



ROCKFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER: 2.17

TITLE: TRAFFIC CRASH INVESTIGATION

SERIES NUMBER: 2 - OPR

SERIES TITLE: OPERATIONS

TOPICS / REFERENCE: ACCIDENTS, CRASH INVESTIGATION, FATALITIES, HIT AND RUN

APPENDICES: A, B, C

ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE / ISSUE DATE: FEBRUARY 13, 2008

DATE OF LAST REVISION: NOVEMBER 29, 2018

THIS ORDER REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL REVISED OR RESCINDED

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Rockford Police Department to investigate traffic crashes brought to the Department's attention, to report those crashes properly, based on current law, and to take appropriate enforcement action based on evidence obtained from the investigation of any traffic crash.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this General Order is to set forth policy and procedures to be followed in the investigation and reporting of traffic crashes.

These guidelines are not meant to be all-inclusive, since each incident must be dealt with on an individual basis, but are intended as broad guidelines to assist the employees and supervisors involved.

This Order is comprised of the following numbered section:

- I. DEFINITIONS**
- II. ASSIGNMENT OF TRAFFIC CRASHES**
- III. TRAFFIC CRASH INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE**
- IV. FATAL OR SERIOUS TRAFFIC CRASH INVESTIGATIONS**
- V. HIT AND RUN INVESTIGATIONS**
- VI. PRIVATE PROPERTY CRASHES**
- VII. FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATIONS**
- VIII. CARE AND CONTROL OF PERSONAL PROPERTY**

APPENDICES:

- A. [DRIVER EXCHANGE FORM](#)
- B. [M2018 – 023 REPORTING OF MINOR TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS](#)
- C. [M2017 – 056 PRIVATE PROPERTY HIT AND RUN CRASHES](#)

I. DEFINITIONS:

- A. Personal Injury: [625 ILCS 5/11-406\(a\)](#) defines personal injury as any injury requiring immediate professional treatment in a medical facility or doctor's office.
- B. Private Property Crash: A motor vehicle crash that began on, ended on, and all damage occurred on any privately owned street, alley, driveway or parking area.
- C. State Reportable Traffic Crash: Any traffic crash resulting in death or personal injury to any person, or where property damage to any one person's property is in excess of \$500 (if uninsured) or \$1500 (if insured) is sustained.
- D. Traffic Crash Reports:
 - 1. SR 1050-Illinois Traffic Crash Report form;
 - 2. SR 1050A-Illinois Traffic Crash Report/Additional Unit form; or
 - 3. SR 1-Illinois Traffic Crash Report/Motorist Report form.
- E. Minor Traffic Crash: When there is minor damage to the involved vehicles and they can be driven from the scene. The following elements must also be met:
 - 1. No injuries to any involved parties exists
 - 2. The drivers are properly licensed
 - 3. The vehicles are properly insured
 - 4. No signs of impairment exist

II. ASSIGNMENT OF TRAFFIC CRASHES:

- A. In general, the Traffic Unit of the Rockford Police Department will be responsible for the investigation of traffic crashes occurring within the jurisdictional limits of the Department. However, traffic crash investigations can, and will, be assigned to any available Operations Bureau personnel as necessary.
- B. Sworn officers will be assigned to investigate all state reportable traffic crashes involving personal injury or tow (Type B crash). Type A crashes (no personal injury or tow) not meeting the minor traffic crash criteria will also be assigned to sworn officers ([See Appendix B](#)).

- C.** Depending upon the nature, severity and location of the traffic crash, one or more officers or supervisors will be assigned to the scene of a traffic crash reported to involve any of the following:
1. Death or personal injury;
 2. Hit and run;
 3. Suspected illegal alcohol, intoxicating compound or drug use on the part of the driver or pedestrian involved;
 4. Damage to public owned, rented or leased vehicle(s) or property is involved;
 5. Crashes involving suspected hazardous materials;
 6. Disturbances between parties involved in the crash;
 7. Crashes involving school buses;
 8. Damage to the extent that towing of a vehicle is required; or
 9. Traffic congestion as a result of the crash.

III. TRAFFIC CRASH INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE:

- A.** Upon arrival at the scene, officers will take charge and take appropriate action to protect the crash scene. The primary assigned officer will be in charge of the crash scene until its completion. The exception will be when supervisory personnel arrive or other officers having specialty training in dealing with the type of crash under investigation.
- B.** Officers will check for injuries and provide basic first aid when possible until the arrival of trained medical personnel. Care of the injured will be turned over to trained medical personnel upon their arrival at the scene.
- C.** Officers should be aware of fire hazards such as ruptured gas tanks when approaching the scene. Fire Department personnel should be requested at any scene where such hazards exist.
- D.** The Emergency Response Guidebook is now available to personnel online in Sharepoint. This book allows for rapid identification of DOT placards, which identify hazardous materials, and provides information concerning the nature of the hazard, emergency procedures, evacuation concerns, etc. Any officer arriving at the scene of such an accident and observing hazardous materials placards and spilled cargo or leakage should immediately request the fire department:
1. In the event information has been relayed to the 911 Communications Center regarding spilled or leaking hazardous materials, officers responding to the scene shall arrive upwind until the material is identified and deemed safe.
- E.** When officers come upon a scene involving a disturbance between drivers, witnesses or others they will separate the involved parties as quickly and safely as possible. If criminal charges are to be filed due to the disturbance, standard arrest procedures will be followed.

- F. Officers will attempt to obtain the names and statements of any witnesses and include information provided by them in the crash report.
- G. When interviewing the participants in the crash, officers should speak with them separately whenever possible while looking for signs of fatigue, intoxication or other physical conditions that may be a contributing factor in the crash.
- H. When there are no injuries at the scene, officers should attempt to move vehicles out of the roadway to clear congestion when practical. If any involved vehicles are immovable, tow trucks should be requested immediately. Guidelines in General Order 2.03 – Impounding or Towing of Motor Vehicles must be followed for towing wrecked vehicles.
- I. For Type A crashes (no personal injury or tow), officers should facilitate the exchange of information so that a report can be completed at the Central Reporting Unit at any District Station. The Rockford Police Department Traffic Crash Reporting Program Form should be used for this purpose, and a case number added for easy CRU reference:
 - 1. In some instances, the on-scene officer may choose to complete the SR-1050 on-scene in the interest of customer service for various reasons, such as the motorist being from out of town or any specific circumstances in which CRU referral would constitute an undue hardship.
- J. For all Type B crashes (personal injury or tow), officers should complete the SR- 1050 on-scene so the exchange of information between the involved parties can be completed and provided to them. The SR 1050 shall be completed using the LexisNexis iyeTek program, which is available on all Department computers.
- K. For all on-scene SR-1050 reports, motorists shall be given information on how to obtain their crash reports at a later date. Currently, the Department provides small cards for this purpose, directing motorists to ecrash.lexisnexis.com for this purpose.

IV. FATAL OR SERIOUS TRAFFIC CRASH INVESTIGATIONS:

- A. Upon arrival at the scene of a possible fatal or serious injury crash, officers will check all involved parties for injuries and determine the most seriously injured party. If possible, officers will administer basic first aid until arrival of trained medical personnel. Officers should not attempt to administer aid or treatment beyond their capabilities.
- B. If not already dispatched, officers should request a supervisor to the scene, as well as additional Units to secure the scene. The responding supervisor or a traffic crash investigator will be responsible for requesting the Officer In Charge (OIC) notify the Traffic Unit Supervisor. The OIC will also make other notifications as necessary.
- C. The initially dispatched officer will remain at the scene after arrival of the trained traffic crash personnel to assist with scene control, scene

investigation, and securing of witnesses and involved persons. Officers will remain on scene until released by a supervisor.

- D. The duties of assigned traffic crash investigator(s) will include, but are not limited to the following:
 - 1. Taking measurements and preparing a scale diagram;
 - 2. Directing or assisting in the collection of evidence and photographs by Identification Unit personnel;
 - 3. Interviewing witnesses and occupants of involved vehicles;
 - 4. Preparing and completing the SR 1050- Illinois Traffic Crash Report form, using the LexisNexis iyeTek program, which is available on all Department computers;
 - 5. Making arrangements for testing that may be required for involved vehicles;
 - 6. Obtaining information needed for review of the traffic crash with the States Attorney's office;
 - 7. Arranging the removal of vehicles to appropriate locations;
 - 8. Control and custody of personal property of involved persons; and
 - 9. Any other duties necessary to complete the investigation.
- E. Any traffic crash scene involving a suspected hazardous material should be responded to, and initially treated, as a serious traffic crash scene. Until trained hazardous materials personnel advise otherwise, officers will respond and secure the scene using guidelines of General Order 2.33 – Hazardous Materials Incidents.

V. HIT AND RUN INVESTIGATIONS:

- A. Upon arrival at a Hit and Run traffic crash, the assigned officer will attempt to gather the following information:
 - 1. Best possible description of the vehicle that fled the scene, to include license plate information;
 - 2. Location and extent of damage to the offending vehicle;
 - 3. Description of the driver and any passengers; and
 - 4. Last known direction of travel.
- B. The District Commander, OIC, Traffic Unit Supervisor, or Patrol Supervisor can authorize the 911 Center to have CRU handle a Hit and Run crash after reviewing the call for service and determining due to call load and availability of police units that having a citizen contact CRU to handle the crash would be appropriate if the following information is met:
 - 1. There is no injury to any person;
 - 2. None of the motor vehicles involved in the crash were disabled;
 - 3. There is no likelihood that evidence will be lost or disappear;

4. The violator cannot be identified or immediately located; and
 5. The violator's vehicle cannot be identified or immediately located. ([See Appendix C](#))
- C. In the event that a violator becomes known, assigned Department personnel will then complete an Incident Report documenting the additional investigative information using the crash report case number and original date and time of the crash.
 - D. Once this information is obtained, the assigned officer will notify communications of the information for a local dispatch and, if necessary, a regional dispatch.
 - E. If damage is severe, the assigned officer may request Identification Unit personnel for crash scene processing. Otherwise, assigned officers are responsible for collection of crash scene evidence.
 - F. Hit and run crashes involving death, serious injury, hazardous materials, suspected impaired drivers or any other situation detailed in this Order will be handled the same as if the crash did not involve a hit and run.
 - G. The assigned officer is responsible for the immediate follow-up investigation, if practical. This would include locating and impounding the offending vehicle and issuing traffic citations to the offender.
 - H. Detailed follow-up investigations of hit and run crashes will be conducted by personnel assigned by the Traffic Unit supervisor.
 - I. In addition to required crash reports, assigned officers will document their investigation on a general case incident report.

VI. PRIVATE PROPERTY CRASHES:

- A. When an officer responds to a Private Property Crash with damages in an amount over \$1500.00 (the vehicles are drivable), the drivers will be instructed to go in person to the Central Reporting Unit of any District Station to file the report, after the officer has checked to ensure each involved driver has a driver's license and insurance.
- B. An officer will investigate Private Property Crashes when any of the following situations is present:
 1. Either driver is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol, intoxicating compound, other drugs or a combination thereof;
 2. There is personal injury to any involved party;
 3. Reckless driving is suspected as a factor in the crash;
 4. The crash involves a hit and run;
 5. Either driver does not have insurance; or
 6. Either driver does not have a valid driver's license.
- C. Central Reporting Unit (CRU) will handle private property hit and run crashes when the following situations is present:

1. There is no injury to any person;
2. None of the motor vehicles involved in the crash were disabled;
3. There is no likelihood that evidence will be lost or disappear; and
4. The violator and violator's vehicle cannot be immediately located. ([See Appendix C](#))

VII. FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATIONS:

- A. Follow-up investigations of traffic crashes are undertaken in support of possible prosecution. When warranted, this follow-up should include at a minimum:
 1. Collection of additional data about driver(s), pedestrian, vehicle(s), traffic control devices or any related information necessary for completion of the investigation;
 2. Obtaining/recording statements from witnesses;
 3. Reconstruction of crashes by a qualified Crash Reconstructionist Specialist; and
 4. Preparation of reports to support a criminal charge arising from the traffic crash under investigation.
- B. The Department has personnel trained in traffic crash investigation techniques, to include reconstruction. These officers will be assigned as necessary to carry out follow-up investigations.
- C. The decision to conduct follow-up investigations of traffic crashes will be made when deemed appropriate by the Traffic Unit Supervisor, District Commander, OIC, the Chief of Police, or as requested by the prosecuting attorney. Generally, follow-up investigations are not conducted in support of civil litigation unless the City of Rockford is a party to the litigation.

VIII. CARE AND CONTROL OF PERSONAL PROPERTY:

- A. Officers responding to the scene of a crash should ensure the property belonging to a traffic crash victim is protected from theft or damage and is removed to a place of safekeeping if the owner is unable to care for it.
- B. If necessary, officers will take control of such property and place it into evidence per General Order 1.22 – Collection & Handling of Evidence and Found Property.

ALL GENERAL ORDERS REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL REVISED OR RESCINDED.

ANY MEMBER OF THE DEPARTMENT MAY, BY VIRTUE OF EXPERTISE OR POSITION OF FUNCTION, BE DESIGNATED TO AUTHOR OR PROVIDE SOURCE MATERIAL FOR A WRITTEN DIRECTIVE. THE OVERALL AUTHORITY TO ISSUE, MODIFY OR APPROVE WRITTEN DIRECTIVES IS DESIGNATED TO THE CHIEF OF

POLICE. HOWEVER, AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO ISSUE DIRECTIVES IS DELEGATED TO THE FOLLOWING.

ALL GENERAL ORDERS ARE SCHEDULED TO BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY BY THE GENERAL ORDER REVIEW COMMITTEE AND WHEN NECESSARY, REVISED OR CANCELED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROCEDURES FOR REVIEWING WRITTEN DIRECTIVES ESTABLISHED IN GENERAL ORDER 1.10 – WRITTEN DIRECTIVES.

ALL NEW AND REVISED GENERAL ORDERS SHALL BE APPROVED BY THE CHIEF OF POLICE BEFORE ISSUE/REISSUE.

ANY EMPLOYEE WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR REVISIONS AND/OR IMPROVEMENTS TO THIS ORDER ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT THEIR IDEAS TO THEIR RESPECTIVE DISTRICT COMMANDER OR BUREAU CHIEF.

BY ORDER OF

_____ **11/29/2018**

Daniel G. O'Shea

Chief of Police