

## Report Preparation

### 322.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Report preparation is a major part of each employee's job. The purpose of a report is to document sufficient information to refresh the employee's memory and to provide sufficient information for follow-up investigation, court testimony, and successful prosecution. Report writing is the subject of substantial formal and on-the-job training.

#### 322.1.1 REPORT PREPARATION

Employees should ensure that their reports are sufficiently detailed for their purpose and reasonably free of errors prior to submission. It is the responsibility of the assigned employee to complete and submit all reports taken during the shift before going off-duty, unless permission to delay submission of the report has been approved by the Shift Commander. Generally, felony reports or those reports requiring prompt follow-up action on active leads, evidence collection, persons of interest or arrest reports where the suspect remains in custody should not be delayed. Additional guidance can be found in Policy 421 (Shift Commanders).

Handwritten reports or forms must be prepared legibly. If the report is not legible, the submitting employee will be required by the reviewing supervisor to promptly make corrections and resubmit the report. Employees who dictate reports shall use appropriate grammar, as content is not the responsibility of the typist. Employees who generate reports on computers are subject to all requirements of this policy.

All reports shall accurately reflect the identity of the persons involved, witnesses, all pertinent information seen, heard or assimilated by any other sense and any actions taken. Employees shall not suppress, conceal or distort the facts of any reported incident, nor shall any employee make a false report orally or in writing. Generally, the reporting employee's opinions should not be included in reports unless specifically identified as such.

#### 322.1.2 DEFINITIONS

Except as noted in this section, these definitions shall be used in all department reporting:

**Person of Interest** - Person possibly involved in the crime, but probable cause to arrest or refer for prosecution does not yet exist.

**Suspect** - Person for which probable cause to arrest or refer for prosecution exists.

In order to accommodate prosecutorial review of domestic violence allegations in which we are unable to substantiate probable cause, as well as child abuse and neglect cases that are statutorily required to be reviewed by a prosecutor, the term suspect shall be used to describe the involved person in the case report.

In all other instances in which we refer a case to a city or state prosecutor, members shall ensure we have properly identified the suspect and there is sufficient information to substantiate the elements of the crime and probable cause for the arrest and/or issuance of a summons or warrant.

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#### 322.1.3 REPORT INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

All personnel shall ensure the following procedures are followed when completing reports or collecting evidence.

- (a) All names of persons involved in a case shall be documented in the primary report or added when a supplemental report is completed. The synopsis of the original case report shall contain the names of all department members involved in the initial investigation.
- (b) Names shall be entered into the appropriate tabs if typing a supplement in Mobile or if dictated, shall be stated at the very beginning of the supplement before any narrative portion and will include as much biographical information as possible in the following:
  - 1. Type of person - suspect, person of interest, victim, witness, etc
  - 2. Full name - last, first, and full middle when possible
  - 3. Current address - street, apt/unit, city, state, and zip code - do not assume the CAD/RMS has the most current information (For homeless victim's officers should list the Gladys Ray Shelter, 1519 1st Ave. S for the address).
  - 4. Social security number
  - 5. Current phone numbers - home, cell, and work
  - 6. Date of birth
  - 7. Sex/race
  - 8. Current Employment/School
  - 9. Criminal Charge (if the person is an arrestee or suspect)
- (c) Whenever evidence is acquired by a department member, regardless of how that occurred, the member shall complete a supplemental report, which includes a brief description of the circumstances as to how and when the evidence was acquired, from whom or where recovered, and its relevance to the case. The supplemental report is in addition to the proper logging of the evidence utilizing the department's evidence tracking computer system.
- (d) Evidence acquired after the original report has been completed shall be listed at the very beginning of the supplemental report before any narrative portion in the following format:
  - 1. Title - evidence
  - 2. Type/description - ex: security video, latent print from pop can, CD/DVD of interview, etc
  - 3. Location - evidence locker, laser fiche, 7th Ave. alternative storage
- (e) CSI personnel or detectives are required to complete a photo log on traffic fatalities, homicides, suspicious deaths or any time a supervisor or incident commander deems the completion of a photo log as necessary. A photo log may be used in lieu of individually listing a description of each photo taken in the supplemental report.

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However, a supplemental report memorializing their actions and the existence of the photographs and photo log shall be completed.

- (f) Officers shall note in their investigative reports the existence of any department created video or audio records obtained pursuant to an investigation in which they actively participated in. Incidental video/audio records obtained due to proximity or a response without any other active participation in the incident do not require report documentation. A narrative summary for interrogations shall be done as required in the Portable Audio/Video Recorder Policy (424), section 424.6.

#### **322.1.4 ASSIST OTHER AGENCY REPORTS**

In order to ensure we can re-contact not only the proper agency to which we provided assistance, but also the proper agent, detective, or officer and provide them with a copy of the report and any evidence gathered, the following information will be required in all Assist Other Agency reports:

- (a) The requesting agency will be listed as the "complainant for the report along with the street address and main phone number for the agency.
- (b) If there is a specific officer from the requesting agency they will be listed in the report as mentioned.
  - 1. The address listed for the officer will be their department address, but a specific desk or cell phone number for that officer should be listed when available.
- (c) If available, an email address to the agency and/or the case officer should be included in the first line of the synopsis.

All Assist Other Agency reports will be coded 2 - follow up needed. This will ensure a timely notification to the requesting agency.

#### **322.2 REQUIRED REPORTING**

Written reports are required in all of the following situations on the appropriate department approved form unless otherwise approved by a Shift Commander. Shift Commanders are responsible to approve all reports and/or notify officers of rejected reports, and ensure the report is processed in a timely manner.

##### **322.2.1 CRIMINAL ACTIVITY**

When a member responds to a call for service, or as a result of self-initiated activity becomes aware of any activity where a crime has occurred, the member shall document the incident. A criminal report requires a victim and sufficient information to establish the elements of a particular criminal offense in order to be reportable. The victim's desire not to prosecute the offender does not negate the requirement to file the criminal offense, which may be later linked to other offenses, as well as ensure accurate crime reporting is conducted. The victim's desire not to prosecute shall be documented in the narrative. However, in the event of a later arrest or suspect identification the victim should be recontacted to confirm their desire to forgo or support prosecution.

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If a call for service is determined to be reportable under the parameters of the Department's online reporting system the officer may refer the complainant to that reporting platform if appropriate based on the circumstances.

Activity to be documented in a written report includes:

- (a) All arrests
  - 1. Incidents involving the arrest of a suspect require Shift Commander approval prior to the officer ending their tour of duty. If a report is rejected the report shall be corrected, resubmitted, and approved prior to the officer ending their tour of duty. All arrest reports and the associated case report should be completed as soon as practical after the arrest is made.
- (b) All criminal investigations and related follow up.
- (c) Situations covered by separate policy, which include:
  - 1. Use of Force Policy
  - 2. Domestic Violence Policy
  - 3. Child Abuse Policy
  - 4. Adult Abuse Policy
  - 5. Hate Crimes Policy
- (d) All crimes for which physical evidence is collected and submitted to the property unit.
- (e) The victim was provided with Marsy's Law information.

#### 322.2.2 NON-CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

The following incidents shall be documented using the appropriate approved report or form:

- (a) Any use of physical force by a member of this department (see the Use of Force Policy).
- (b) Any firearm discharge (see the Firearms Policy).
- (c) Any time a person is reported missing (regardless of jurisdiction) (see the Missing Person Reporting Policy).
- (d) Any found property.
- (e) Any traffic accidents above the minimum reporting level (see the Traffic Accident Response and Reporting Policy).
- (f) Suspicious incidents that may indicate a potential for crimes against children or that a child's safety is in jeopardy.
- (g) All protective custody detentions.
- (h) Calls for service at liquor establishments licensed by the City. In addition to any other criminal investigative reports, members shall complete department form 308 (Liquor Establishment Incident Form) in the department-approved database for tracking and reporting purposes.

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- (i) Suspicious incidents that may place the public or others at risk shall be documented utilizing the suspicious activity/person report charge within the mobile system.
- (j) Whenever the employee believes the circumstances should be documented or at the direction of a supervisor.

#### 322.2.3 DEATH REPORTS

Death investigations require specific investigation methods depending on circumstances and should be handled in accordance with the Death Investigation Policy. An officer handling a death investigation should notify and apprise a supervisor of the circumstances surrounding the incident and a determination will be made on how to proceed. The following cases shall be appropriately investigated and documented using a case report:

- (a) Sudden or accidental deaths
- (b) Suicides
- (c) Homicide or suspicious deaths
- (d) Unattended deaths (no physician or qualified hospice care during the period immediately preceding death)
- (e) Found dead bodies or body parts

#### 322.2.4 INJURY OR DAMAGE BY DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

Reports shall be taken if an injury occurs that is a result of an act of a department employee. Reports or documentation in the applicable call for service shall be made when there is damage to department property or equipment.

#### 322.2.5 MISCELLANEOUS INJURIES

Any injury that is reported to this department shall require a report when:

- (a) The injury is a result of a drug overdose.
- (b) There is an attempted suicide.
- (c) The injury is major or serious, whereas death could result.
- (d) The circumstances surrounding the incident are suspicious and it is desirable to record the event.

The above reporting requirements are not intended to be all-inclusive. A supervisor may direct an employee to document any incident he/she deems necessary.

#### 322.2.6 DEPARTMENT ONLINE REPORTING SYSTEM

In order to increase department efficiencies and provide an alternative reporting mechanism for the public, specific crimes and/or other reports should be referred to the Department's Online Reporting System (DORS). The requirements and types of crimes reportable via DORS is referenced in the Report Preparation Standard Operating Procedure (322).

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Members may refer victims to online victim assistance programs (e.g., Federal Communications Commission (FCC) website for identity theft, Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) website for computer crimes).

This policy applies to calls for service reported through the Red River Regional Dispatch Center or an on-scene officer as outlined in the policy.

#### **322.2.7 DEPARTMENT LOBBY CALLS FOR SERVICE**

Upon receiving a complaint or call for service in our front lobby area, Records Unit staff shall acquire all necessary information such as the nature of the crime or complaint, location of the incident, and the complainant's name and contact information. If appropriate, Records Unit staff should refer the complainant to the online reporting kiosk in the lobby or, if circumstances dictate, take the report directly from the complainant. If an officer response is needed, staff should contact the Red River Regional Dispatch Center (RRRDC) who shall dispatch the appropriate patrol officer to the lobby or location of the incident depending on the complainant's wishes.

#### **322.3 GENERAL POLICY OF EXPEDITIOUS REPORTING**

In general, all employees and supervisors shall act with promptness and efficiency in the preparation and processing of all reports. An incomplete report, unorganized reports or reports delayed without supervisory approval are not acceptable. Reports shall be processed according to established priorities. Additional guidance is contained in Policy 421 (Shift Commanders).

##### **322.3.1 GENERAL USE OF OTHER HANDWRITTEN FORMS**

County, state and federal agency forms may be block printed as appropriate. In general, the form itself may make the requirement for typing apparent.

#### **322.4 REPORT CORRECTIONS**

Shift Commanders shall review reports and all handwritten forms, except citations, for content and accuracy. If a correction is necessary, the reviewing Shift Commander shall ensure contact is made with the officer, stating the reasons for rejection. It shall be the responsibility of the originating employee to ensure that any report returned for correction is processed in a timely manner.

#### **322.5 REPORT CHANGES OR ALTERATIONS**

Reports that have been approved by a Shift Commander and submitted to the Records Unit for merging in the record management system may only be modified or altered for grammatical corrections without the knowledge of the originating officer. However, if Records Unit personnel identify issues with the content of a report prior to finalizing the merge process, records personnel shall contact the originating officer before making any content changes to the report. This will ensure the content of the originating officer's report is reflected accurately. Once a report has been merged into the records management system content edits shall only be completed by the originating officer who shall do so by completing a supplement to the original report.

Reviewed reports that have not yet been submitted to the Records Unit may be corrected or modified for minor grammatical errors by the reviewing Shift Commander, or rejected and sent

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back to the originating officer for corrections. If the reviewing Shift Commander determines there are content issues in the report, he/she shall reject the report and contact the originating officer for the needed corrections. If an officer submits a report for review, the officer may request that report to be rejected by the Shift Commander in order for the officer to make changes or to complete the report.