Manteno Police Department

Body Camera Report

2021

The Manteno Police Department is made up of 20 sworn personnel. In addition to the chief of Police we have one Lieutenant, three shift Sergeants, One Detective Sergeant and one detective who is also assigned to the FBI task force and another investigator who is assigned to the Tri-County Auto Theft Task Force. We also have a School resource Officer, 11 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. In 2021 we obtained more body worn cameras and now have a total of 15 units. The Manteno Police Department has Getac body cameras and currently has 8 in car Getac systems as well that link up to the body worn cameras. These systems utilize cloud based storage.

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. Over the past year, our department has gone through a lot of personnel changes and has hired a total of 4 new officers. The body cameras have also proven useful for training purposes.

The Manteno Police Department has still been experiencing some difficulties and hurdles that need to be overcome. Since the department acquired 4 new in car systems that link up to the body cameras there are several officers who are not familiar with how to link the cameras to the system since they are use to utilizing an old in car system. Some officers are not very familiar with how to correctly label videos that are synced to the in-car system and this makes it more difficult for investigators to locate videos needed to put together cases. Officers are also not correctly categorizing videos and investigators are having to go back in and change the categories and retention periods. These issues will be addressed through a new training that is in the process of being set up.

The Manteno Police Department also continues to experience batteries not lasting very long and some cameras going dead, especially the older cameras. Now that we have a total of 15 cameras this doesn’t occur as much. In the past officers would place their camera in the in-car charger during their shift to help it stay charged; however, sometimes they would then jump out of the car and forget to grab the camera and an incident was potentially missed. To help with this issue, the department recently obtained breakaway chargers that hook up to the camera while it is still being worn by the officer. If the officer must jump out quickly, the cable detaches.

Another issue we have also been looking into is the fact that the Manteno School District doesn’t feel comfortable with our school resource officer utilizing a body camera while functioning with in the school setting. Our department doesn’t currently require our SRO to wear one during his day-to-day activities due to this request. Once the police reform body camera requirement goes into effect in 2025 we will have to further address this issue.

A major issue the department began experiencing with the acquisition of all the new body and in-cameras was that there was a log jam of data trying to get uploaded and transferred to the cloud so we could access videos. Videos were taking several days to upload and there were several delays getting video evidence to the States Attorney’s office. Our local internet provider was finally able to figure out the issue which has been since fixed.

The Manteno Police Department shift supervisors, administrators, and investigators 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. During the 2021 year we didn’t have any formal complaints filed against any of our officers. One informal complaint was filed for unprofessionalism. The officer received counseling for the incident.

The Manteno Police Department continues to use body cameras during investigations and arrests and copies of the videos have been sent to the States Attorney’s Office; however, 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.

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