

# ELIZABETH POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS



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# OF PAGES: 3

**SUBJECT: LAW ENFORCEMENT INVOLVED CRASH  
INVESTIGATIONS**

**EFFECTIVE DATE:**  
January 28, 2025

**ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:**  
NJSACOP 2.1.4

**BY THE ORDER OF:**  
Chief Giacomo Sacca

**BY AUTHORITY OF:**  
Director Earl J. Graves

**SUPERSEDES ORDER #:**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to describe the responsibilities of the agency for the investigation of a motor vehicle crash involving a police officer and police vehicle. The police department is committed to the principles of risk management and will make every effort to reduce police officer involved motor vehicle crashes.

**POLICY:** The Elizabeth Police Department will thoroughly investigate all police officer and police vehicle motor vehicle crashes to determine cause. The police department will conduct a meaningful review of the results of the motor vehicle crash investigation and make recommendations, if any, for policy change, additional training, equipment enhancements and/ or discipline as a result of the review.

## **PROCEDURE:**

### **I. OFFICER INVOLVED CRASH SCENES**

- A. Unless the member operating the department vehicle involved in the crash is engaged in law enforcement-related activity that precludes the officer remaining at the crash site, the member will remain at the scene of the accident and will inform Communications personnel of the crash and the need for emergency personnel/apparatus.
- B. In the event there is a serious injury to any person at the crash site, or the crash presents an actual or potential physical hazard, the member involved shall remain at the scene unless other police personnel are present to address the injuries or hazard, regardless of the law enforcement activity in which the member is engaged.
- C. In the event the crash occurs in another jurisdiction, the Communications Supervisor shall take steps to notify the appropriate agency and this agency of the crash.
- D. The member of the department assigned to the crash incident shall ensure appropriate first responder actions are taken and the necessary emergency personnel/apparatus are dispatched to the crash scene.
- E. A vehicle crash report (NJTR-1) shall be prepared in all cases. A Supervisor (Preferably of a higher rank than the involved individual) not involved in the accident shall prepare the report. The crash report shall indicate the circumstances of the crash, including whether the crash occurred during an emergency response. If so, the report shall indicate what emergency devices were being used at the time of impact.
- F. An Incident Report will be prepared concerning the accident, indicating who was involved in the crash, the department vehicle involved, extent of injuries, and weather and traffic conditions.

## **II. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. A patrol supervisor shall respond to the scene and ensure that an Incident Report is completed for all job related injuries and/or crashes. A patrol supervisor shall also respond to all crash scenes involving department vehicles and ensure a NJTR-1 crash report is completed along with the Incident Report.
- B. If a crash occurs out of this jurisdiction, a supervisor shall respond only after notifying the Communications Center. If the crash scene is a considerable distance from this jurisdiction, the supervisor shall consult with higher command before responding.
- C. The supervisor completing the Incident and NJTR-1 crash report shall ensure that copies of all reports are forwarded to the Internal Affairs Unit and the Commanding Officer of the officer involved.
- D. If the police motor vehicle crash was a result of a police response to any emergency that involved serious bodily injury to any person, as defined in N.J.S. 2C:11-1(a), during a pursuit, the Union County Prosecutor's Office shall be notified.

1. Depending on the circumstances of the police involved motor vehicle crash the Union County Prosecutor's Office may conduct the crash investigation.

### **III. MEANINGFUL REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF INCIDENT**

- A. The Commanding officer of the officer involved shall perform a review of all crashes. This shall include:
  1. Reviewing the circumstances and all the material compiled by the supervisory investigator relative to the crash.
  2. Speaking with the supervisory investigator regarding their findings.
  3. The Commanding Officer will make an entry in the Guardian tacking Software detailing their findings through the administrative review, including any past crashes involving the member and recommending any changes that may likely reduce or eliminate future occurrences. These include, but are not limited to, policy changes, training, equipment enhancements, and/or discipline.
  4. The Commanding Officer shall forward all reports to the appropriate Division Commander, along with any conclusions or recommendations, for further action.
  5. All meaningful reviews are to be completed no later than the last day of the tour the crash occurred on. In the extraordinary circumstance that this cannot be accomplished, the Commanding Officer shall coordinate with the Division Commander to ensure that the requirements of this order are fulfilled.
  6. The Division Commander shall determine the need for further actions and will direct them accordingly. All meaningful review and analysis reports shall be retained in the Guardian Tracking software.