

A More Confident Holiday Season

Protecting retail teams and the shopping experience when seasonal pressure peaks



Executive summary

Holiday readiness is more than stocked shelves and staffed shifts. It means preparing associates for difficult interactions and making sure they know how to get help.

Axon Body Mini combines visible camera presence and incident recording with connected support. Panic alerts, live location, livestreaming and two-way voice connect associates with designated responders. Axon Assistant adds real-time translation and relevant organizational policy guidance.

This whitepaper explores seasonal challenges, frontline support and a practical deployment approach of the Axon Body Mini camera.

The busiest season demands stronger support

During the five-day Thanksgiving weekend in 2025, 129.5 million consumers shopped in stores, up 3% from 2024.[1] That traffic creates opportunity — and significant demands on the people delivering the shopping experience.

Those demands continue through the post-holiday returns period. Associates need timely information for routine questions, communication support when understanding is difficult and human assistance when an interaction becomes unsafe.

The opportunity is straightforward:

Prepare associates before an incident.

Connect them with help during it.

Preserve context afterward.

Holiday readiness means preparing not only for more transactions, but for the moments when an associate needs help.

Five challenges that put holiday confidence at risk

And how Axon Body Mini helps overcome them.

1 **Customer frustration and escalation**
Unavailable gifts, disputed promotions and long queues can turn routine disappointments into confrontational exchanges. Visible camera presence and recording status may reinforce accountability; connected support provides a path to help when communication alone is not enough.

2 **Seasonal staffing and confidence gaps**
UKG's 2025 holiday hiring survey found that 83% of surveyed retailers expected understaffed stores at least two days per week during the season.[2] Newer associates may still be learning policies and escalation procedures while managers cover competing demands.

Axon Body Mini's policy lookup feature lets associates ask questions and receive guidance drawn from their organization's approved policies. For example, an associate can check holiday return requirements to explain the policy and identify the next step without waiting for a manager. Exceptions and decisions requiring authorization remain with the appropriate manager.

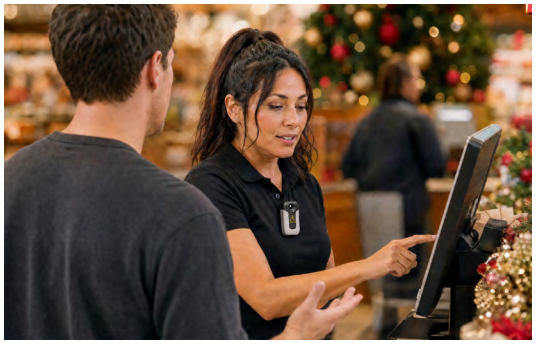
3 **Theft-related safety concerns**
Asset protection should keep people at the center of the response. Visible camera presence may support deterrence, while recording can preserve incident context. If a situation escalates, panic alerts, live location and connected communication help designated responders assess the need and coordinate assistance.

Associates should follow approved safety procedures, request help and disengage when appropriate — not rely on the camera to change someone's behavior.

4 **Delayed support and incomplete context**
"Can someone come to the service desk?" identifies a location, but not necessarily the need. A panic alert, livestream and two-way voice can give responders more context and a direct connection to the associate.

5 **Returns disputes and post-holiday friction**
When a customer disputes a gift return, policy lookup helps the associate explain requirements and identify when a manager must approve an exception. If a language barrier adds confusion, real-time translation helps clarify the conversation. If the interaction becomes threatening, the panic button connects the associate with help and initiates recording to preserve context for review.





More than a camera

Support before, during and after a difficult interaction.

Before: Clearer communication

Visible accountability: A visibly worn camera and front-facing LED matrix make recording status apparent.

Communication support: Axon Assistant offers real-time translation and relevant policy guidance.

Transparency: Approved signage and verbal notification explain when and why recording occurs.

During: A direct connection to help

Panic alerts: A single button alerts designated responders and provides the associate's location.

Live support: Responders can initiate livestreaming and two-way voice to assess the situation and coordinate assistance.

After: Context for review

Incident documentation: Video and audio reduce reliance on recollection alone.

Pre-event context: A configurable 30–120-second buffer helps preserve events leading up to recording activation.

Evidence workflows: Footage uploads when docked; authorized teams can share evidence through approved workflows.



100g
Lightweight

3
Mounting Options

12+
Hours of Battery Life



Designed for the realities of retail

Weighing under 100 grams, Axon Body Mini was built for the frontline. It offers three mounting options, 12+ hours of battery life and pooled-device assignment. These features support a repeatable workflow: pick up a device, wear it through the shift and return it to the dock.

Why retailers are adopting body-worn cameras

A 2024 study of 16 large retailers identified deterrence, de-escalation and employee reassurance as leading reasons for adopting body-worn cameras. Participants also reported value in incident documentation and connected support.[3]

A practical approach to frontline protection

Clear policies, hands-on training and prepared responders turn technology into everyday support.

Make the purpose clear
Explain how the program supports safety, connects associates with help and documents incidents. Retail research identifies employee engagement, clear policies and data controls as important implementation considerations.[3]

Set recording and evidence rules
Activation and restrictions:
Define when recording is appropriate and where it is prohibited.

Notification and privacy:
Establish signage, verbal notification and protections for sensitive locations and interactions consistent with applicable requirements.

Access and sharing:
Specify who may view, export or share footage, for which purposes and through which approved workflows.

Retention and purpose:
Set retention periods, deletion processes and investigation holds, with clear boundaries against unrelated use.

Set up Axon Assistant policy lookup
Upload your organization's approved policies, including holiday return windows, promotions and escalation procedures. Assign an owner to keep these materials current.

Train associates to escalate situations not clearly addressed by store policy — and exceptions requiring approval — to authorized managers.

Prepare the human response
Assign alert recipients, backup coverage and response ownership. Consider interactive training technology such as Axon MetaCoach to train associates on how to use body-worn cameras and prepare for difficult interactions — including when to request help, de-escalate safely and disengage.

NIOSH's holiday retail guidance highlights prevention, supportive supervision and organizational approaches to worker well-being.[4] Support should continue after an incident through reporting, manager follow-up and appropriate employee care.

Illustrative scenario: A difficult holiday return

A newer associate faces a disputed return and a language difference. Translation clarifies the request; policy lookup provides guidance; a manager handles exceptions. If behavior becomes threatening, the associate follows safety procedures and activates approved support and recording workflows. Footage can inform later review alongside employee accounts and other evidence.

A roadmap for a more confident holiday season

Build readiness before peak demand and maintain it through returns.



Phase 1: Assessment and planning

- Review risks, employee feedback and existing systems.
- Define program objectives and measurable success metrics.
- Determine participating roles and locations.
- Assign program ownership and security response responsibilities.
- Establish device-use, recording, privacy and evidence policies.



Phase 2: Pilot before peak demand

- Pilot in selected stores and roles.
- Train associates and responders on features and safety procedures.
- Test connectivity, mounting, assignment, docking and uploads.
- Gather feedback on guidance, response readiness and documentation.



Phase 3: Scale and optimize

- Finalize policies, training and workflows using pilot findings before expanding deployment.
- Finalize device-use, recording, privacy and evidence policies.
- Track adoption, associate confidence, response times and incident documentation.
- Review safety outcomes against baseline data and use findings to continually improve the program.

Protect the people who make the season possible

A confident holiday season starts with supported associates. Pairing Axon Body Mini with clear policies, training and prepared responders connects frontline teams with help — through the rush, the returns season and beyond.

References

[1] National Retail Federation and Prosper Insights & Analytics. “Thanksgiving Holiday Weekend Draws a Record 203 Million Shoppers.” December 2, 2025.

[2] UKG. “Annual UKG Holiday Hiring Survey: Retailers Brace for Busy Holidays, Staffing Challenges, and Growing Dependence on AI.” October 3, 2025.

[3] Beck, Adrian. Body Worn Cameras in Retailing: A Review of Use and Impact. Beck Research & Consultancy Ltd, May 2024.

[4] National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. “Help for the Holidays: Preventing Fatigue, Violence, and Stress in Retail.” December 1, 2023.

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