

**GENERAL ORDER**

August 2017

Immediately

**III-23**

Distribution: All Employees

Subject: **INCIDENT REPORTS**

Index as:	Crash Reports	RMS Reports
	Exculpatory Evidence	Substantiated
	Incident Reports	Unfounded
	No Reports (NR's)	VIPAR
	NR's	Virtual Inmate Processing and Reporting (VIPAR)
	Police Reports	Written Police Reports
	Reports, Police	

Accreditation Standards: 4.2.2, 82.1.5, 82.2.1, 82.2.2, 82.2.4, 83.2.6, 84.1.1  
Cross Reference: [G.O. II-03, Release Of Information To The Public and News Media](#)  
[G.O. II-15, Security of Records and Files](#)  
[G.O. III-14, Property and Evidence](#)  
[I.O. V3-02, Child Abuse Neglect](#)  
[I.O. V5-01, Persons Suffering from Mental Illness](#)  
[I.O. V5-02 Substance Abuse Impairment](#)  
[I.O. V5-18, Domestic Violence](#)  
[I.O. V5-24 Missing Persons and Runaways](#)  
[USB SOP II-10, Traffic Records](#)  
[USB SOP II-11, Crash Investigations](#)  
§316.066(3), §741.29(2), §937.021, F.S.S.  
Replaces: G.O. III-23, Incident Reports, (August 28, 2017)

This **Directive** consists of the following sections:

- I. Introduction
- II. Policy
- III. Definitions
- IV. Reporting Requirements
- V. Preparing the Report
- VI. Submission and Review of Reports

## I. INTRODUCTION

A. Police agencies receive and record information on a vast number of people and a myriad of crimes, incidents, events, activities and traffic crashes, etc. This repository of information is extremely valuable to research past occurrences and to provide investigative relationships and leads to investigators.

B. The St. Petersburg Police Department utilizes the Records Management System (RMS) to electronically manage, retain and recover the various reports prepared by the Department.

C. Alternative reporting methods available to citizens include the acceptance of certain incidents over the telephone through the Telephone Reporting Unit (TRU) and, alternatively, a process for self-reporting by use of the Internet (on-line reporting).

D. The Department will utilize the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office VIPAR application as the primary means of completing arrest affidavits and referrals.

1. If VIPAR is unavailable, a hand-written affidavit or referral, **will be completed, and**
2. A legible copy must be turned into the Records Division to be scanned and attached to the report.

## II. POLICY

A. Officers and **I**nvestigators **will**:

1. Properly investigate and fully document all matters which have been self-initiated or brought to their attention.
2. Ensure a complete record of the event is made by preparing a written report for every category of event described in this Order.
3. **Include in their reports all relevant investigative information and reference all material evidence and facts that are reasonably believed to be either incriminating or exculpatory to any individual in the case.**
4. Remain mindful of the need to properly classify the incident under investigation and not make excessive use of the "Police Information" category unless appropriate.

B. Officers and **I**nvestigators should fully consider the benefits of reporting acts or incidents where information may initially be lacking, but the reporting of which may have a positive effect on a future investigation.

## III. DEFINITIONS

A. **Exculpatory Evidence** – Evidence that is favorable to the accused; is material to the guilt, innocence, or punishment of the accused; and/or may impact the credibility of a government witness, including a Law enforcement Officer or other Department employee.

B. **Substantiated** – The investigation produced evidence which would lead a reasonable person to believe the incident occurred.

C. **Unfounded** – The investigation conclusively proved the act complained about did not occur.

D. **VIPAR** (Virtual Inmate Processing and Reporting) – The Web-based application maintained by the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office for completing and processing electronic arrest affidavits and juvenile referrals.

## IV. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A. Documentation including a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) record, an official report prepared with the applicable RMS module, or the appropriate citation or summons form, **will** be prepared whenever:

1. Any of the following is reported within the City:
  - a. **I**ncidents resulting in an Officer being dispatched or assigned, including reports of crimes or complaints by a citizen;
  - b. Criminal and non-criminal cases initiated by Officers;
  - c. Incidents resulting in arrests, citations or summonses.

2. The following incidents **will** be fully documented, and the appropriate **RMS** module will be utilized to prepare the **required** report for:

- a. All homicides, suspicious deaths, suicides or unattended deaths;
- b. All reports of domestic violence, and dating violence; (see [I.O. V5-18, Domestic Violence](#))
- c. Domestic quarrels, when required by [I.O. V5-18, Domestic Violence](#)
- d. All reports of child abuse (see [I.O. V3-02, Child Abuse Neglect](#)) or abuse of aged persons or disabled adults.

3. The following substantiated incidents **will** be fully documented, and the appropriate RMS module will be utilized to prepare the report:

- a. All violations of Federal or Florida State Statutes, excluding common traffic violations;
- b. Ordinance violations when enforcement is taken, excluding parking violations;
- c. When a physical arrest is made, a juvenile is taken into custody, or a *Notice to Appear* (NTA) is issued;
- d. When a person is taken into temporary custody due to alcohol intoxication, incapacitation or mental disability; (see [I.O. V5-01, Persons Suffering From Mental Illness](#) and [I.O. V5-02 Substance Abuse Impairment](#));
- e. All runaways, missing or found persons; (see [I.O. V5-24, Missing Persons and Runaways](#));
- f. When evidence, contraband or property is taken into police custody, even if it is only to be held for destruction, or property reported lost or found; (see [G.O. III-14, Property and Evidence](#));
- g. All vehicle impoundments;
- h. Motor vehicle crashes when required by [USB SOP II-11, Crash Investigations](#);
- i. Prowlers where there is evidence a suspect was in the area;
- j. Shots heard in the area (only required when a complainant wants to be seen or evidence is located);
- k. When a sworn Supervisor determines a report should be completed;
- l. When it is in the best interest of the community or the Department to complete a report.

B. If the initial incident reported is determined to be unfounded (excluding those listed in Section IV.A.2.), however, the investigation reveals a different act occurred, the reporting requirements for the substantiated act **will** be met and the Emergency Communications Center notified **of the appropriate incident type**.

C. The various **RMS** modules should:

1. Be completed with the maximum amount of information available to the investigating Officer to assist in any follow-up investigations, maintenance of accurate records, and to help ensure Officer safety in future matters.
2. Have all required fields filled out.
3. Represent the writer's professionalism by being grammatically correct, lacking spelling errors, and demonstrative of thorough investigative techniques when the document is obtained by victims, other law enforcement agencies and attorneys.

## V. PREPARING THE REPORT

A. The investigating Officer **will**:

1. Prepare a written report in the **RMS** for the incidents listed in the Reporting Requirements section.
2. Consult with a sworn Supervisor if they are unsure whether or not a report should be written.
3. Upon completion of the investigation and after a determination that no written report is necessary, clear the event using one of the following clear codes and adding appropriate notes to the CAD record as necessary:
  - a. NR 03 - Unfounded, the incident did not occur;
  - b. NR 06 - Resident refused complaint, the incident was not occurring upon the Officers arrival;
  - c. NR 08 - Incident occurred, additional documentation is not required;
  - d. NR 15 - Incident is a follow-up, additional documentation is not required.
4. Ensure the CAD incident information is properly updated, based on the investigation, by direct entry or by requesting the CAD record be revised by Emergency Communications Center personnel.

B. Supervisors will:

1. Monitor field investigations and radio transmissions to ensure compliance with the reporting requirements in Section IV of this Directive.
2. Review applicable CAD and RMS reports to ensure that Officers under their command are complying with this Order.

VI. SUBMISSION AND REVIEW OF REPORTS

A. Officers will prepare incident reports within the time frames specified in this policy and submit them electronically.

B. Supervisors will monitor submitted reports, review them in a timely manner as indicated below, and return them for correction or approve them, and send them electronically to the LEADS Unit for processing.

C. Supplemental/follow-up reports prepared by Officers in the Uniform Services Bureau (USB) will be submitted in the manner and within the time frames specified in this policy. Investigative Services Bureau supplemental/follow-up reports will be submitted according to their Standard Operating Procedures or as directed by a Supervisor.

D. If the incident results in an arrest:

1. The Officer/Detective will:

- a. Submit a completed report for approval by the end of the Officer's shift or other assignment whenever a person is in custody;
- b. Inform their Supervisor that Incident and Arrest Reports were sent for approval. If their Supervisor is unavailable, a Uniform Services Bureau Supervisor will be notified of the existence of the unapproved report and arrest document and the need for Supervisory approval.
- c. Officers in USB who are off probation must link their Sergeant's report box (or the other designated Supervisor approving their report) in the Records Management System.

2. The approving Supervisor will:

- a. Review the reports in their entirety, to include captioned areas, attachments, and narrative, and confirm the investigation is thorough and complete;
- b. Ensure the report and a legible copy of the arrest affidavit supports the appropriate criminal charge(s).
- c. Ensure that electronic copies of applicable forms are attached to the RMS report, to include arrest affidavits, Notice to Appear (NTA) or juvenile referrals.

3. The Watch Commander will:

- a. At the start of their shift, ensure that all arrest reports are reviewed from the previous shift;
- b. Assign any incident and arrest from the previous shift to an on-duty Supervisor to review. This review will be completed prior to the end of the Watch Commander's shift.

E. If the incident does not result in an arrest:

1. The Officer/Detective will complete and submit for approval all reports for incidents that have not resulted in an arrest by the end of the investigating Officer's shift or assignment.

- a. With the approval of a Supervisor, submission of a non-arrest report may be delayed for up to 24 hours.
- b. Any exceptional situation or a need for an extension beyond the 24-hour period requires approval from a Watch Commander.

2. The approving Supervisor, within seventy-two (72) hours of receiving the electronic report without an arrest, will:

- a. Review and approve in their entirety (including captions) all felony, domestic violence and other reports prepared by Officers on probation;
- b. Supervisors who cannot review their subordinates' reports within the seventy-two (72)-hour time frame will coordinate with another Supervisor to ensure the reports are reviewed within that time frame.

3. Watch Commanders should conduct a timely review of Supervisor's RMS electronic "in-boxes" to ensure that all reports have been reviewed within the seventy-two (72)-hour time frame. If any reports are older than 72 hours, the Watch Commander will review them or assign a Sergeant to review and approve or reject them.

F. No **UNAPPROVED** report will be released outside the Department, and then only when policies for official release are complied with. See [G.O. II-03, Release Of Information To The Public and News Media](#) and [G.O. II-15, Security of Records and Files](#).

G. The LEADS Unit is responsible for the approval and rejection of all reports to their final approval level.

1. The following reports will be approved by Supervisors prior to being sent to LEADS for review:

- a. Arrest reports;
- b. Reports completed by Officers on probation; and
- c. Reports completed by members of Specialized Units.

2. LEADS Unit is also for disseminating that report to the necessary entities.

a. Reports containing information relevant to the prosecution of a crime, including exculpatory evidence, will be marked in the RMS for dissemination to the SAO. This includes any reports prior to prosecution and after conviction.

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Anthony Holloway  
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