

General Order

Houston Police Department



ISSUE DATE:

June 19, 2018

NO.

800-07

REFERENCE: Supersedes all prior conflicting Circulars and Directives, and General Order 800-07, dated April 25, 2017

SUBJECT: CRITERIA FOR SUBMITTING INCIDENT REPORTS

POLICY

Incident reports shall be completed when an officer views or becomes aware of any activity that may indicate the occurrence of a crime or becomes aware of a suspicious incident with a potential terrorism connection. Incident reports shall be completed and submitted for review prior to the end of each shift.

This General Order applies to all employees.

1 EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to this policy include certain misdemeanor thefts or criminal mischief incidents. Prior to arrival, officers who receive a call to a misdemeanor theft or criminal mischief case having no solvability factors (e.g., suspect, witness, or physical evidence), may request that the police dispatcher redirect the call either to the Teleserve Unit or to the "Online Police Report" via the department's website, if eligible. The police dispatcher shall examine the queue for the Teleserve Unit and if possible, redirect the call. The dispatcher shall be the final authority regarding these matters.

The primary duty of the Teleserve Unit is to take preliminary incident reports by telephone, which allows patrol units to be available for response to higher priority calls for service. Teleserve services "delayed report" calls that deal with lost or stolen property or willful damage to property in which there is no evidence to gather and there are no witnesses able to identify possible suspects. Teleserve shall not handle "In Progress" calls for service. Teleserve Unit eligible calls include:

- a. Telephone Harassment / No Threat
- b. Theft – Lost or Stolen Under \$10,000
- c. Theft of Service
- d. Theft from Motor Vehicle
- e. Criminal Mischief
- f. Burglary of Motor Vehicle
- g. Burglary of Coin Operated Machine
- h. Auto Theft / LoJack
- i. Auto Theft / Investigation Auto Theft

j. Forgery / Investigation Forgery

k. Out of Jurisdiction / Long Distance

Under most circumstances, officers are not required to generate an incident report regarding civil matters. A first-line supervisor shall be contacted in all cases in which there is disagreement between a citizen and an officer regarding the generation of a report.

With the exception of City property, firearms, explosives, or circumstances addressed in section 6, *Suspicious Activity*, of this General Order, generating lost or stolen property reports for items believed to be lost rather than stolen, shall be left to the discretion of the officer.

When a loss involves credit cards, banking checkbooks, automated teller machine (ATM) cards, pagers, keys, or other items that can be devalued by closing accounts, discontinuing service, or changing locks, complainants shall be directed to notify the concerned company or financial institution. When a wireless device is stolen, officers shall contact the relevant investigative division prior to advising the complainant to terminate services associated with the device.

Nothing prohibits completing a lost or stolen property report if the officer feels the circumstances surrounding the loss support generating an incident report (e.g., sensitive documents, expensive items, driver licenses, or social security cards).

2 ONLINE POLICE REPORTS

WebCop is an online based self-reporting incident report writing system that allows citizens to file their own police reports for minor crimes with low solvability and without any evidence, witnesses, or possible suspects. With these criteria in place, WebCop serves to help increase the efficiency of patrol and investigative operations by allowing officers more time to respond to and investigate higher priority incidents. WebCop eligible incidents are limited to theft and criminal mischief reports for which the loss is less than \$5,000 in value.

Online police reporting is intended as a convenience for citizens who wish to use the Internet to report certain crimes. Officers shall not direct citizens to the online police reporting application as a substitute for taking a report call or as a substitute for a walk-in transaction at a police facility.

3 SITUATIONS THAT ALWAYS REQUIRE AN INCIDENT REPORT

The following situations always require the creation and submission of an incident report:

- a. Felony or Class A or B misdemeanor.
- b. Family violence (see General Order 600-06, **Family Violence**).
- c. Hate crime (see General Order 600-37, **Hate Crimes**).
- d. Home invasion.

- e. Class C misdemeanor assault, trespassing, or trespassing on school property.
- f. Juvenile involvement of any type. Reports concerning a juvenile in custody or public service transportation shall be completed and entered before leaving the Juvenile Division.
- g. Threat of or actual bodily injury sustained by a citizen, suspect, or a police employee.
- h. Tagged property, including video evidence.
- i. Death of a person.
- j. Stolen vehicle.
- k. Response to resistance by an employee, (see General Order 600-17, **Response to Resistance**).
- l. Display of any weapon necessitating a police response.
- m. Rejection of a prisoner by jail personnel for medical reasons.
- n. Suspicious activity, as listed in section 6 of this General Order.
- o. Contact with a diplomatic representative of a foreign government (see General Order 500-15, **Contact with Representatives of Foreign Governments**).
- p. Any incident involving a person suspected of mental illness. If a mentally ill citizen has been handled more than once in any given *calendar* year for emergency detention and an original report exists, officers may supplement the original report.
- q. Lost firearms or explosives.
- r. Lost, stolen, or damaged City property (see General Order 400-18, **Responsibility for City and Other Government Property**).
- s. Trafficking of persons. When a person has been found and it is reported they were smuggled or trafficked, officers shall generate a report titled "Trafficking of Persons."
- t. Documentation of an offender in the Misdemeanor Marijuana Diversion Program.

4 REPORTS AND APPROVAL IN THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Incident Report Approval Time Frames (Patrol and Investigations)

Anytime an original or supplement incident report is created in the department's records management system (RMS), the owner of that report shall complete and Owner Approve (OA) the report by the end of the shift, with the exception of high priority reports (e.g., stolen or recovered vehicles, stolen or recovered license plates), which shall be Owner Approved immediately. Once an original or supplement incident report is Owner Approved, RMS automatically places the report in Supervisor Approved status. The Records Division shall leave

the report in Supervisor Approved status for three *calendar* days to allow supervisors time to review the reports. Supervisors shall be responsible for the quality of work performed by their subordinates.

After a report has been OA and it is determined that corrections or modifications need to be made, the officer or supervisor can reopen the report for the modifications if it has not been frozen by Records Division. The system will allow a supervisor to send a follow-up request, if necessary. In this case, the supervisor would reopen the report for the user and send the user a follow-up request. If the supervisor does this, the recipient's employee number shall be entered on the form to ensure the author of the report receives the request.

After the initial three-*calendar*-day period, the report shall be frozen and transferred to RMS by the Records Division. Once the report has been frozen and transferred, it shall not be reopened and all changes or corrections shall then be done through a supplement.

Unapproved Reports and Corrections

All employees who enter incident reports in RMS shall log into the system daily to obtain any notification (e.g., follow-up requests) regarding their reports. If an employee receives notification that a report has been unapproved by either a supervisor or the Records Division, the report shall be corrected and OA by the end of the employee's shift, regardless of the due date listed on the follow-up request. Corrected and OA reports shall be frozen after three *calendar* days following the date the report was OA.

Reports Created in Error

If an incident report was created in error (e.g., incorrect incident number was used), whether it is an original or a supplement, then the report shall be titled: "Report Created in Error." If a supplement report was created under the wrong incident number, with no original report entered, then an original report shall be created under the same incident number in order for the supplement report to be OA and transferred into RMS. If an employee finds that a correct incident number was previously used in error for another report, then a new incident number can be requested for the same location in order to complete a report.

Homicide Reports

When a Homicide investigator responds to a scene, the Homicide hold desk personnel shall be responsible for completing, at a minimum, the Incident Tab of the original incident report with the primary investigator entered as the primary officer. The Homicide hold desk personnel shall also OA the report so that supplement reports can move through the approval process within the time frame described above. Patrol personnel shall not write an original report when a Homicide investigator is responding to the scene. Patrol officers shall generate only supplement reports for such incidents.

Extra Employment

All incident reports created while working extra employment shall be OA on the officer's own time by the end of the extra employment hours. See General Order 300-14, **Extra Employment**.

5 TEXAS ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE COMMISSION (TABC) ESTABLISHMENTS

Incidents involving a shooting, stabbing, or other public disturbance on the premises of an establishment holding a TABC license or permit shall require officers to submit a copy of the incident report to the Vice Division for transmittal to the TABC.

6 SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

Suspicious activity is defined as observed behavior reasonably indicative of pre-operational planning associated with terrorism or other criminal activity. While a single instance of suspicious activity may not be a precursor to terrorist or criminal activity, other factors and circumstances may be present that cause concern and require additional investigation. If there is a criminal offense associated with the incident, officers shall utilize the appropriate criminal offense title and indicate the Criminal Intelligence Division (CID) as the secondary concerned division.

When a suspect is in custody or suspicious circumstances require additional investigative assistance, officers shall contact the Houston Regional Intelligence Service Center (HRISC) supervisor. After business hours officers shall contact the on-call CID homeland security supervisor via the Command Center.

In order to ensure appropriate review and analysis of suspicious incidents with a potential terrorism connection, officers shall complete an "Investigation Criminal Intelligence" report concerning any of the suspicious activities listed below:



- e. **Observation/Surveillance:** Incidents involving unusual or prolonged interest in facilities, buildings, or infrastructure beyond casual or professional interest that would arouse

suspicion of terrorism. [REDACTED]

- f. **Aviation Activity:** Incidents involving suspicious events or persons associated with aviation that would arouse suspicion of terrorism. [REDACTED]
- g. **Misrepresentation, Eliciting Information, Testing or Probing Security, Breach, or Attempted Intrusion:** Incidents involving suspicious events or persons associated with the security of a facility, infrastructure, or secured, protected site that would arouse suspicion of terrorism. [REDACTED]
- h. **Theft/Loss/Diversion:** The theft of badges, uniforms, identification, or emergency vehicles associated with a facility, infrastructure, or secured, protected site.
- i. **Sabotage/Tampering/Vandalism:** Incidents involving the damaging, defacing, or destroying any part of a critical infrastructure. [REDACTED]
- j. **Miscellaneous Activity:** Incidents of suspicious events or persons that cannot be vetted and based on additional factors continue to arouse suspicion of terrorism or criminal activity.

7 RELATED GENERAL ORDERS

300-14, Extra Employment
400-18, Responsibility for City and Other Government Property
400-19, Microcomputer Regulations
400-21, Mobile Computing Devices
400-22, Keys, Passwords, and Personal Identification Numbers
500-12, Handling Persons Exhibiting Mental Health Crisis
500-15, Contact with Representatives of Foreign Governments
600-06, Family Violence
600-17, Response to Resistance
600-37, Hate Crimes
800-08, Auto Theft Reports


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