

## Report Preparation

### 322.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to those members of the Department who complete investigations and reports as a part of their duties.

### 322.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Easton Police Department that members shall act with promptness and efficiency in the preparation and processing of all reports. Reports shall document sufficient information to refresh the member's memory and shall provide enough detail for follow-up investigation and successful prosecution.

### 322.3 EXPEDITIOUS REPORTING

An incomplete report, unorganized reports or reports that are delayed without supervisory approval are not acceptable. Reports shall be processed according to established priorities or to a special priority made necessary under exceptional circumstances.

### 322.4 REPORT PREPARATION

Reports should be sufficiently detailed for their purpose and free from errors prior to submission and approval. It is the responsibility of the member to complete and submit all reports taken during the shift before going off-duty unless permission to hold the report has been approved by a supervisor (Md. Code PS § 3-514). Generally, reports requiring prompt follow-up action on active leads or arrest reports where the suspect remains in custody should not be held.

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

#### 322.4.1 HANDWRITTEN OR TYPED REPORTS

County, state and federal agency forms may be block printed unless the requirement for typing is apparent. Supervisors may require block printing or typing of reports of any nature for department consistency.

Handwritten reports must be prepared legibly. If the report is not legible, the submitting member will be required by the reviewing supervisor to promptly make corrections and resubmit the report.

In general, the narrative portion of reports where an arrest is made or when there is a long narrative should be typed or dictated. Members who dictate reports shall use appropriate grammar, as the content is not the responsibility of the typist.

Members who generate reports on computers are subject to all requirements of this policy.

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### **322.5 REQUIRED REPORTING**

In all of the following situations, members shall complete reports using the appropriate department-approved forms and reporting methods, unless otherwise approved by a supervisor.

The reporting requirements are not intended to be all-inclusive. A member may complete a report if he/she deems it necessary or as directed by a supervisor.

#### **322.5.1 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 regardless of whether a victim desires prosecution.

Activity to be documented in a written report includes:

- (a) All arrests.
- (b) All crimes.
- (c) Non-felony incidents involving threats or stalking behavior.
- (d) Situations covered by separate policy. These include:
  - 1. Use of Force Policy
  - 2. Domestic Violence Policy
  - 3. Child Abuse Policy
  - 4. Adult Abuse Policy
  - 5. Hate Crimes Policy
  - 6. Suspicious Activity Reporting Policy

Non-criminal incidents where the victim/complainant does not desire a report shall be documented using the department-approved alternative reporting method (e.g., dispatch log.)

#### **322.5.2 NON-CRIMINAL ACTIVITY**

Non-criminal activity to be documented includes:

- (a) Any found property or found evidence.
- (b) All protective custody and welfare detentions.
- (c) Any time a person is reported missing, regardless of jurisdiction (see the Missing Persons Policy).
- (d) Suspicious incidents that may indicate a potential for crimes against children or that a child's safety is in jeopardy.
- (e) Suspicious incidents that may place the public or others at risk.
- (f) Any use of force by members of this department against any person (see the Use of Force Policy).

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- (g) Any firearm discharge (see the Firearms Policy).
- (h) Any time a member points a firearm at any person.
- (i) Any traffic accidents above the minimum reporting level (see the Traffic Accidents Policy).
- (j) Whenever the member believes the circumstances should be documented or at the direction of a supervisor.

#### **322.5.3 MISCELLANEOUS INJURIES**

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

- (a) The injury is a result of drug overdose.
- (b) There is an attempted suicide
- (c) The injury is major or serious, and potentially fatal.
- (d) The circumstances surrounding the incident are suspicious in nature and it is desirable to document the event.
- (e) The injury is sustained on town owned property (sidewalk, park, etc.)

#### **322.5.4 DEATHS**

Death investigations require specific investigation methods, depending on the circumstances. They should be handled in accordance with the Death Investigation Policy. The handling member should notify and apprise a supervisor of the circumstances surrounding the incident to determine how to proceed. The following incidents shall be appropriately investigated and documented:

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

#### **322.5.5 TOWN PERSONNEL OR PROPERTY**

Incidents involving Town personnel or property shall require a report when:

- (a) An injury occurs as the result of an act of a Town employee or on Town property.
- (b) There is damage to Town property or equipment.

#### **322.6 REVIEW AND CORRECTIONS**

Supervisors shall review reports for content and accuracy. If a correction is necessary, the reviewing supervisor should advise the reporting officer, and state the reasons for rejection.

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The original report should be returned to the reporting member for correction as soon as practicable. It shall be the responsibility of the originating member to ensure that any report returned for correction is processed in a timely manner.

#### **322.6.1 CHANGES AND ALTERATIONS**

Reports that have been approved by a supervisor and submitted to the Records Section for filing and distribution shall not be modified or altered except by way of a supplemental report.

Reviewed reports that have not yet been submitted to the Records Section may be corrected or modified by the authoring member only with the knowledge and authorization of the reviewing supervisor.

### **322.7 STATE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

#### **322.7.1 TEMPORARY DETENTION OR INVESTIGATIVE STOP SEARCHES**

Any temporary detention or investigative stop that results in a search requires the department performing the search to file a written report with this department within 24 hours of the incident. The report shall be completed using the form prescribed by the Secretary of Public Safety and Correctional Services and shall include:

- (a) The name of the person searched.
- (b) The circumstances surrounding and reasons for the search or seizure.

The Records Section is required to deliver copies of all forms completed for this purpose to the Secretary of the State Police (Md. Code CR § 4-206(c)).

#### **322.7.2 HATE CRIMES**

The Records Section, in conjunction with the Criminal Investigations Unit for cases assigned for investigation, shall report all incidents apparently directed against an individual or group because of race, color, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender, disability, national origin, homelessness, or any other class specified by state law to the Department of State Police in accordance with any procedures they adopt (Md. Code PS § 2-307).