



SUBJECT: Vermont Department of Corrections Report: Funding of Body-Worn Cameras
TO: Joint Fiscal and Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committees
DATE: September 15, 2021

The Fiscal Year 2022 Appropriations Act appropriated \$1,000,000 to the Vermont Department of Corrections (DOC) for body-worn cameras (BWCs), with the stipulation that the cameras not be deployed until the Department adopts a policy on, and trains staff in, their use.

The DOC has researched the cost of the leading suppliers of BWCs and services but has not yet entered the contracting process. As the Department has not yet identified a provider, the following comparison of the vendors currently under consideration is provided. The comparison is based on the total estimated 5-year cost of their use, as one supplier offers the equipment for lease, and the other for sale. Costs for the BWCs, training, data storage, and redaction, are addressed.

Leasing Vendor

If we were to enter into a contract with the leasing vendor, the total 5-year estimated cost would be approximately \$936,000. This would include:

- 300 leased BWCs;
- 15 leased docking kits, each with a capacity to dock and charge 10 cameras; and
- 5 years of storage (300 plans, each 100 GB).

The vendor would be responsible for fixing or replacing any damaged or malfunctioning equipment, and typically replaces BWCs with newer equipment approximately every three years.

Selling Vendor

For a comparable package, the estimated 5-year cost of contracting with the selling vendor would be \$1,655,000, or approximately 77% more expensive than the leasing vendor. This package would include:

- 300 owned BWCs;
- 37 owned transfer station kits, each with 8-slots;
- 6 owned USB charging docks; and
- 300 unlimited storage plans with 6 upload plans (60 concurrent devices); and
- Technical services.

There are several expenses this plan would not include, such as “back-office costs” and configuration, support, and installation costs. Under this plan, there would not be any provision for updating or replacing equipment.

Staff Training

Staff training is expected to be cost-neutral. Both vendors would train our trainers in how to use and properly maintain the BWCs and related equipment. The DOC Office of Professional Standards and Compliance will then conduct trainings of front-line staff.

Redaction of Recordings

The training provided by the vendors would include how to redact recordings. This function would only be performed by authorized DOC staff. Although this cost will be absorbed within staff salaries, it is difficult to estimate the cost of redaction, due to the unpredictability of how long it may take to properly redact a recording and how frequently recordings will be released or shared.