request Changes

**Submitted by:** Jonathan Westendorf, City Manager / Adam Colon, Polic Chief

**Scope/Description:** The proposed amendment to the Police Records Policy establishes a formal process for responding to requests for law enforcement video records, including body-worn camera footage, dash camera recordings, surveillance video, drone footage, and similar materials maintained by the Police Department. The policy authorizes the City to recover the actual costs associated with reviewing, redacting, preparing, and producing such video records, which are often resource-intensive to process.

Pursuant to Ohio House Bill 315, municipalities are permitted to charge the actual cost of preparing law enforcement video records for inspection or production. The amendment sets that cost at \$75 per hour, capped at \$750 per request, requires advance payment of the estimated cost, and outlines limited exemptions—such as requests made by crime victims, government agencies, schools, or in cases of significant public interest. This change ensures compliance with state law while providing transparency and fiscal responsibility in managing public records requests.

**Budget Impact:** To be billed at \$75/hour not to exceed \$750 Per Record.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends Council support the administrative policy change.

#### 801.4.2 REQUESTS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT VIDEO RECORDS

The City's Police Department records and maintains law enforcement video records in the administration and furtherance of legitimate law enforcement activities within the City. This includes, but is not limited to, body worn camera footage, cruiser dash camera footage, mobile or stationary video surveillance footage, drone footage, or other similar video footage that is recorded and maintained by the City and its Police Department.

- (a) The City shall charge an individual or entity that requests law enforcement video records for the actual cost associated with the City's preparation of a law enforcement video record for inspection or production.
  1. The actual cost to the City of preparing each law enforcement video record for inspection or production shall include reviewing, blurring or otherwise obscuring, redacting, uploading, and producing the law enforcement video records, and also includes the storage medium on which the record is produced, City staff time, and other relevant overhead costs necessary to comply with the request.
  2. The actual cost to the City of preparing each law enforcement video record for inspection or production has been determined to be \$75 per hour.
  3. This actual cost shall be assessed to the requester for each hour taken to prepare each law enforcement video record for inspection or production, not to exceed \$750 in total.
  4. The requester shall pay the estimated actual cost by certified check or money order to the City.
  5. The City shall not be obligated to prepare a law enforcement video record for inspection or production until the estimated actual cost is paid in full by the requester.
  6. If the actual cost to prepare the requested law enforcement video records for inspection or production exceeds the estimated cost provided to the requester, the City shall charge the requester for the difference between the estimated cost and the actual cost, subject to the following conditions:
    - i. The City advised the requester, in writing, that the actual costs exceed the estimated costs prior to fulfilling the request; and,
    - ii. The actual costs charged to the requester cannot exceed 20% more than the estimated cost provided to the requester.
  7. The City shall not charge the actual cost for the preparation of law enforcement video records for inspection or production in the following circumstances:
    - i. A request for law enforcement video records requested by the victim, or potential victim, the immediate family members of the victim, a parent or

legal guardian of a juvenile minor victim, an attorney representing the victim, a persona having power of attorney on behalf of a victim, of a crime where a police report has been filed;

- ii. A victim, or an attorney representing a victim who submits a signed retention agreement, who suffered loss and could seek remedy through a tort action as defined by R.C. 2307.11, who reasonably asserts that the video recording relates to the action or omission that caused the victim's harm or loss, so long as the victim or the victim's attorney submits an affidavit identifying that the use of the video is to investigate harm or damages that may have been captured on the video.
- iii. A request for law enforcement video records made by any federal, state, or local government agency or any federal, state, or local law enforcement agency;
- iv. A request for law enforcement video records made by a public or private school; or,
- v. A law enforcement video record that is made publicly available by the City and/or its Police Department which may include, but is not limited to, law enforcement video records that are of great public interest.

(b) When the City receives a request for a law enforcement video record, the City's Police Department shall provide the requester with the estimated actual costs of fulfilling the request for law enforcement video records, in writing, within five (5) business days of receipt of the public-records request.

1. The City's written response may be sent via email or regular mail, depending upon the manner in which the original request was received.
2. If the original request was not received via email or regular mail, the City shall contact the requester in another way (phone, in-person, etc.) to advise them of the estimated actual cost.