



GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

Chapter: Operations	Section: 405.5	
Subject: Vehicle Operations	Topic: Investigation of Sheriff's Vehicle Crashes	
Accreditation: ADM.25.01	Revised:	Reaffirmed:
Enacted: 07/30/2015	Last Review: 05/01/21	Review: 10/01/2021

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish guidelines to be followed whenever a Sheriff's Office vehicle is involved in a crash.

II. POLICY

Recognizing that motor vehicle crashes will occur despite all preventive efforts, it shall be the policy of the Sheriff's Office to ensure the proper investigation of all vehicle crashes and damage to agency vehicles.

III. GENERAL PROCEDURES

- A. The operator of a Sheriff's vehicle involved in any type of crash or incident (as defined in General Order 405.1) shall, unless physically disabled, notify ECC without delay.
- B. Upon being notified of such a crash or incident in Loudoun County, the dispatcher shall advise an on-duty supervisor within the area of the crash/incident.
- C. A complete investigation of the facts and circumstances surrounding the crash or incident shall be conducted.
 - 1. Generally, the investigation will be conducted by the vehicle operator's immediate supervisor. In the event the immediate supervisor is not available, the investigation shall be conducted at the direction of the nearest available supervisor.
 - 2. If the crash resulted from a pursuit or involved injuries, a Traffic Safety Unit supervisor shall be consulted and may send a deputy to respond to work the crash investigation.
 - 3. A deputy of equal or superior rank shall investigate any crash or incident involving a superior or staff deputy. The services of any Traffic Section unit may also be utilized for assistance.
- D. A FR-300 must be completed for all crashes involving a Sheriff's vehicle that occur in Loudoun County.

1. A .pdf copy of the FR-300, along with digital photos of the crash scene, shall be forwarded to the Sheriff's Office Fleet Coordinator. The Fleet Coordinator shall forward the documentation to Fleet Operations and Risk Management after review.
- E. Fatal or serious injury crashes or incidents require a verbal report be made to the Sheriff as soon as possible after occurrence. The ranking supervisor on-duty at the time of the crash or incident shall make the verbal report. In the event the Sheriff is unavailable, the report shall be made to the acting sheriff or his immediate designee.

IV. REPORTING OF CRASHES INVOLVING SHERIFF'S OFFICE VEHICLES THAT OCCUR OUTSIDE LOUDOUN COUNTY

- A. The involved deputy shall immediately notify his/her supervisor or an on-duty patrol supervisor.
- B. The involved deputy should contact the local jurisdiction wherein the crash occurred to investigate. The involved deputy should obtain the investigating officer's name and the local case number.
 1. The investigation of a Sheriff's Vehicle crash that occurs outside the boundaries of Loudoun County which involves death or serious injury to any party, or allegations of criminal conduct by Sheriff's Office personnel, shall be conducted in accordance with Section V, C, of this General Order.
- C. The involved deputy's supervisor should obtain a copy of any documentation available from the reporting jurisdiction and include it in the investigative file.

V. CRASH INVESTIGATION REVIEW POLICY

- A. An Administrative Investigation Inquiry shall be completed for all crashes involving a Sheriff's Office vehicle utilizing the BlueTeam system.
- B. The investigating supervisor of the crash shall complete and submit the investigation and reports within 30 days. If additional time is required, approval must be obtained. The supervisor should also include whether the crash is determined to have been preventable or not and what, if any, General Orders or state/local laws were violated.
- C. The Internal Affairs Section, with the assistance of the Traffic Section, shall investigate the following types of crashes or incidents:
 1. Those crashes or incidents involving a Sheriff's vehicle coming into contact with another vehicle, object, or person as a direct result of the intentional actions of the deputy, which result in death or serious physical injury.

2. Those crashes or incidents resulting in fatalities or serious physical injury which directly involve a Sheriff's Office vehicle.
 3. Those crashes or incidents that result in death or serious physical injury which occur coincidentally with a vehicle pursuit involving Loudoun County deputies.
- D. Where crash cases are assigned to the Internal Affairs Section, they will be responsible for the following tasks:
- a. Completing all investigative activities, reports (excluding the FR-300), and administrative actions usually assigned to the employee's supervisor.
 - b. Ensuring a thorough examination of all issues likely to be questioned in any potential civil proceeding.
- E. Incidents defined in this General Order as a Use of Force shall be reported in accordance with General Order 403.12, Investigation of Use of Force.
1. If the crash is being investigated as a use of force incident, the Internal Affairs Supervisor shall report his/her findings to the Sheriff through the appropriate Bureau Commander.
- F. The supervisor shall forward all information to the involved deputy's Division Commander or his/her designee for review. Upon review, if a degree of culpability is determined, an appropriate disciplinary action shall be imposed by direction of the final reviewing supervisor or Commander.
- G. If the crash involved serious injury, death, or a finding resulting in a recommendation of disciplinary action to include suspension or termination, the results will be forwarded to the Sheriff for final review.
- H. Any loss of take-home vehicle privileges will require that the employee's vehicle be parked at the Sheriff's Headquarters (803 Sycolin Road, SE, Leesburg, VA) for the period defined.
- I. Any temporary re-assignment of the deputy involved in a crash will be at the discretion of his/her respective Division Commander and will routinely stay within that division.