



City of Racine Police Department
Policy and Procedure

Number: 1920

Subject: Accident Investigation		
Date Issued: 05-19-1989	Date Revised: 9/13/16	Revision Number: 5

POLICY

The Department has a standard method of investigating motor vehicle accident reported to the Department. Any member/employee involved in an accident while operating a Department controlled vehicle shall report the incident immediately to the department. Under no circumstances, shall a member investigate an accident in which he/she was personally involved.

PROCEDURE

When investigation of a traffic accident scene is required, the following steps shall be taken:

MEMBER

1. Upon arrival at the accident scene, park your vehicle in such a manner so that it provides maximum visibility for on-coming traffic while providing maximum protection for the scene.
 - a. Your issued traffic vest shall be worn while you are in the roadway unless the roadway is blocked or closed.
 - b. Check for injuries and request rescue personnel if needed.
 - 1) Provide care and assistance for anyone injured until rescue personnel arrive.
 - 2) Do not move anyone seriously injured unless it is necessary to prevent further injury or death.
 - 3) Take necessary action to safeguard all persons and property at the scene.
 - 4) Seek assistance from bystanders only when it is necessary to prevent death or great bodily harm.
 - c. Determine if additional assistance will be required to appropriately handle the situation.
 - 1) Notify Dispatch and request assistance, if needed.
 - 2) Advise a supervisor of serious personal injury accidents.
2. Investigate the scene:
 - a. Identify and interview all drivers, occupants and any pedestrians involved.
 - 1) Note spontaneous statements made by any persons involved with the accident.
 - 2) Note the condition of the operator(s) of the vehicles for signs of impairment due to physical condition, or the use of intoxicants and/or controlled substances.
 - 3) Record visible injuries including complaints of injury.
 - b. Identify and interview any witnesses at the scene.
 - c. Examine and note any damage to the vehicles involved resulting from the accident. Note evidence of any equipment malfunctions that may have contributed to the accident.
 - d. Note any evidence left on the roadway, including marks, debris and skid marks.
 - e. Request an evidence technician for photographs and measurements to assist in placement of the vehicles and physical evidence at the scene as needed or required.
3. Property recovered at the scene shall be processed in accordance with Procedure #1201(Property Inventory Excluding Vehicles).
4. Note any contributing circumstances including:
 - a. Road/weather conditions
 - b. Obstructions
 - c. Vehicle traffic
 - d. Traffic control

- e. Any other element outside the operators' immediate control that may have contributed to the accident.
- 5. After gathering the necessary information, ensure that all vehicles are removed from the traffic lane(s).
- 6. Upon completion of your investigation, prepare a Badger Tracs Crash Report for all reportable accidents.
 - a. In a non-reportable accident situation, click the non-reportable box in Tracs and continue completing the report.
 - b. Take appropriate enforcement action, based on the available evidence and information.
 - c. When a Department member is involved in an accident while operating a city owned vehicle:
 - 1) Notify a supervisor and if available request a Traffic Investigator.
 - 2) Forward all reports to the Traffic Bureau for dissemination.
 - d. When a Department employee or other law enforcement Officer is involved as an operator in an off duty accident:
 - 1) Insure that a supervisor is notified as soon as practical and follow his instructions.
 - 2) Follow the same enforcement action procedures that would apply to any citizen.
 - e. Complete any additional reports required by the Department.
 - f. A complete Badger Tracs Crash Report and a Phoenix Supplementary report shall be required when more information is available than documented on the Badger Tracs Crash Report or in the following situations:
 - 1) Fatalities
 - 2) Serious Injuries
 - 3) Hit and runs
 - 4) City owned vehicles, squads and property
 - 5) When follow-up investigations are necessary
 - 6) When there are unusual or extenuating circumstances that must be recorded
 - 7) Where enforcement action may be warranted for any unit involved, but no citations are issued
 - 8) When information is obtained by a member who is on the scene and that information may assist the primary investigating officer
 - g. Promptly forward reports & citations to your supervisor.
- 7. Upon completion of your investigation of the accident, including the removal of vehicles from the scene, notify Communications of the results of the accident including:
 - a. Accident type (reportable or non-reportable)
 - b. Accident injury classification (A, B or C Type)
 - c. Citations, arrest(s) or supplements completed.

SUPERVISOR

- 1. Upon arriving at the scene of any serious accident, determine if additional personnel are needed.
 - a. Notify Communications and request assistance.
 - b. Assign personnel as needed.
 - c. If the accident involves a member on duty insure that the person's immediate supervisor is notified as soon as practical.
 - d. Traffic Investigators shall be assigned to handle:
 - 1) Fatalities
 - 2) Personal injury accidents with a potential of death or a serious disabling injury
 - 3) Hit and run accidents with a potential of death or a serious disabling injury
 - 4) Accidents involving all city owned vehicles or other jurisdiction vehicles with a potential of death or a serious disabling injury
 - e. If available, Traffic Investigators should be assigned:
 - 1) Reportable Hit and Run accidents
 - 2) Accidents involving all city owned vehicles.
- 2. If a Department member/employee is an operator or occupant of a Department vehicle involved in an accident, insure that the person completes a Phoenix Supplementary report.

3. Review reports & citations submitted by members for completeness and accuracy ensuring any necessary reports have been completed.
4. When an off duty Department member is the operator of a privately owned vehicle and involved in a traffic accident:
 - a. Examine the scene and consult with the investigating officer.
 - b. Based on the existing circumstances determine if the primary officer should continue with the investigation or whether a Traffic Investigator or outside Agency should be utilized.
 - c. Review all reports and ensure appropriate enforcement action, within normal department guidelines, is taken. If necessary take part in any enforcement action.
 - d. Provide the Shift Commander with an overview of the accident.
5. Forward completed reports to the Shift Commander.

SHIFT COMMANDER

Review all reports submitted by the Supervisor. Complete a Shift Commander's Report (PP73) if necessary.

PUBLIC SERVICE COUNTER

1. If individuals come to the Public Service Counter to report a motor vehicle accident, Public Service Counter Personnel should:
 - a. Obtain basic information to assist in determining whether the accident occurred within the City of Racine and requires an officer to complete.
 - 1) If so, contact Communications and have an officer respond.
 - 2) If it didn't occur within the City, provide the complainant with the directions to the appropriate police agency to report it.
 - 3) If it occurred within the City but doesn't require police participation in the reporting process (operator left the scene voluntarily, etc.), then provide the operator with a Drivers' Report of Accident form (MV4002) and explain how to complete it.
 - a) Once the operator completes the form, obtain a complaint number from Communications.
 - b) Photocopy the form and return the original to the operator.
 - c) Scan the completed form in Phoenix under complaint number in attachments.
2. Check the Badger Tracs Manager on a daily basis.
3. Check Phoenix to see if crash report transmitted.
4. Transmit the Accident to Phoenix, once transmitted copy the PDF files of Crash Reports from the Tracs Transmitted Folder and paste them into Media folder.
5. Delete transmitted crash reports out of transmittal folder.
6. Only transmit Crash Reports from counter station #3.

RELATED PROCEDURES

- [115 – Communicable Disease Prevention](#)
- [807 – Inventorying Evidentiary Vehicles](#)
- [1919 – Responses to Traffic Accidents](#)
- [1922 – Non-response to Traffic Accidents](#)
- [1201 – Property Inventory Excluding Vehicles](#)
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