POLICY/PURPOSE:
The purpose of this directive is to establish the policy and procedure for video recording custodial interviews of persons involved in serious crimes.

It shall be the policy of the Cedar Rapids Police Department (CRPD) to video record investigative interviews of persons involved with or having suspected involvement in crimes of a serious nature. This would include all felony and aggravated level investigations. The decision to video record other interviews shall be made by the investigating officer or commander based upon the facts known about the offense at the time of the recording. Video recording may also be authorized by a commander, at the request of a prosecuting attorney or other law enforcement agency, or for other unusual circumstances.

Because the CRPD arrests several thousand people yearly on misdemeanor investigations, video recording should only be done with serious crimes due to the expense and logistics involved in maintaining the recordings.

Persons categorized as key witnesses will also be video-recorded reference felony investigations. This will be at the discretion of the investigating officer(s) or any commander.

PROCEDURE:

- Several rooms have the capabilities for video recording within the Investigative Division. These locations are outfitted with a panel next to the door containing red and green buttons.
- To activate the recording system, the green button should be pressed once and it will illuminate. To stop the recording, press the button again and the light will turn off indicating that the recording has stopped.
- The recording system also has the ability to be muted allowing for confidential conversations between attorneys and their clients. To activate this feature, press the red button, and it will illuminate and the conversation will be muted. Even though the conversation is muted, officers will be able to observe the activities within the interview room.
- The Arbitrator Video Recording System in CID has a three-year “live-view” storage capacity therefore only certain interviews require a download to a digital storage medium (disc, external hard drive etc.) for storage purposes. All interviews related to any homicide, sexual abuse and Class A felony investigation must be downloaded to a digital storage medium.
- All interviews downloaded to a digital storage medium will be entered as evidence.
- When recording interviews using the CID Arbitrator Video System officers are required to label the interview within the Arbitrator System noting the case number, officer(s) name, interviewees full name and classification tag (CID interview). This practice will insure that all interviews are fully searchable for Property and Evidence
POLICY TITLE: Video Recording Suspect & Witness Interviews

STANDARD/REF #: 

APPROVED BY: Wayne Jerman, Chief

EFFECTIVE DATE: 3/1/2011

REQUIRED REVIEWERS: Criminal Investigations Division

REVISED DATE: 2/18/2015

REVIEWED DATE: 10/29/2012

personnel.

- At the start of the custodial interview, the investigating officer will inform the person that a recording of the interview is being made.

- Whenever it becomes necessary to review evidentiary recordings, the integrity of the original recording must be maintained. The original digital storage medium should never be released or removed from evidence unless ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction. Copies shall be made by Property and Evidence as needed for the County Attorney’s Office, defense attorneys, CRPD officers/investigators and other law enforcement agencies. Anytime a copy is made it shall be documented and attached within the department’s record management system. Duplicate discs etc. will be clearly labeled as copies to distinguish them from originals.

- Officers should utilize the recording system in their cars to capture both witness and suspect statements when possible. If a recording is made, officers should document that information in their report and label the interview within the Arbitrator System noting the case number, officer(s) name, interviewee’s full name and the appropriate classification tag.

- There may be situations where it is not practical to record something in the field. In these cases, a written statement is acceptable as an alternative to a recorded statement. However, when possible, a recording is the preferred method of documenting statements.