Manteno Police Department

Body Camera Report

2020

The Manteno Police Department is made up of 19 sworn personnel. In addition to the chief of Police we have one Lieutenant, Three shift Sergeants, One Detective Sergeant and one detective, School resource Officer, 10 patrol officers, and one Aux officer. The department obtained two body cameras in early September of 2018 for a trial basis to see if the department wanted to implement a body worn camera program for its officers. The department decided to implement the program and ordered a total of 5 more body cameras which arrived in 2020. A training was put together that went over the department policy as well as how to operate both the body worn camera systems as well as the in-car systems that go along with them. The Manteno Police Department has Getac body cameras and currently has 4 in car Getac systems as well that link up to the BWC. Five squad cars still have a Panasonic in car system, so this procedure had to be addressed as well. All officers were required to complete the training.

These cameras have turned out to be very useful in accurately depicting calls for service and obtaining evidence. The cameras have also been utilized on a regular basis for obtaining interviews by members of the investigation’s division. We have now gone from utilizing a DVD video recording system in our interview rooms to just utilizing body worn cameras so the interviews can be directly uploaded to the cloud and sent to the States Attorney’s office as opposed to making several DVDs. Body camera plates have been mounted to the wall in each interview room we have.

The Manteno Police Department has still been experiencing some difficulties and hurdles that need to be overcome. The training seemed to help with some of the officer error; however, there are still issues that have come up and reminders must be put out. Officers still have been forgetting to activate the camera when they get out of the car right away and some evidence has been missed. Now officers are instructed to activate the camera right away when they get a call. This is only an issue when officers are responding to calls that they are responding to without lights and sirens. The trigger automatically activates the cameras in those situations. Some officers are also deactivating the camera prior to the call being completing done and something else might come up. They have been instructed to wait until they are in the car and have cleared the scene completely.

The Manteno Police department also continued to experience batteries not lasting very long and some cameras going dead. Some layover and overlapping schedules have been a big cause for this. We ordered and received an 8th camera which for the most part has taken care of this situation. Officers are also remembering to charge the cameras in their cars during down time. A problem with the charging is that we still have 5 old Panasonic systems where you cannot charge the BWC in the car.

Another issue we have found is that when dealing with combative suspects the BWC has been getting knocked off pretty easily. A final issue is that the activation button keeps getting hit and making unwanted marks on videos in situation like this where a subject may be resisting.

The Manteno Police Department shift supervisors and administrators currently review body camera footage as needed for the creation of case files for video evidence obtained. Supervisors are also authorized to review relevant recordings any time they are investigating alleged misconduct or reports of meritorious conduct or whenever such recordings would be beneficial in reviewing an officer’s performance. We have had two incidents where the evidence retrieved by the cameras has turned out to be very useful for complaints of alleged excessive use of force. One incident a complaint was made, and the video clearly showed the officer was justified and the complaint was unfounded. The second incident was a medical distress call where an official complaint has not been made as of yet; however, the video and audio clearly show the officers were attempted to help the individual and there was no malicious or excessive force used.

The Manteno Police Department uses body cameras during investigations and arrests and copies of the videos have been sent to the States Attorney’s Office; however, we currently have not gotten notification if the videos have been used in court for prosecution.

This report has been completed by Lieutenant Brian J. Lockwood of the Manteno Police Department. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Lieutenant Brian J. Lockwood

(815)929-4816

blockwood@villageofmanteno.com