



CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

SOP # OPS-049:

EFFECTIVE: 02/01/18

INCIDENT REPORTING

REVISION: 01/13/25

PURPOSE

The purpose of this order is to establish a system for receiving specified crime and incident report information.

POLICY

Incident reports shall be prepared by Chatham County Police Department personnel for criminal and non-criminal incidents that occur within the unincorporated areas of Chatham County in accordance with the procedures as outlined in this order. The only exception is reports of Identity Theft, which will be taken in accordance with federal law requiring that they be written regardless of the jurisdiction in which they occurred. Complaints involving report content that are received through the mail shall be directed to the Records Unit Supervisor for action.

PROCEDURE

I. FIELD REPORTING AND MANAGEMENT

A. Report Forms

1. The following report forms are mandatory:
 - a. RMS incident reporting system
 - (1) If available, the Records Management System (RMS) will be used for the incident and supplemental reports. If not available, printed report forms will be used.
 - b. Incident Report Form.
 - c. Georgia Uniform Motor Vehicle Traffic Accident Report.
2. The following forms will also be completed when investigating certain types of incidents and will be supplemental to a preliminary report. Which could include the following:
 - a. Incident Supplemental Report.
 - b. Arrest and Booking Form.
 - c. Traffic Citation
 - d. Tow Forms
 - e. County Ordinance Form

- f. Ban (Trespass) Form
 - g. Traffic Stop Attempt Form
- B. Documenting Police Action
- 1. All reports and records maintained to document police activity will contain at a minimum the following information:
 - a. Date and time of the initial reporting.
 - b. Full name of the citizen requesting the service, or victim's or complainant's full name. Initials are forbidden, the first name is mandatory.
 - c. Nature of the incident.
 - d. Nature, date, and time of action taken, if any, by law enforcement personnel.
 - e. Contact information (phone numbers, e-mail, etc.) of all individuals listed in the report, when available.
 - 2. Reports submitted without the required information shall be returned to the Precinct Commander for completion.
- C. Report Forms Policy
- 1. If the RMS system is not available, then members of the CCPD shall use the appropriate report form(s) as indicated by the nature of the incident being reported.
 - 2. Only legible, printed reports will be acceptable.
 - a. Reports written in script or cursive handwriting will be returned to the reporting Officer's Supervisor, with a message indicating the reason.
 - b. The appropriate Precinct/Unit Commander will be notified of any failure to provide an acceptable report in a timely manner.
- D. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- 1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) shall not be used as the sole means to author narratives for official police reports. All reports must be authored and completed by department personnel.
 - 2. AI may be used as a limited aid for spelling, grammar, formatting, and sentence structure.
 - a. When AI is used in this capacity, department personnel shall, prior to submission, review all content to ensure that the use of AI does not alter the accuracy, intent, or meaning of the information contained in the report.
- E. Procedures to be followed in completing Incident Reports
- 1. Incident Report
 - a. All complaints of a criminal nature received by the CCPD that occurred within the unincorporated areas of Chatham County shall be reported.
 - (1) Identity Theft reports will be made by CCPD officers regardless of the jurisdiction in which the crime occurred.
 - b. Incident reports shall be made for criminal acts which are brought to the attention of an Officer and occur within the unincorporated area of Chatham

- County, even though the complainant does not wish to file charges or have a report made.
- c. An incident report shall be made when a person is arrested for any criminal act occurring within the unincorporated area of Chatham County.
 - (1) Non-criminal incidents that require an incident report include, but are not limited to, natural cause deaths, missing persons, and destruction of animals for humane reasons or because the animal is an immediate threat to public safety.
 - (2) Incident reports shall be taken on these non-criminal matters, even though the complainant may not wish a report to be made.
2. Officers shall document all incidents meeting the following criteria, provided they were alleged to occur within unincorporated Chatham County.
 - a. Citizen reports of crime.
 - b. Citizen complaints.
 - c. Incidents resulting in a CCPD employee being dispatched or assigned to investigate.
 - d. Criminal and non-criminal cases initiated by Department personnel.
 - e. Incidents involving arrests, citations, or summonses.
 3. Supplemental Report
 - a. A supplemental report shall be entered by the officer when it is necessary to explain, expand, or continue with information from the incident report, or to record important or new information not contained in the original Incident Report.
 - b. A supplemental report may be entered by the initial reporting officer or by any other Officer with reportable information relevant to the original incident.
 4. Arrest / Booking Report
 - a. All arrest information shall be entered for every arrest associated with the booking of an individual.
 - b. At a minimum, the Arrest/Booking Report shall include;
 - (1) The case report number (CRN).
 - (2) The full name, address, and phone number of the arrestee.
 - (3) Charges/Offenses
 - (4) The traffic citation number and/or warrant number, if any.
 - (5) Arresting officer's information, First and Last Name, including Payroll Number.
 - (6) The disposition of the arrestee (i.e., in custody, posted bond, released on subpoena).

- (a) If a suspect is released on a subpoena, their fingerprints should be taken

5. Accident Reports

- a. The Georgia Uniform Vehicle Accident Report Form shall be completed by Officers conducting a traffic accident investigation in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedure regarding "Traffic Accident Investigation."

F. Case Numbering System

1. All calls for service shall be given a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) call number.
2. All cases requiring a CRN will have an incident report submitted.
 - a. Each case shall receive a separate CRN.
 - b. The CRN is a nine digit number, beginning with CC.
 - (1) The first two digits denote the year (CC100101001).
 - (2) The third and the fourth digits denote the month (CC100101001).
 - (3) The fifth and sixth digits denote the day of the month (CC101001001).
 - (4) The seventh, eighth, and ninth digits are assigned by CAD and indicate a numerical sequence (CC100101001).
 - c. Preliminary Incident Reports shall be entered into RMS and completed by the end of shift.
3. Officers must check RMS for any unapproved reports or rejected reports.
4. Officers must then correct or complete his/her reports.
5. If RMS is not available reports shall be completed and turned in by the end of the shift. Reports written by Officers working off-duty shall be turned in to an on-duty Officer prior to the end of the off-duty employment shift.

G. Supervisory Review

1. All reports (accident reports, incident reports, citations, etc.) shall be submitted for supervisory review before the investigating Police Officer goes off duty. If the RMS system is not available, there are boxes at each precinct for reports to be dropped off for supervisor review. Supervisors can also pick up reports from Officers.
2. Patrol supervisors will pull up all RMS reports assigned to Patrol. The supervisor will review the report and either APPROVE or REJECT the report. Rejected reports will be identified within RMS or returned to the officer with a notation/description of the corrections needed.
3. CID and specialized units (SET, Marine Patrol, etc.) supervisors will pull up all RMS reports assigned to his/hers unit within 24 hours of being completed. The supervisor will review the report and either APPROVE or REJECT the report. Rejected reports will be identified within the RMS or returned to the officer, with a notation/description of the corrections needed.

4. Every report submitted by an employee shall be reviewed for accuracy, completeness, and legibility by a Supervisor.
 - a. Reports not approved will be returned to the writer for appropriate corrections.
 - b. Supervisor approval is identified within the RMS system or indicated by the Supervisor's signature on the written report which shall be forwarded to the Records Unit.

H. Report Accountability and Distribution

1. If the RMS is not available, completed and approved reports are logged on a reporting accountability log at each precinct and transported daily along with the log to the Records Unit.
2. Crime Analyst Personnel shall pull up all supervisor approved reports in the RMS system to review them for accuracy in coding and make corrections if necessary.
 - a. Each report shall be coded according to the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS).
3. The Records Unit is responsible for sending reports or verified copies of reports to outside agencies or departments.
4. Authorized and trained personnel may retrieve reports from the RMS for internal use, which are unofficial printouts to assist Divisions and Units in the performance of their duties.

II. INCIDENT REPORTING OVER THE TELEPHONE

- A. Officers shall report all complaints received from citizens via the telephone in accordance with the procedures as outlined in this order.
- B. Incident reports that cannot be taken over the telephone are:
 1. Incidents where the suspect or multiple witnesses are at the scene.
 2. Incidents resulting in injury.
 3. Sex crimes.
 4. Child abuse/neglect.
 5. Incidents involving the custody of evidence or property.
 6. Incidents that require the examination of a crime scene (Burglary, Robbery, etc.).
 7. Incidents involving multiple complainants/victims.
 8. Crimes in-progress.
 9. Missing persons who are classified as "missing under unusual circumstances" as defined by SOP-OPS-012 Missing Persons.
 10. Domestic violence.
 11. Accidents.
 12. Damage to property.

- C. For all call-in complaints, it is the responsibility of the officer to question the complainant(s) about the elements of an incident to determine if a report can be taken over the telephone.
- D. When the Community Resource Officer (CRO) is on-duty, they shall write all reports that do not interfere with the performance of their assigned duties.
 - 1. The CRO shall notify the Senior Communications Specialist when they are unavailable to take telephone calls for incident reports.
 - 2. When the CRO becomes available, they shall immediately notify the Communications Center of their availability to take telephone calls for incident reports.

III. INCIDENT REPORTING FOR WALK-INS

- A. Officers shall document all complaints received from citizens who report in person to any CCPD facility in accordance with the procedures as outlined in this order.
- B. Incident reports that cannot be taken for walk-ins (these reports require an on-scene response) are:
 - 1. Burglaries.
 - 2. Robberies (of a person) that occurred within the last eight (8) hours, unless there is a compelling reason to take the report.
 - 3. Accident Reports.
 - 4. Child abuse/neglect (third-party reporting may be an exception but must be approved by a supervisor).
 - 5. Incidents resulting in injury, unless there is a compelling reason to take the report.
- C. For all walk-in complaints, it is the responsibility of the officer to question the complainant(s) about the elements of an incident to determine if a report can be taken without an on-scene response.

IV. INCIDENT REPORTING FOR SHOPLIFTING AND TRANSACTION FRAUD

- A. Officers responding to a business or other location where a citizen has detained a subject for theft or fraud (per O.C.G.A. 17-4-80) will determine if probable cause does exist in order to effect the arrest of the subject being detained. If probable cause exists, the officer will assume custody of the detainee and arrest the individual on the appropriate criminal charge(s).
- B. Evidence of the crime will be photographed and appropriately marked for identification before returning the property to security for safekeeping and production in court or appropriately marked for identification and logged into the Police Property Room as evidence. Officers shall either obtain any video evidence while on the scene or complete a Technical Services Request form and submit it for processing.
- C. Officer will determine the exact dollar amount for the items taken or fraud, and if possible, obtain a copy of a receipt for said items.
- D. Officer will complete a preliminary report for shoplifting /fraud, include all elements of the crime, and add all photographs to the report.

- E. The officer should obtain a witness statement from security/ loss prevention and attach it to the report. A completed CCPD Form 1014 Shoplifting Report form can be used as the witness statement. (The CCPD form 1014 Shoplifting Report can also be used for in-store purposes. It WILL NOT be considered the primary report as it has in the past.)
- F. The suspect will be transported to the Chatham County Detention Center on felony charges; misdemeanor charges will be handled per current protocol at the time of the arrest.
- G. Officer will complete the Field Arrest Form and list the Officer as the Arresting Officer and the security/ loss prevention as a witness to the crime. The officer will ensure that a good address and contact information are obtained and listed in both the report and on the Field Arrest Report.
- H. Officer will be required to appear in court on all shoplifting arrests and will no longer write “officer not needed” on the Field Arrest Report.

BY ORDER OF:

Electronically Signed in PowerDMS on 01/13/2026

Jeffrey M. Hadley
Chief of Police