



Body Cameras Are Essential for Small Law Enforcement Agencies – Even on a Tight Budget

BLOG

Smaller law enforcement agencies carry the same responsibilities and risks as larger departments, but often with fewer officers, less equipment, and significantly tighter budgets. When every dollar must be justified, investments in technology can feel out of reach. Yet one tool consistently proves its value operationally, financially, and in terms of community trust – the body camera.

Not just a “good to have,” but body cameras are a critical force multiplier directly improving officer safety, protecting the department from liability, and ultimately saving money by preventing costly claims and settlements.

WHY THIS TECHNOLOGY MATTERS

Officer Safety Is Non-Negotiable

When officers work solo shifts, patrol wide rural areas, or respond with limited backup, common realities for small agencies, situational awareness and documentation become even more important. Body cameras dramatically improve officer safety by:

- **Capturing the full context** of interactions, ensuring an accurate record of threats, resistance, or escalating behavior.
- **Providing real-time visibility** to command staff through live streaming capability, allowing supervisors to make informed decisions and send support when needed.
- **De-escalating volatile encounters** simply by being present. Studies show individuals behave more appropriately when they know they’re being recorded.

Smaller agencies feel the burden of being understaffed, and body cameras become an extra set of eyes with an unbiased witness that never gets tired, never looks away, and never forgets.

Reducing Liability Through Transparency and Unbiased Evidence

One false allegation can drain a smaller department's resources for years. Even if the officer acted professionally, the absence of video can leave the agency exposed to:

- Lengthy internal investigations

- Civil lawsuits
- Public distrust
- Damaged officer morale

Body cameras provide an unbiased, irrefutable account of what actually happened. This single factor dramatically reduces the likelihood of:

- False misconduct claims
- “He said, she said” disputes
- Prolonged investigations
- Public controversy and negative press

According to multiple municipal risk pools, agencies with body cameras see a notable decline in liability claims and lawsuit payouts. When video quickly resolves a complaint, the agency avoids legal fees, overtime costs for officers pulled off the street, and potential settlement payments. For a smaller department, avoiding even one major claim can justify the entire investment in body cameras for years.

Body Cameras Save Money – Even When Budgets Are Tight

At first glance, body cameras can look expensive when you factor in bundled components such as hardware, digital evidence platform, and training. But leaders in smaller communities are recognizing the cost of NOT having body cameras is far higher. Money saved by:

- **Reducing lawsuit settlements** through objective evidence
- **Lowering insurance premiums** (possible discounts for departments using body cameras)
- **Minimizing administrative burden** by rapidly resolving complaints
- **Improving prosecution outcomes** and reducing wasted court time
- **Avoiding reputational damage** that can lead to leadership turnover or community backlash



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Body cameras are not just an expense; they are financial safeguards.

When the right solution is chosen, especially one with predictable pricing and no hidden fees, agencies gain long-term stability and protection.

Strengthening Community Trust

In tight-knit towns where officers personally know many community members, maintaining trust is essential. Body cameras support that trust by:

- Demonstrating **transparency**
- Providing **accountability** to both officers and citizens
- Building **confidence** in investigative outcomes
- Showing a **commitment** to fairness and professionalism

Smaller communities often expect even more from their police agencies because they're more personally connected. **Body cameras reinforce the message that the agency is committed to protecting everyone** – officers included.

Modern Body Camera Solutions Are Designed for ALL Agencies

Today's body camera platforms are more scalable, affordable, and easier to deploy than ever before. Features like the following mean **no dedicated IT staff or large budgets to get the benefits of enterprise-grade technology.**

- Automatic recording triggers
- Officer-down alerts
- Unlimited user licensing
- Cloud-based evidence management
- AI-powered efficiency tools like redaction, transcription, and tagging

Additionally, the benefit of bundling body cameras and in-vehicle video can reduce both risk and surprise fees that typically strain department budgets.

THE TRUE COST IS IN WAITING, NOT IN ACTING

Smaller law enforcement agencies face enormous pressure to do more with less. Body cameras are one of the few investments that simultaneously:

- Improve officer safety
- Strengthen community trust
- Reduce liability
- Protect against false claims
- Improve operational efficiency
- Save the department money in the long run

In today's environment, not having body cameras brings far more risk financially, operationally, and reputationally than the cost of implementing them. **For agencies with limited resources, body cameras are not a luxury – they are essential.**

Let Coreforce help your department reap the benefits of our BodyWorn™ suite technology – bringing you camera choice to fit all of your needs. Contact us for more information!