

# New York expands police cameras to all patrol officers

January 31 2018

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The New York Police Department, the largest city police force in the United States, announced Tuesday that all patrol officers and detectives would be equipped with body cameras by the end of 2018.

Officials said the rollout was a year ahead of schedule and expressed hope that it would be a decision replicated by other forces around the country, amid ongoing outcry over the deaths of unarmed—often African American—men at the hands of police in disputed circumstances.

New York's police force began a body-[camera](#) pilot program in December 2014, six months after the death of father-of-six Eric Garner in a police chokehold was among those that sparked nationwide protests.

The acceleration of the program will see 18,000 officers outfitted and trained by the end of the year, de Blasio said. Police commissioner James O'Neill said 2,200 police officers currently wear the body cameras.

The preliminary budget for the accelerated rollout includes \$5.9 million this year, \$12 million in 2019 and \$9.5 million in 2020, officials said.

"We're helping to make New York City fairer faster, and growing trust between police and communities," said Mayor Bill de Blasio.

Four of the last five officer-related shootings in New York were

captured by body cameras, O'Neill said.

He said "the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages" with cameras a de-escalator and complaints quickly resolved. He added that they help to keep members of the public and police safe, drive down crime and build trust.

Eric Adams, president of New York's most populous borough Brooklyn, estimated that the cameras would save the [city](#) "millions of dollars in unjustifiable law suits."

New York's crime rate is at its lowest in more than half a century. Fewer than 300 homicides were recorded in 2017, numbers not seen since 1951.

The tiny, flat [body](#) cameras look like pagers and can be clipped onto uniforms to record [police](#) interactions and activities in real time.

The devices, which are far cheaper than dashboard cameras, are a relatively recent innovation in the United States but the New York agreement is likely to increase chances they will become standard equipment.

New York has more than 36,000 officers in a city of 8.5 million residents.

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