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## OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

# Body Camera Use During Inspections

The Office of the State Fire Marshal has utilized body camera technology for several years as a resource available to our field staff for situations that they felt warranted additional safeguards. However, society and culture change has forced the need for video evidence of all interactions, especially for law enforcement agencies.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal is a law enforcement agency as set forth in Kansas Statutes and the Kansas Fire Prevention Code. As such, the State Fire Marshal has mandated the use of body cameras during all inspections since 2021. Body cameras are used out of an abundance of precaution to protect our staff from allegations of misconduct and/or complaints.

Body camera recordings are the property of the State Fire Marshal and will not be viewed, disseminated, or utilized for any purpose other than those of an investigatory nature, and only if an allegation or complaint is made to our agency.

Several facilities have brought up concerns regarding safeguarding private information and situations, including but not limited to, medical or educational information. The State Fire Marshal understands those laws and requirements and therefore requires a facility escort during the entire time we are in your buildings. We require those escorts to precede us into rooms or spaces to ensure sensitive information/situations are not observed by our staff.

**Important Note:** It is the facility's responsibility to abide by privacy laws on behalf of their occupants. Fire Marshal staff should not see or be exposed to these privacy situations with or without the use of body cameras.

*For any questions or concerns, please contact the State Fire Marshal's legal counsel, Jared P. Smith at [jared.smith@ks.gov](mailto:jared.smith@ks.gov) or 785-250-9498.*