

	<p style="text-align: center;">BRIDGEPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">POLICY AND PROCEDURE GENERAL ORDER</p>	Distribution	General Order Number
		ALL PERSONNEL	5.08
		Original Issue Date	Reissue/Effective Date
		5/21/19	3/24/23
Order Title: TRAFFIC ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION		Accreditation Standard:	Section
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		Section Title	
		PATROL FUNCTIONS	
Rescinds:		Roderick Porter, Chief of Police	

This General Order is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This General Order should not be construed as creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this General Order will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.

I. PURPOSE

To establish a written directive that provides guidelines and procedures to Bridgeport Police Department employees relating to traffic accident investigations.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Bridgeport Police Department to provide procedures for the investigation of traffic accidents. This General Order establishes procedures for the response, reporting, and investigation of motor vehicle accidents, with additional guidelines for those that are serious or complex, and on-scene and follow-up responsibilities and activities for officers assigned to investigate traffic accidents.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Reporting and Investigation of Traffic Accidents

The Department will attempt to respond to and investigate serious traffic accidents reported at the time of their occurrence. Officers responding to a traffic accident shall investigate and report the crash in a thorough and professional manner. All traffic accidents reported to the Department shall receive a high priority, and should not be delayed whenever manpower allows for an immediate response unless approved otherwise by the Shift Sergeant due to unusual circumstances. The following guidelines govern reporting and investigation of traffic accidents involving:

1. Death or Injury

- a. An Accident Investigation Team (AIT), consisting of an Accident Investigator (AI) and Supervisor, shall be summoned to the scene of collisions when the Shift Sergeant determines that technical expertise will be necessary for the complete investigation of traffic accidents that result in:
 - 1) Death
 - 2) Serious physical injury
 - 3) Collisions involving police vehicles in which a serious physical injury is sustained.
 - 4) Other crashes as determined by the Patrol Supervisor

- b. In response to fatal collisions, as well as those involving life-threatening injuries, the following procedures will apply:
 - 1) When it is evident that a fatality or life-threatening injuries are involved, officers will notify their immediate supervisor and will request notification of all other personnel who have a responsibility at the scene, including notification of any Command personnel, a Public Information Officer (PIO), State's Attorney, and Medical Examiner.
 - 2) Officers will note the exact location and condition of the person(s) so details may be included in the investigative report and diagram.
 - 3) Officers will attempt to identify the person(s).
 - 4) If identification involves handling personal property or valuables, it should be done in the presence of witnesses, and documented in the written report.
 - 5) Officers will properly receive any property or valuables released to another person or agency.
 - 6) The identity of the person(s) will not be released until proper notification of the next of kin.
 - 7) In the case of an on-scene fatality, investigative duties directly related to the body (bodies) shall be conducted with priority to facilitate the prompt removal of the body (bodies) to the custody of the Medical Examiner.
 - 8) An investigative hold will be placed on any vehicle involved in the fatal crash, which will be properly impounded to permit a

later, more thorough examination of the vehicle(s).

c. AIT members will assume responsibility for the following in a serious or fatal accident:

- 1) Completion of a final scale diagram
- 2) Requesting the driving records of all operators involved from the Department of Motor Vehicles
- 3) Complete accident reconstruction
- 4) Ensuring that all pertinent information, evidence, photographs, etc are obtained from the involved vehicles prior to their removal from the scene
- 5) Requesting supplements from any involved officers to be included in the accident investigation
- 6) Request the assistance of any outside agencies, if needed (CSP Truck Squad, City Engineering, etc.)
- 7) If necessary, applying for a search warrant for any of the following:
 - Any involved vehicles if mechanical defects are believed to be a factor in the accident, or for any necessary measurements required to reconstruct the accident or to obtain any photos or other evidence deemed necessary to assist in reconstructing the accident.

To obtain the results of any blood tests which were drawn from any involved operator, in accordance with Connecticut General Statute § 14-227a.

2. Hit and Run (Evading)

a. Crashes involving hit and run cases also referred to as “evading” are to be thoroughly investigated. Upon determining that a crash is a hit and run, Dispatchers and arriving officers will attempt to obtain:

- 1) The best possible description of the hit and run vehicle, the driver and/or passengers

2) The direction of travel

- b. All pertinent information regarding the incident shall be immediately relayed to the Dispatch Center to be broadcast to other field units and surrounding law enforcement agencies if warranted. If the hit and run is of a serious nature, a Supervisor will coordinate efforts by the Department to search the area for the vehicle.
- c. On scene investigators will attempt to locate, photograph, collect, and preserve all physical evidence that may be useful in the identification of the missing vehicle, including, but not limited to, blood, hair, soil, fabric, automotive parts and accessories, and paint. Officers will record statements from witnesses and, in more serious crashes, may conduct an area canvass to locate and identify other witnesses who may have information relating to the hit and run crash. Officers may be assigned to canvass garages, service stations, and check public parking lots in an effort to locate the vehicle.
- d. All information collected relative to the hit and run crash will be given to officers in briefings and to other agencies through COLLECT and other means, if necessary. The department may use news media resources to seek additional leads to solve the hit and run crash.
- e. When a suspect vehicle is located, officers will establish positive identification utilizing physical evidence collected at the scene and, if necessary and possible, a search warrant. Officers will attempt to interview the owner of the vehicle and attempt to determine the identity of the driver at the time of the crash. Officers will take the appropriate enforcement action if the driver is identified.

3. Impairment Due to Alcohol or Drugs

- a. Officers should be alert to the fact that driver impairment due to alcohol and/or drugs is a factor in many accidents and will be alert to cues or evidence of such impairment when carrying out their investigation. Officers will take appropriate enforcement action when sufficient evidence is obtained.
- b. In cases of traffic accidents involving impaired drivers, the dispatched officer, whenever possible, should attempt to handle both the investigation of the collision and the investigation into the violation of D.U.I. laws. If time limits for test samples or other conditions make this impractical, a Supervisor may assign another officer to assist with the investigation.

4. Hazardous Materials

- a. Collisions involving hazardous materials are to be reported and investigated in accordance with this Order.

5. Collisions on Private Property

- a. Under normal circumstances, the Department will respond to all private property traffic accidents. Upon arrival, officers shall check the credentials of each operator and vehicle and should direct the parties involved to exchange information. However, an on scene investigation and an accident report shall be completed when any of the following conditions are present:

- 1) The crash involved a fatality or personal injuries.
- 2) A hit and run collision.
- 3) Impairment of one of the drivers due to alcohol/or drugs.
- 4) Reckless operation
- 5) A City-owned vehicle was involved.
- 6) Extenuating circumstances indicating an on scene investigation should be conducted, as determined by a Supervisor.
- 7) Insufficient documentation (misuse, uninsured, no license, etc.)

- b. In extenuating circumstances, such as snowstorms and other unusual occurrences, the Shift Supervisor may direct that officers do not respond to private property traffic accidents unless one of the above conditions is present. Information will be entered in CAD after determining the validity of the operator and vehicle documents, which will document the incident.

- c. Officers investigating accidents may elect to use the optional Insurance Information Exchange report that is located in PowerDms under Forms and by utilizing this link [Insurance Exchange Report](#). The information will be entered in CAD as described in section b above unless exceptions are present. Officers will report the facts of the accident as reported, but will not make a determination of a violation of Connecticut State Statute, with the following exceptions:

- 1) Accidents involving violations of state statutes under Title 14, for which action can be taken in parking areas for ten or more cars.
- 2) Fatal accidents

6. Late Reported Accidents

- a. Upon receiving a late reported accident, officers will enter the information in CAD after determining the validity of the operator and vehicle documents, which will document the incident. However, due to the inability of investigating officers to witness the scene, ascertain road conditions, and otherwise complete a competent investigation, no action will be taken and no violation will be determined. Additionally, a diagram will be completed showing the accident location and movement of vehicles if that is able to be ascertained and the area of impact may be shown if it is able to be determined. The words "POLICE NOT AT SCENE" should be included on the diagram.
- b. For the purposes of this section, a late reported accident will be defined as any accident which occurred over one hour prior to its being reported. An exception shall be evading accidents, in which case a late reported accident will be defined as being reported over one hour after the accident is discovered.

7. Matter of Record (MOR) Accidents

Motor vehicle accidents may be classified as MOR and reported as such when:

- a. The estimated damage to any of the involved vehicles is less than \$1000
- b. There are no reported injuries
- c. The involved vehicles are not city-owned or from another municipality.
- d. A public passenger vehicle is not involved.
- e. The investigating officer may elect to use the Insurance Information Exchange report that is located in PowerDMS under Forms and by using this link [Insurance Exchange Report](#).

– If there is a complaint of injury days after the original complaint and the injury was not originally reported, the assigned officer will document such complaint on an addendum form with the original CFS number.

B. Responding to Serious or Complex Motor Vehicle Accidents

1. Under normal circumstances, one officer will usually be dispatched to the scene of reported traffic accidents. However, due to the serious nature of most of the types of traffic collisions listed below, it may be necessary to

dispatch at least two officers to the scene, plus a Supervisor, depending upon information received by Dispatchers. Serious and complex traffic collisions include, but are not limited to the following situations:

- a. Death or serious injury
 - b. Hit-and-run
 - c. Impaired operation due to alcohol, drugs, or other impairing substances.
 - d. Damage to public property.
 - e. Hazardous materials spills
 - f. Disturbances between parties involved in a collision.
 - g. Major traffic congestion as a result of a collision
 - h. Damage to vehicles that requires towing.
 - i. Possible vehicular assaults or assaults with motor vehicles
 - j. A Departmental vehicle
 - k. Any collision occurring during a pursuit.
2. When officers are dispatched to one of the above types of incidents, they shall respond immediately to the scene and provide the following services, according to the provisions of this General Order. These services include, but are not limited to the following:
- a. Investigating the collision
 - b. Requesting emergency and/or other services
 - c. Collection and preservation of evidence
 - d. Restoring the normal flow of traffic
3. In less serious collisions that involve property damage only, and where the vehicles can be moved under their own power, the Department's response may take into consideration such factors as:
- a. Workload

- b. Availability of personnel
- c. Unusual occurrences, such as major snowstorms, ice storms, hurricanes, etc., that tend to cause a temporary increase in the number of traffic collisions volume beyond the Department's capacity to handle the calls for service in a timely manner.
- d. When any of the above factors result in circumstances that tend to either delay or prevent the Department from responding to the scene of minor traffic accidents, the Shift Supervisor may permit the suspension of on-scene investigations and instruct Dispatchers to advise callers that they should exchange operator information and report the collision in person at Headquarters within 72 hours. The information will be entered in CAD after determining the validity of the operator and vehicle documents, which will document the incident. This information should be communicated to the public through the Department's public information program, including brochures available to the public, the Department's website, and at Citizen Police Academies.

C. On-Scene Responsibilities of Responding Officers

1. The most important function of any officer handling any traffic collision investigation is to prevent the situation from deteriorating and becoming worse. In order to accomplish this task, officers must take specific actions in a logical sequence, dependent upon the circumstances involved. Such actions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Summoning additional assistance as needed, including EMS and/or the Fire Department
 - b. Protecting the crash scene and preserving evidence
 - c. Establishing a safe traffic pattern around the crash scene
 - d. Locating witnesses and recording information
 - e. Expediting the removal of vehicles, persons, and debris from the roadway
2. The first responding officer, as much as practical, shall identify the participants, as well as potential witnesses. Participants and witnesses should be separated to the extent possible in order to ensure that individual statements about the crash are not unduly influenced or biased. Guidelines and

procedures relating to responding officers include the following:

a. Determination of Investigating Officer

- 1) The primary officer who is dispatched to the scene is responsible for the handling the investigation unless otherwise directed by a Supervisor. This officer may request assistance, as needed, and will be responsible for directing others with particular needs. If an AIT is requested, the AIT Supervisor will be in charge of the scene, and when necessary, request others to assist with the investigation.

b. Identifying and Dealing with Injured Persons

- 1) Officers shall inquire with persons for possible injuries and request Emergency Medical Service (EMS) personnel as needed. In situations where there is personal injury or the imminent threat of injury, actions to deal with the injury/threat will take precedence over investigative or reporting activities. Officers will administer first aid as necessary until relieved by other responding officers or EMS personnel. When appropriate, officers will provide assistance to rescue, fire, and other emergency personnel.

c. Identifying and Dealing with Hazardous Materials and Fires

- 1) On occasion, officers may respond to collision scenes that involve hazardous materials and fires. A hazardous material is any element, compound, or a combination thereof which is flammable, corrosive, explosive, toxic, radioactive, an oxidizer, or is highly reactive, and which, because of handling, storing, processing, and packaging may have detrimental effects upon operating and emergency personnel, the public, equipment, and/or the environment.
- 2) For any collision involving a fire, or a commercial cargo vehicle that may be carrying hazardous materials, officers should approach cautiously. If there is an actual fire or potential for fire, officers will take appropriate actions to protect bystanders and motorists and request the fire department.
- 3) As a matter of precaution, officers should also ask operators of commercial vehicles if they are carrying any hazardous materials. This can also be accomplished directly or indirectly

by descriptive data in shipping documents, on containers, package labels, and vehicle placards.

- 4) Through training and information, including copies of the U. S. Department of Transportation Emergency Response Guidebook, officers may be able to identify the material(s) involved and relay this information to the local fire department. The absence of an identifying placard does not necessarily mean the absence of hazardous materials.
- 5) If it has been determined that there is a possibility of hazardous materials being present, the scene, which includes all the area inside the perimeter, shall be released to the control and authority of the fire department until such time as the fire department declares the emergency unfounded and/or under control. Supervisors should establish an Incident Command System.
- 6) If an officer comes in contact with suspected hazardous material, the officer shall immediately seek medical treatment, document the exposure, and notify a Supervisor.

d. Collecting Information

- 1) Officers assigned to investigations of traffic accidents are responsible for interviewing participants and witnesses, and when appropriate, such as a serious or fatal collision, obtaining statements from those persons in written form. The investigating officer will examine and record any damage to vehicles involved in traffic collisions, as well as damage occurring to the roadway or public or private property. Other information to be gathered may also include the following:
 - a) Obtaining and recording detailed measurements, when applicable
 - b) Ensuring that photographs are taken of all crash scenes involving:
 - Fatalities
 - Serious personal injuries
 - Police vehicles
 - City-owned vehicles
 - Extensive property damage
 - Other crash scenes when deemed necessary and

prudent by the investigating officer, Shift Lieutenant, or another supervisor.

- c) Preserving and collecting physical evidence at the scene, and submitting the evidence to the Property Custodian, including evidence that will be submitted for laboratory analysis.
- d) To assist persons involved in exchanging information.

e. Protecting the Collision Scene

- 1) The assigned officer is responsible to protect the scene to include, but not limited to, the following critical issues:
 - a) Preservation of evidence
 - b) Safety of crash victims
 - c) Safety of witnesses, bystanders, and the officer's cruiser
 - d) Safety of other equipment, as well as, the personal property of others.
- 2) Officers will take appropriate action designed to assist the motoring public and others in safely and successfully moving through or around traffic accident scenes when such assistance is necessary. Officers with the responsibility of maintaining traffic control at crash scenes will take the following actions and precautions:
 - a) The officer shall park his cruiser in a manner to protect the scene so as to not create an additional hazard. The officer is to use the cruiser's overhead lights, flares, cones, police tape, etc., to warn persons and motorists of any hazard.
 - b) The officer shall direct any other responding units to appropriate locations to allow for traffic safety and care for injured persons.
 - c) Consistent with the need to preserve evidence, vehicles and debris are to be removed from the roadway as rapidly as possible. If a wrecker is needed, it shall be summoned in accordance with existing policy and procedure.
 - d) To prevent congestion, and to permit emergency

vehicles to move freely and safely, officers will direct vehicles at the scene to be removed from the roadway as soon as possible.

- e) Officers shall direct bystanders (except witnesses) to leave the immediate scene.

f. Controlling Property Belonging to Accident Victims

- 1) Investigating officers have a responsibility to protect property belonging to victims from theft and pilferage. Items of great value, items readily accessible to theft, money, and expensive jewelry should not be left with the vehicle and should be tagged and submitted to the Department's Property Custodian for safekeeping, or directly given to the owner or his designate. Found property, for which ownership cannot be readily determined, shall be properly tagged and submitted to the Property Room. When the rightful owner is located and identified, the property shall be released unless it is considered contraband or is needed for evidence.

g. No Investigation Required

If upon arrival, all operators have exchanged information and do not wish to have an investigation conducted, the investigating officer will:

- 1) Ensure that there are no injuries
- 2) Ensure that there is no apparent major damage to the involved vehicles
- 3) Ensure that the operators are not under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- 4) Ensure that all involved parties have valid licenses, registrations, and insurance cards.

D. Responsibilities of Secondary Units

- 1. Secondary units shall assist the investigating officer in:
 - a. rendering aid to injured persons
 - b. taking statements
 - c. collection and preservation of evidence
 - d. traffic control

- e. crowd control
- f. taking measurements
- g. or any other assistance requested by the investigating officer or supervisor

E. Responsibilities of Field Supervisor

1. If upon arrival, the investigating officer discovers that the accident involves City employees operating a City vehicle, a supervisor shall be requested to respond to the scene and investigate the collision. Police vehicle accidents will be investigated as outlined in Section F below.
2. In the event of a serious or fatal motor vehicle collision, the Sergeant shall respond to the scene.
3. Upon arrival at the scene, the Sergeant shall:
 - a. Assist and advise the investigating officer, if necessary
 - b. Coordinate with other emergency services for response to the scene
 - c. Coordinate response of police personnel to the accident and set up detours and traffic control patterns as necessary
 - d. Evaluate the scene and if appropriate, notify the Accident Investigation Team
4. In the event of fatal injuries, the Shift Commander shall be notified.
5. If a member of AIT is on duty at the time of the collision, that officer will be dispatched to investigate the accident. If no members of AIT are on duty at the time of the collision, the Sergeant will request that AIT is called in to investigate.

F. Accidents Involving Department Personnel - Administrative Review

1. On all investigations of accidents involving Department police personnel and vehicles, the investigating supervisor should confer with the Traffic Unit Supervisor, if available, for pertinent investigation information.
2. The Chief of Police, after consideration of all reports and circumstances of the accident, will reach a final disposition of:
 - a. No Fault
 - b. Oral Reprimand
 - c. Written Reprimand
 - d. Citation
 - e. Suspension
 - f. Termination

3. The Chief of Police shall determine the disposition of the accident and notify the involved member of the disposition and if disciplined, of the right to appeal.

G. BPD-Involved Accidents Occurring within City Limits:

1. Department personnel involved in an accident with a Department vehicle will immediately notify the Dispatcher of the accident.
2. The Dispatcher will send a Patrol Supervisor and an officer to respond to the accident.
3. If it is physically impossible for a Patrol Supervisor to respond to the accident scene, he/she shall request another supervisor from another sector respond to the scene.
4. The Patrol Supervisor shall oversee the investigation by a patrol officer and completion of the State of Connecticut Accident Form (PR-1 Rev 12-94), The Patrol Supervisor shall immediately begin the administrative investigation of the accident.
5. If the motor vehicle accident involves a Patrol Unit Supervisor, and no other supervisor is available, the patrol officer on duty shall investigate the accident and submit all reports to the Patrol Unit Shift Commander for review.
6. If the investigation finds that the evidence establishes cause to believe that Department personnel are at fault, the Supervisor's summary report (9x12) to the Chief of Police will state the finding of the investigation to include:
 - a. The specific ordinance or law that was violated; and
 - b. The specific section of the directive system which was violated.
7. If the other driver is determined to be at fault, the Supervisor will document the specific violations identified and take appropriate enforcement action.
8. If the Supervisor cannot determine fault, the Supervisor will document the specific reasons why fault cannot be determined.
9. The investigating Supervisor will forward copies of the accident report, summary report, and case incident report to the following:
 - a. One copy of the accident report, summary report, and case incident report to the Patrol Commander, who will forward a copy to the Chief of Police;

- b. Accident Review Board; If no accident review board, Traffic OIC

H. Investigation of Accidents Involving Officers from Other Jurisdictions

1. Whenever notification is received that a police vehicle from another jurisdiction has been involved in an accident within the City of Bridgeport, Dispatch personnel shall assign Bridgeport Police Department units, including a supervisor, EMS, and Fire apparatus as necessary.
2. Upon arrival, the Supervisor shall take charge of the accident scene, and take all steps necessary to secure the scene and any witnesses or evidence which may be present. Except in minor, non-injury accidents, the Shift Commander will be notified to respond.
3. The Supervisor will advise the Shift Commander of the relevant details as soon as possible after arriving on the scene.
4. The Shift Commander shall notify the Division Commander or other ranking officers as required based on the seriousness of the incident. The Shift Commander will also ensure that a ranking officer of the involved police department is notified of the accident, even if the out-of-town officer has already notified his or her agency by radio.
5. In the event that an officer from another jurisdiction is seriously injured, incapacitated or unconscious as a result of the accident, the first responding officer will take custody of any weapons, radios or other valuable police equipment and secure such equipment until it can be turned over to another member of the injured officer's department.
6. The Bridgeport Police Department's investigation of the motor vehicle accident shall take precedence over any administrative or internal investigation required by the rules or regulations of any other police department.
7. Bridgeport Police personnel shall be responsible for all aspects of the investigation, including but not limited to:
 - a. Completion of the accident report;
 - b. The taking of statements;
 - c. The taking of measurements;
 - d. The taking of photographs;
 - e. The collection and preservation of evidence.

8. All investigative efforts will be carried out in accordance with Bridgeport Police Department directives.
9. Members of the involved officer's department shall be permitted to conduct an administrative or internal investigation at the scene to the extent that their investigation does not impede or hamper that of the Bridgeport Police Department.
10. If it becomes necessary to impound the public safety vehicle, removal and seizure of the vehicle will be the responsibility of the Bridgeport Police Department.
11. If it is not necessary to seize and impound the vehicle, and such a vehicle does not constitute an immediate traffic hazard, any request to allow a wrecker from the involved jurisdiction to remove the vehicle will be honored. If the distance and times involved make such action impractical, the vehicle will be removed by a local firm according to the Bridgeport Police Department towing policy.
12. If the accident investigator determines that enforcement action should be taken against the out-of-town police officer beyond the issuance of an infraction, the preferred method shall be an arrest by warrant or misdemeanor summons following review by the Patrol Supervisor. Nothing herein shall preclude the immediate arrest of an officer if the circumstances dictate such action.

I. Extra-Jurisdictional Accidents:

1. Whenever a Bridgeport Police Department vehicle driven by an on or off-duty member is involved in a motor vehicle accident that occurs outside the City of Bridgeport, the member shall immediately notify headquarters or request that the investigating department immediately make such notification.
2. Any Dispatch or other personnel receiving such notification shall forward the information to the Shift Commander. The Shift Commander shall contact the involved police department and obtain any available information and notify the Division Commander or other ranking officer as appropriate based on the severity of the incident.
3. The Shift Commander will dispatch a Supervisor to respond to the accident location. If a supervisor is not immediately available, the Shift Commander shall designate an officer to respond to the scene pending the arrival of a Supervisor.
4. Should the accident occur outside the boundaries of the State of Connecticut

or otherwise make an immediate response impractical, the Division Commander will choose the appropriate course of action to obtain any relevant documents concerning the incident.

5. In the event that the Bridgeport police officer is seriously injured, incapacitated or unconscious, the first responding officer will secure all weapons and other department property at the scene.
6. The responding Supervisor will inform the ranking officer at the scene that the Supervisor is there to conduct an administrative investigation and will request cooperation in performing this task.
7. Department officers at the scene will cooperate with the investigating agency and shall not interfere with the agency's investigation.
8. The on-scene Bridgeport Police Department Supervisor will make every attempt to keep Bridgeport Police Department headquarters apprised of the progress of the investigation.
9. Should an injured Bridgeport police officer, passenger, prisoner, or another occupant of the car require transportation to a hospital in the jurisdiction where the accident occurred the Patrol Supervisor shall obtain the name of the treating physician or some other authorized hospital staff with whom Headquarters can maintain contact.
10. No Bridgeport Police Department personnel shall remove any Bridgeport police officer, passenger, or prisoner from the scene until authorized by the investigating police department.

J. Follow-up Investigative Activities for Motor Vehicle Accidents

1. It is the responsibility of the investigating officer, including members of the AIT, to conduct all necessary follow-up investigations. These steps may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Collecting information about drivers, pedestrians, vehicles, and roadway conditions, including providing the principals with each other's insurance information, whenever possible, and prior to leaving the scene
 - b. Obtaining and recording formal statements from witnesses
 - c. Collection and preservation of evidence
 - d. Collecting off-scene data, particularly in the following situations, as

applicable:

- 1) To interview injured persons that have been taken to a medical facility.
- 2) To examine and collect additional data or evidence when vehicles or other property may have been removed from the scene.
- 3) To obtain formal statements from witnesses away from the scene

e. Reconstructing collisions

f. Use of expert and technical assistance, including the use of:

- 1) Mechanics
- 2) Engineers
- 3) Physicians
- 4) Other specialists

If a cost will be incurred, the technical assistance will require the advance approval of the Chief.

g. Preparation and filing of formal reports and citations, including those supporting criminal charges, in which case appropriate copies will be forwarded to the prosecutor or the court to support the charge(s)

h. Follow-up meetings with the prosecutor, when necessary

2. These responsibilities do not preclude the investigating officer from seeking the assistance of other officers who might be working different days, hours, or beats, to assist in some of these tasks, with the approval of a Supervisor.
3. When investigating a serious traffic accident involving a question about mechanical failure, the officer may order the vehicle impounded for an inspection by a certified mechanic. Examples would be:
 - a. Fatalities and other serious collisions where a strong possibility of civil litigation exists.
 - b. City vehicle collisions with mechanical failure in question
 - c. Anytime liability may possibly be attached to the City
4. When the vehicle is impounded, it should be towed directly to the Police

Department garage or impound area. A request shall be directed to the Chief for an inspection. Anytime a police vehicle is involved in a collision involving possible equipment failure, the vehicle should be placed out of service and secured for inspection prior to being placed back in service.

5. If a Supervisor feels that the technical skills to properly investigate a crash are not available within the Department, or if there is a conflict of interest issue with personnel conducting the investigation, he/she may request technical crash assistance from the State Police, with prior approval of the Chief.

K. Reporting Procedures

1. All motor vehicle accidents will be documented in the NexGen under Accident Entry. In the event that the NexGen Computer System is unavailable; the officer will save all documentation, make notes and write the report at a later time.
2. The NexGen computer screens will be filled out completely in accordance with the guidelines issued for its use.
3. The "Control", "People" and "Collision" Tabs of the Accident Entry shall be completed prior to the end of the Investigating Officer's shift.
4. Accident reports shall be completed and case tracked within three (3) of the Officer's working days.
5. In the case of complex investigations or those requiring follow ups, reasonable time may be taken to complete the investigation with prior supervisory approval.
6. In all accidents where the officer responds to the scene, a diagram of the accident scene shall be completed.
7. In accidents involving a criminal or other motor vehicle arrest (DUI, Under Suspension), the narrative section is to show the specific act(s) which caused the accident and refers to the Arrest (AR) report for further details of the arrest.