

Report Preparation

323.1 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.

323.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Missoula 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.

323.3 EXPEDITIOUS REPORTING

Incomplete reports, 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.

323.4 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. Generally, reports requiring prompt follow-up action on active leads, felony offenses, or in-custody reports should not be held. No reports shall be held over an officer's scheduled days off.

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.

323.5 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 they deem it necessary or as directed by a supervisor.

323.5.1 CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Activity to be documented in a written report includes:

- (a) All arrests.

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- (b) All felony crimes.
- (c) Non-felony criminal incidents involving threats, prowlers, or stalking behavior.
- (d) Situations covered by separate policy. These include:
 - (a) Use of Force Policy
 - (b) Domestic Violence Policy
 - (c) Child Abuse Policy
 - (d) Adult Abuse Policy
 - (e) Hate Crimes Policy
 - (f) Suspicious Activity Reporting Policy
 - (g) Identity Theft Policy
- (e) All misdemeanor crimes where the victim desires a report.

Misdemeanor crimes where the victim does not desire a report shall be documented using the department-approved alternative reporting method (e.g., a dispatch log).

323.5.2 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).
- (g) Any firearm discharge other than humanely dispatching an injured animal (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.

323.5.3 MISCELLANEOUS INJURIES

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

- (a) The injury is a result of drug overdose.

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- (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.

323.5.4 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

323.5.5 CITY PERSONNEL OR PROPERTY

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

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

323.6 ALTERNATIVE REPORTING FOR VICTIMS

Reports that may be submitted by the public via online or other self-completed reporting processes include:

- (a) Lost property.
- (b) Misdemeanor thefts of property and felony thefts of property with shift commander approval.
- (c) Vandalism.
- (d) Vehicle break-ins with no suspect information or evidence.
- (e) Stolen vehicle attempts.
- (f) Annoying telephone calls with no suspect information.
- (g) Identity theft without an identifiable suspect.
- (h) Online or email fraud solicitations without an identifiable suspect.
- (i) Not-in-progress hit-and-run vehicle accidents.
- (j) Supplemental property lists for prior reports.

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Members at the scene of one of the above incidents should not refer the reporting party to any alternative means of reporting without authorization from a supervisor. Members may refer victims to online victim assistance programs (e.g., the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) website for identity theft; the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) website for computer crimes).

323.7 REVIEW AND CORRECTIONS

Supervisors shall review reports for content and accuracy. If necessary, the reviewing supervisor should reject the reports for corrections.

It shall be the responsibility of the originating member to ensure that any report returned for correction is processed in a timely manner.

323.7.1 CHANGES AND ALTERATIONS

Reports that have been approved by a supervisor and submitted to the Records Unit 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 Unit must be corrected or modified by the authoring member only, with the exception of minor grammatical errors, which may be completed by the reviewing supervisor.