

Step to Shelter Merseyside
Body-Worn Camera Policy

1. Purpose

Step to Shelter Merseyside is committed to the safety of its staff, volunteers, and the individuals we support. The use of body-worn cameras (BWCs) aims to enhance transparency, accountability, and security while ensuring compliance with legal and ethical standards. This policy outlines the appropriate use, storage, and management of BWC footage.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Step to Shelter Merseyside staff and volunteers authorized to use BWCs while engaging in outreach, support services, or other operational activities.

3. Use of Body-Worn Cameras

- BWCs will only be used by authorized personnel.
- The primary purposes of BWCs are:
 - To ensure the safety of staff, volunteers, and service users.
 - To document interactions for training, accountability, and safeguarding.
 - To provide evidence in case of incidents, complaints, or legal proceedings.
- Cameras must be worn visibly and activated during interactions with service users when deemed necessary for safety or documentation purposes.
- Individuals should be informed that they are being recorded unless doing so would pose a risk to safety.
- BWCs should not be used in a manner that violates privacy rights or confidentiality agreements.

4. Storage and Retention of Footage

- Footage will be securely stored and accessible only by authorized personnel.
- Recordings will be retained for **30 days**, unless required for investigations, legal matters, or safeguarding purposes.
- After the retention period, footage will be permanently deleted unless an extension is deemed necessary.

5. Access and Disclosure

- Access to BWC footage is restricted to designated personnel.
- Footage may be disclosed to:
 - Law enforcement agencies where required by law.
 - Relevant safeguarding authorities when necessary.
 - Internal teams for training or investigative purposes, ensuring compliance with data protection laws.
- Unauthorized access, sharing, or tampering with footage is strictly prohibited.

6. Compliance and Accountability

- Staff and volunteers must comply with this policy and complete relevant training before using BWCs.
- Misuse of BWCs may result in disciplinary action, including termination of volunteer or staff roles.
- Regular audits will be conducted to ensure compliance with this policy and data protection regulations.

7. Data Protection and Privacy

- The use of BWCs must comply with the **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)** and **Data Protection Act 2018**.
- Personal data captured on BWCs will be processed lawfully, fairly, and securely.
- Service users have the right to request access to their recorded data, subject to legal considerations.

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to reflect changes in regulations, technology, or organizational needs.

Approval & Implementation

Approved by: **Mr. Dylan Williams (Manager)**

Date: 10/03/2025