

S.119 and S.219

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Testimony: June 25, 2020

Act 172 of 2016 (Big Bill) Sec. E.232 required the State Archivist, the Department of Public Safety, as well as representatives of statewide criminal justice agencies, to collaborate and “develop recommendations and action plans for these agencies to meet their records retention and evidence requirements [related to body-worn cameras]. These recommendations and action plans shall consider industry best practice and cost efficiency and security, including available options for digital records.”

While attempts to engage the Department of Public Safety, as well as other representatives of statewide criminal justice agencies, pursuant to this requirement were unsuccessful, this work was effectively completed in 2019 through a collaboration among law enforcement officials and with strong encouragement by the House Committee on Appropriations.

Currently, all state and local law enforcement agencies have the required record schedules approved by the State Archivist and issued by the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (Secretary of State’s Office) pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 317a, and 3 V.S.A. § 117, and 3 V.S.A. § 218 to effectively manage both dash- and body-camera footage along with many other law enforcement agency records.

The Department of Public Safety, in collaboration with the State Archivist, has also developed a comprehensive records and information management (RIM) policy that is inclusive of both dash- and body-camera footage and addresses compliance with the Vermont Public Records Act (PRA). This policy currently serves as a model for local law enforcement agencies and the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration has an active pilot with local law enforcement departments on deploying the new record schedules and model RIM policy at the local level while continuing to collaborate with the Department of Public Safety.

The Vermont State Archives and Records Administration amends record schedules when statutes are added or amended and we issue updated schedules when there are legal changes to recordkeeping requirements. We are monitoring these bills accordingly.