



fb: BTVCopWatch
 ig: @BTVCopWatch
 twitter: @BTVCopWatch
 info@btvcopwatch.org



BTV Copwatch is an autonomous network of community members committed to filming police in and around Burlington, VT. Our goal is to provide support, education, and resources to empower our neighbors to monitor police activity. While we offer guidance to anyone looking to effectively film the police, we are not gatekeeping copwatching in our community. The vision is to create a culture in Burlington where filming the police is commonplace and expected.

Why We Copwatch

- De-escalation:** prevent police violence (in the moment & long-term)
- Documenting** police action (when useful for court cases, media, etc)
- Educate & Empower** others to copwatch
- Community Care & Defense:** providing solidarity& support for people harassed by police
- Protest & Disrupt & Abolish** existing power structures

Useful Phrases

- “I am exercising my right to record police activity”
- “I am not physically interfering”
- “I just want to make sure no one’s rights are violated”
- “I am filming from a reasonable distance”

Filming Tips

Never livestream | Film overtly | Get multiple vantage points/angles | Begin filming ASAP | Stand close in case asked to step back | Limit ongoing commentary | Film any interactions between cops & copwatchers | Turn your phone horizontally | Debrief/process after filming | Limit interactions with cops | Film cops, not neighbors



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Code of Conduct

Participants in BTV Copwatch Must...

- Not be members of local, state, or federal law enforcement agencies.
- Commit to anti-oppression in our dealings with each other and the community. Do not tolerate racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, or other forms of oppression.
- Respect the confidentiality of fellow copwatchers.
- Respect the privacy and dignity of community members we film.
- Seek consensus with other copwatchers before communicating any information obtained while copwatching. This includes video, audio, or any first-hand accounts of interactions with police or community members.
- Get consent before publishing any identifying personal information obtained while copwatching.
- Respect community members' requests to stop filming them, especially when you feel there is no immediate danger.
- Never use violent rhetoric, make violent threats, or commit violence.
- Make every necessary effort to not physically interfere with police.
- Commit to keeping community members safe by avoiding behaviors that could escalate situations.
- Never provide any information to police that could implicate someone in a crime.
- Never livestream any recording.
- Never copwatch while intoxicated.
- Refrain from carrying firearms while copwatching.
- Understand that copwatching involves the risk of arrest.

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