

# OGDEN CITY POLICE

## Office of the Chief

### Policy No: 72

Subject Report Preparation	Effective Date March 15, 2023
Department Police	Replaces Policy Dated N/A
Division All Police Personnel	Review Date March 2025
Authorized Signature 	

**NOTE: This rule or regulation is for internal use only and does not enlarge an officer's civil or criminal liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violations of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this agency, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.**

#### I. PURPOSE

Report writing is a vital task for law enforcement. Reports are subject to intense scrutiny and need to be accurate, detailed, and informative. The purpose of this policy is to define and outline initiating, completing, and submitting law enforcement offense reports.

#### II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Ogden Police Department that offense reports will be specific and clearly describe the who/what/when/where/why/how of an incident or crime being reported. This is inclusive of the department employee's actions during the investigation.

#### III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Department Employee – Those members of the department, sworn and civilian, who are responsible for completing official police department reports.
- B. Incident Reports – Incident Reports document Calls for Service (CFS) or Self-Initiated Field Activities (SIFA)

- C. Accident Reports – Accident Reports document persons and property, events, conditions, and causes related to motor vehicle accidents. Based on criteria established by the State of Utah, accidents are documented as either reportable or non-reportable.
- D. Supplemental Reports – Supplemental reports document investigative activities or provide more information to supplement an Incident report.

#### IV. REPORT PREPARATION

Department employees (herein referred to as “employee(s)”) should ensure that all reports, i.e. Incident, Accident, and Supplemental reports, are sufficiently detailed for their purpose and free from errors prior to submission.

All reports 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.

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.

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.

The department’s OneNote PD Reference Guide outlines the fundamentals of report writing and provides general instructions on completing the report forms.

#### V. HANDWRITTEN REPORTS

Some incidents and report forms lend themselves to block print rather than typing. In general, the narrative portion of those reports where an arrest is made or when there is a long narrative should be typed or dictated. Supervisors may require block printing, typing, or dictating of reports of any nature for department consistency.

## VI. DICTATING REPORTS REQUIRED

In the interest of efficiency and officer safety, sworn personnel and certain civilian positions are issued Dragon for Law Enforcement (herein referred to as "Dragon") software and hardware for the purpose of dictating work-related documents (e.g. case reports, supplements, memorandums, emails, etc.).

Department employees issued this technology shall utilize it for dictation/completion of all case report narratives and supplemental reports, regardless of individual typing efficiency. Usage of Dragon for other documents (e.g., memorandums, emails, etc.) is strongly encouraged.

Employees who have been issued Dragon in the following bureaus will be required to utilize Dragon beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023:

- a. Patrol
- b. CRU (Crime Reduction Unit)
- c. CP (Community Policing)
- d. Traffic

Failure to utilize Dragon software and hardware as outlined in this policy may result in disciplinary action.

## VII. TIMELINESS OF REPORTS

In general, all officers and supervisors shall act with promptness and efficiency in the preparation and processing of all reports. An incomplete report, unorganized reports, or report completions delayed without supervisory approval are not acceptable.

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 hold the report has been approved by a supervisor. Generally, reports requiring prompt follow-up action on active leads, or arrest reports where the suspect remains in custody should not be held.

If a report is to be carried over from one work period to the next, it must be completed at the beginning of the shift immediately following the off-duty period. A report can only be held or carried over with the approval of the employee's immediate Supervisor.

## VIII. REPORT CORRECTIONS

Supervisors shall review reports for content and accuracy. If a correction is necessary, the reviewing supervisor should note the correction needed stating the reasons for rejection. The original report and the correction should be returned to the reporting employee for correction as soon as practical. It shall be the responsibility of the originating officer to ensure that any report returned for correction is processed in a timely manner.

## IX. REPORT CHANGES OR ALTERATIONS

Reports that have been approved by a supervisor and submitted to the Records Bureau 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 Bureau may be corrected or modified by the authoring officer only with the knowledge and authorization of the reviewing supervisor.

## X. REQUIRED REPORTING

Written reports are required in all of the following situations unless otherwise approved by a supervisor.

### Criminal activity

When a department employee 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 employee 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 felony crimes.
- c. Non-felony incidents involving threats or stalking behavior.
- d. Situations covered by separate policy. These include:
  1. Use of force.
  2. Domestic Violence.
  3. Domestic Violence in the presence of a child.

4. Domestic Mistreatment of vulnerable adults.
  - 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., dispatch log).

#### Non-Criminal activity

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

- a. Any time an officer points a firearm at any person as defined in OPD Policy 03.
- b. Any time an officer aims an Electronic Control Device (ECD) at an individual or activates the device to gain compliance as defined in OPD Policy 03.
- c. Any use of force against any person by a member of this department.
- d. Any firearm discharge.
- e. Any time a person is reported missing, regardless of jurisdiction.
- f. Any found property or found evidence.
- g. Any traffic collision above the minimum reporting level defined by state law.
- h. Suspicious incidents that may indicate a potential for crimes against children or that a child's safety is in jeopardy.
- i. All protective custody detentions.
- j. Suspicious incidents that may place the public or others at risk.
- k. Whenever the employee believes the circumstances should be documented or at the direction of a supervisor.

## Death Cases

Death investigations require specific investigation methods. 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 in a report.

- a. Sudden or accidental deaths.
- b. Suicides.
- c. Homicide or suspected homicide.
- d. Unattended deaths (UCA 26-4-2, a death that occurs more than 365 days after the day on which a health care professional examined or treated the deceased individual for any purpose, including writing a prescription).
- e. Found dead bodies or body parts.

## Injury or damage by city personnel

Reports shall be taken if an injury occurs that is a result of an act of a City employee. Additionally, reports shall be made involving damage to City property or City equipment. If the injury or damage is significant, or may expose the City to potential liability, a supervisor should be notified. Supervisors notified of such events should consider requesting an investigation by an outside agency, notification of the Chief of Police via chain of command and involvement of City Risk Management assistance.

## Miscellaneous Injuries

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

- a. The injury was a result of a drug overdose.
- b. Attempted suicide
- c. The injury is major/serious, whereas death could result.
- d. The circumstances surrounding the incident are suspicious in nature 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 they deem necessary.

### No Report Criteria

The following circumstances are the only time an officer is not required to write a police report (NR). An officer should always consider if information they gather may be of use later, such as names, addresses, etc., and should always evaluate the probability that a question may arise later on how a case was handled. In such circumstances, a report should be written even when the case fits the following guidelines:

- a. When an alarm tripped accidentally or by a faulty mechanism.
- b. When the request for services was directed to a non-existent location.
- c. When an officer arrives at the location and there is a refused complainant or are unable to locate the complainant and cannot find a problem. This does not mean being unable to locate the suspect.
- d. When the complainant decides there is no need for police services and calls back through Weber Dispatch requesting the officer be cancelled. The exception would be domestic violence (DV) cases as Utah law requires an investigation and police report.
- e. When a traffic citation is issued, i.e. parking problem.
- f. When a person needs information only and the officer takes no other action. If the person is requesting information on what action to take on a criminal or civil matter where no report has been made previously, a report must be written.
- g. When the officer has completed an assignment such as VIN inspection, death notification, traffic and crowd control, motorist assist, and medical and/or fire department assists.
- h. NR accidents; damage does not exceed the standards set forth in (UCA 41-6a-402) and there are no injuries.

When clearing a call as NR on the MDT, notes are required justifying the reason for the NR. When clearing a call as NR on the radio, it is necessary to give the dispatcher the reason i.e. 10-24 NR, unable to locate the complainant and cannot find a problem.

## XI. ALTERNATE ON-LINE REPORTING FOR VICTIMS

Reports that may be submitted by the public via online reporting processes include:

- a. Lost property.
- b. Misdemeanor thefts of property, other than firearms or materials that threaten public safety, when there is no suspect information, serial number, or ability to trace the item.
  - 1. Misdemeanor thefts of cellular telephones may be reported even though they have a serial number.
- c. Vehicle burglaries with no suspect information or evidence.
- d. Stolen vehicle attempts with no suspect information or evidence.
- e. Misdemeanor vandalism with no suspect information and no hate crime implications.
- 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 and if the financial loss classifies as a misdemeanor.
  - i. Hit-and-run vehicle collisions with no suspect or suspect vehicle.

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