

Nassau County Investing \$5 Million In Police Body Cameras

By [Jennifer McLogan](#) May 27, 2021 at 7:29 pm

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MINNEOLA, N.Y. (CBSNewYork) — In a major step toward police transparency on Long Island, [Nassau County police](#) officers will soon be equipped with body cameras. The county is about to invest \$5 million in [body cameras](#) for its police force. It is among the last large law enforcement agencies in the country to do so, and many Long Islanders say it's long overdue.

All 2,500 [Nassau County](#) uniformed police officers will soon be wearing body cameras on their chests or shoulders.

“I am proud to share that for the first time in history, Nassau County police officers will wear body cameras, a proven tool for accountability, safety and approved officer performance,” Nassau County Executive Laura Curran said.

Of the 50 largest law enforcement agencies in the country, only Portland, Oregon, and Long Island — Nassau and Suffolk — have not equipped officers with body cameras.

“Both Nassau and Suffolk have had to be dragged kicking and screaming into the 21st century,” civil rights attorney Fred Brewington told CBS2’s Jennifer McLogan.

Brewington cites traffic stops and arrests are four to five times greater among Black and brown people on Long Island.

“Body cameras will serve as a tool to help clarify what’s really taking place out there on the street,” he said.

But police leaders believe that in most cases, the officer will be exonerated with video proof.

“They know they’re professional and they want the world to see that, so when the complaints come in, we will be able to go to that video and say, ‘Look, this is what happened,’” Nassau Police Commissioner Patrick Ryder said.

“I myself have been a victim of police-inflicted violence. I have lived it,” said Sergio Argueta, a youth counselor and Latino leader with the Corridor Counts Coalition. “Give us the information, give us the data, start being transparent and realize that this is just the beginning.”

Suffolk County police will follow with their body cam rollout in October. The department released the following statement:

“The implementation of body-worn cameras is a top priority for the Suffolk County Police Department and an integral part of the police reform plan that received overwhelming approval by the county legislature in March. The department is currently meeting with vendors and after a vendor is approved, the goal is to begin roll out of body-worn cameras in late fall to early winter.”

There is frustration that it has taken a decade to get the cameras approved.

In addition to the costs of technology, Long Island’s two counties will each pay millions of dollars annually to compensate officers

equipped with body cameras, as part of police union collective bargaining agreements.

“It’s complete transparency on both ways,” Freeport homeowner Angela Reynolds said. “That body cam will tell the story and will give a voice to the silent.”

“It’s good for both sides to use as evidence to support what happened and what is going on,” Oceanside homeowner Karen Nardone said.

One year after the murder of George Floyd and marches across America, police body cameras are coming to Long Island.