



OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Bill Analysis

Jeff Hobday

H.B. 425

132nd General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Antani and Craig, Becker, Seitz, Sheehy, Lang

BILL SUMMARY

- Provides that a record created by a body camera worn by a law enforcement officer is a public record, subject to certain exceptions.
- Exempts from disclosure under the Public Records Law certain portions of a body-worn camera recording, depending on the content of the recording.
- Allows any person to file a mandamus action in the Ohio Supreme Court requesting the Court to order the release of all or portions of a recording if a public office has denied a request to release restricted portions of a body-worn camera recording.
- Specifies that an infrastructure record of a public school is not a public record subject to mandatory release or disclosure under the Public Records Law.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Application of Public Records Law to body camera recordings

Ohio's Public Records Law requires a public office or person responsible for public records, upon request, to promptly prepare the public record and make it available to the requester for inspection or copying.¹ The bill exempts from disclosure under the Public Records Law certain "restricted portions of a body-worn camera recording," as described below. A "body-worn camera" is defined in the bill as a visual and audio recording device worn by a peace officer while on duty.²

¹ R.C. 149.43(B).

² R.C. 149.43(A)(1)(gg), (13), and (14).

Restricted portions of a body camera recording

Under the bill, "restricted portions of a body-worn camera recording" exempted from the Public Records Law include any visual or audio portion of a body-worn camera recording that shows, communicates, or discloses any of the following:³

- The death of a person or a deceased person's body, unless the death was caused by a peace officer or the consent of the decedent's executor or administrator has been obtained.
- The death of a peace officer, firefighter, paramedic, or other first responder, occurring while the decedent was on duty, unless the consent of the decedent's executor or administrator has been obtained.
- Grievous bodily harm, unless the injury was effected by a peace officer or the consent of the injured person or the injured person's guardian has been obtained. As used in the bill, "grievous bodily harm" means serious bodily injury, including fractured or dislocated bones, deep cuts, torn ligaments, and serious damage to internal organs.⁴
- An act of severe violence against a person that results in serious physical harm to the person, unless the act and injury was effected by a peace officer or the consent of the injured person or the injured person's guardian has been obtained.
- Grievous bodily harm to a peace officer, firefighter, paramedic, or other first responder, occurring while the injured person was on duty, unless the consent of the injured person or the injured person's guardian has been obtained.
- An act of severe violence resulting in serious physical harm against a peace officer, firefighter, paramedic, or other first responder, occurring while the injured person was on duty, unless the consent of the injured person or the injured person's guardian has been obtained.
- A person's nude body, unless the person's consent has been obtained.
- Protected health information (as defined in federal law),⁵ the identity of a person in a health care facility who is not the subject of a law enforcement

³ R.C. 149.43(A)(14).

⁴ R.C. 5924.120(A)(6), referenced but not in the bill.

⁵ 45 C.F.R. 160.103, referenced but not in the bill.



encounter, or any other information in a health care facility that could identify a person who is not the subject of a law enforcement encounter.

- Information that could identify the alleged victim of a sex offense, menacing by stalking, or domestic violence. "Sex offense" is defined to include rape, sexual battery, unlawful sexual conduct with a minor, gross sexual imposition, sexual imposition, importuning, voyeurism, and public indecency.⁶
- Information, other than a confidential law enforcement investigatory record, that could identify a person who provides sensitive or confidential information to a law enforcement agency when the disclosure of the person's identity or the information provided could reasonably be expected to threaten or endanger the safety or property of the person or another person.
- Personal information, such as any government-issued identification number, date of birth, address, financial information, or criminal justice information from the law enforcement automated data system or similar databases, of a person who is not arrested, cited, charged, or issued a written warning by a peace officer.
- Proprietary police contingency plans or tactics that are intended to prevent crime and maintain public order and safety.
- A personal conversation unrelated to work between peace officers or between a peace officer and an employee of a law enforcement agency.
- A conversation between a peace officer and a member of the public that does not concern law enforcement activities.
- The interior of a residence, unless it is the location of an adversarial encounter with, or a use of force by, a peace officer.
- Material that is "obscene" by the standard set forth in the Sex Offense Law.⁷

⁶ R.C. 2907.10, referenced but not in the bill.

⁷ R.C. 2907.01(F), referenced but not in the bill.



Mandamus action to compel disclosure

If a public office denies a request to release a restricted portion of a body-worn camera recording, the bill allows any person to file a mandamus action in the Ohio Supreme Court requesting the Court to order the release of all or portions of the recording. If the court determines that the filing articulates by clear and convincing evidence that the public interest in the recording substantially outweighs privacy interests and other interests asserted to deny release, the Court must issue a writ of mandamus ordering the public office to release the recording.⁸

Public school infrastructure records

The bill specifies that an infrastructure record of a public school is not a public record subject to mandatory release or disclosure under the Public Records Law. Current law, unchanged by the bill, defines "infrastructure record" as any record that discloses the configuration of critical systems, including communication, computer, electrical, mechanical, ventilation, water, and plumbing systems, security codes, or the infrastructure or structural configuration of a building. The term also includes a risk assessment of infrastructure performed by a law enforcement agency. It does not mean a simple floor plan that discloses only the spatial relationship of components of the building.⁹

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	11-21-17

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⁸ R.C. 149.43(H).

⁹ R.C. 149.433(A) and (B)(2).

