

HB 1587-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2026 SESSION

26-2897

07/09

HOUSE BILL ***1587-FN***

AN ACT requiring police body-worn camera footage be subject to the right-to-know law.

SPONSORS: Rep. Sabourin dit Choiniere, Rock. 30; Rep. Corcoran, Hills. 28; Rep. Giasson, Hills. 29; Rep. Granger, Straf. 2; Rep. Tim Mannion, Hills. 1; Rep. Tom Mannion, Hills. 1; Rep. Slottje, Hills. 13; Rep. Spillane, Rock. 2

COMMITTEE: Criminal Justice and Public Safety

ANALYSIS

This bill requires police body-worn camera footage be subject to the right-to-know law and requires a public body or agency to respond to requests for body camera footage within 5 business days.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT requiring police body-worn camera footage be subject to the right-to-know law.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Public Officers and Employees; Access to Governmental Records and Meetings; Definitions.
2 Amend RSA 91-A:1-a, II to read as follows:

3 II. "Governmental proceedings" means the transaction of any functions affecting any or all
4 citizens of the state by a public body, **and includes video and audio recordings created by law**
5 **enforcement officers in the performance of official duties through body-worn cameras,**
6 **except as limited by RSA 91-A:5 or other applicable law.**

7 2 New Paragraphs; Public Officers and Employees; Access to Governmental Records and
8 Meetings; Minutes and Records Available for Public Inspection. Amend RSA 91-A:4 by inserting
9 after paragraph IX the following new paragraphs:

10 X. A public body or agency may charge actual costs for redaction and processing of body-
11 worn camera requests in accordance with paragraph IV.

12 XI. A public body or agency shall respond to requests for footage under this section within 5
13 business days and provide either the records, an explanation for denial, or a statement of time
14 needed for redaction and processing to the requester.

15 3 New Section; Public Officers and Employees; Access to Governmental Records and Meetings;
16 Disclosure of Police Body-Worn Camera Footage. Amend RSA 91-A by inserting after section 4 the
17 following new section:

18 91-A:4-a Disclosure of Police Body-Worn Camera Footage.

19 I. Body-worn camera footage recorded by law enforcement officers in the course of official
20 duties shall be subject to public disclosure under this chapter.

21 II. Prior to disclosure of any body-worn camera record, the public body or public agency shall
22 redact:

23 (a) Personal identifying information of individuals, including social security numbers,
24 addresses, phone numbers, medical or welfare data, and other information whose disclosure would
25 constitute an invasion of privacy under RSA 91-A:5, IV.

26 (b) Imagery of minors, victims of sexual assault, and private locations where individuals
27 have a reasonable expectation of privacy, unless the public interest in disclosure outweighs the
28 privacy interest.

29 (c) Any other content exempt under RSA 91-A:5 or federal law.

30 III. Requests for records shall be processed in accordance with RSA 91-A:4, with redactions
31 documented in writing, specifying the statutory basis for each withheld or redacted portion.

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1 4 Repeal. RSA 91-A:5, X, relative to exempting body-worn camera footage from disclosure, is
2 repealed.

3 5 Effective Date. This act shall take effect January 1, 2027.

**HB 1587-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT requiring police body-worn camera footage be subject to the right-to-know law.

FISCAL IMPACT: This bill does not provide funding, nor does it authorize new positions.

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenue	\$0	Indeterminable		
<i>Revenue Fund(s)</i>	Fee Revenue for Requests			
Expenditures*	\$0	<u>Department of Safety</u> \$484K in FY 27, \$483K in FY 28, and \$508K in FY 29 <u>Department of Corrections</u> \$111K in FY 28 and \$114K in FY 29		
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	General Fund			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Funding Source(s)</i>	None			

*Expenditure = Cost of bill

*Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill

Estimated Political Subdivision Impact				
	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
County Revenue	\$0	Indeterminable		
County Expenditures	\$0	Indeterminable		
Local Revenue	\$0	Indeterminable		
Local Expenditures	\$0	Indeterminable		

METHODOLOGY:

This bill, effective January 1, 2027, requires police body-worn camera footage be subject to the right-to-know law and requires a public body or agency to respond to requests for body camera footage within 5 business days. This will have an impact on state, county, and local expenditures, which are discussed below.

State Expenditure Impact

Department of Safety

The Department states the Digital Evidence Unit of the New Hampshire State Police, within the Justice Information Bureau, is the work unit tasked with administration of the entire body-worn camera (BWC) and cruiser camera inventory as well as management of footage, to include classification, retention, redaction, and release. That unit is staffed by one full-time program manager and by one full-time management analyst and has a vacant full-time management analyst position. The Department states it would need to fill the vacant position, as well as hire two additional management analysts (SOC 13-05, step 4), and hire two new paralegal positions (SOC 23-04, step 5) at a total cost for all five positions of \$484,000 in FY 2027, \$483,000 in FY 2028, and \$508,000 in FY 2029. This bill provides neither authorization nor appropriation for new personnel.

Department of Corrections

The Department states that body worn cameras are worn by probation and parole officers as well as corrections officers and investigators throughout the facilities. These recordings can be stored for access if needed for any investigation or follow-up. If this bill were to be implemented, the Department states it would require a full-time administrator who would be tasked with facilitating the right-to-know requests and be responsible for providing the redacted interviews as requested within the (5) business day requirement. The Department states the cost for this position (SOC 11-05, start date 07/01/27) would be \$111,000 in FY 2028 and \$114,000 in FY 2029.

County Expenditure Impact

The New Hampshire Association of Counties states it is unable to estimate the cost of the proposed legislation. However, it is likely that additional expenditures would be required for staffing and technology enhancements, which could necessitate a formal hiring process and the issuance of Requests for Proposals (RFPs).

Local Expenditure Impact

The New Hampshire Municipal Association states that managing and processing RSA 91-A requests for body-worn camera recordings will increase expenditures in municipalities that employ this technology by between \$10,000 and \$100,000, depending on the actual volume of requests. The amount may be greater for large municipalities. These costs include software and staff hours required to make the mandatory redactions to recordings requested under RSA 91-A, potential legal fees and penalties associated with inadvertent release of personal identifying information or imagery in private locations where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy; further, municipalities may incur legal expenses related to lawsuits alleging improper editing of recordings released to the requestor. The Association adds that New Hampshire state law does not require all law enforcement officers to wear body-worn cameras, although many

local departments and the state police have voluntarily adopted the use of body and/or dashboard cameras. The cost associated with this bill may discourage municipalities from adopting this technology or discontinue the use of it, which may reduce local expenditures.

Revenue Impact

This bill states a public body or agency may charge actual costs for redaction and processing of body-worn camera requests. Amounts that may be charged and collected are indeterminable at this time, however would offset costs to law enforcement agencies in complying with this bill.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of Safety, Department of Corrections, New Hampshire Municipal Association, and New Hampshire Association of Counties