

<p>MESA POLICE</p> <p>Department Policy Manual</p>	<p>Police Incidents Involving Death/Serious Injury, Officer Involved Shootings & In-Custody Death Investigations</p>	<p>DPM 2.1.10</p> <p>Effective 06/02/2016 Revised 10/25/2025</p>
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1. PURPOSE

This policy provides Mesa Police Department (MPD) members with guidelines for critical incidents including Officer Involved Shootings (OIS) and police incidents resulting in serious injury or death.

2. GENERAL

- A. This policy outlines the procedures for: [\[ALEAP 1.6A\]](#)
 1. The investigation of all incidents of firearms discharged by a Department member except for:
 - a. Target practice.
 - b. Hunting.
 - c. Ballistics examinations.
 - d. Incidents involving the shooting of an animal.
 - e. Firing of a less lethal weapon that does not result in serious injury or death.
 - f. Simunition training.
 2. Police incidents resulting in serious injury or death.
- A. The MPD will manage all officer involved shooting scenes and police incidents resulting in serious injury or death efficiently and with the utmost concern for thoroughness, accuracy, consistency, and the individual rights of all persons involved. [\[ALEAP 1.6A\]](#)
- B. All officer involved shooting scenes will be investigated by an East Valley Critical Incident Response Team (EVCIRT) agency in accordance with the established EVCIRT agreement.
- C. EVCIRT will not investigate the shootings of animals. If an incident involved the shooting of an animal, refer to [DPM 2.5.45 Animal-Related Incidents](#) and [DPM 2.1.11 Concurrent Investigations](#).
- D. If an incident involved an accidental or unintentional discharge of a firearm, refer to the protocols outlined in [DPM 2.1.20 Firearms Use](#) and [DPM 2.1.11 Concurrent Investigations](#).
- E. The fundamental priorities at a shooting scene or incident resulting in serious injury or death are as follows: [\[ALEAP 1.6A\]](#)
 1. Preservation of life.
 2. Scene stabilization.

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3. Suspect apprehension.
4. Property preservation.
5. Evidence collection.
6. Environmental protection.

3. OFFICER SCENE RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. **Officers involved at the scene** shall take those measures that are reasonably necessary to protect themselves, the public, ensure the safety of the officers, and to preserve any and all evidence to include:
1. Ensure that any threats to officer safety and the safety of others no longer exists.
 2. Secure and separate the suspects and witnesses.
 3. Contain the scene and preserve areas with known evidence.
 4. Relay any information on fleeing suspects to Communications and other field units, including the Aviation Unit, and initiate a Bullseye.
 5. Request a supervisor, additional backup, emergency medical services if necessary and any other assistance required immediately.
 6. If injured persons are present, administer emergency first aid to those injured persons as necessary, until emergency medical services arrive.
 7. Any involved firearms, weapons, or other devices should be photographed in the condition they were in when police arrived on scene.
 - a. If no safety issues exist, leave in their original condition and location.
 - b. If safety is a concern, render-safe procedures may be used after photographing, if possible.
 - c. Officers must document any actions taken to render safe and the condition found.
 8. Take note of the time. Survey the area for relevant facts, individuals who are present and who left the scene, witnesses, suspects, and suspect vehicles.
 9. On-officer body cameras shall continue to record until the responding lieutenant arrives on scene and takes possession of the camera(s).
- B. **Prior to the supervisor arriving**, and as time and personnel permits:
1. Secure the area, establish a perimeter with crime scene tape, and limit access to authorized persons necessary to investigate the incident in compliance with established methodology, such as ICS procedures.
 2. Assist the injured.

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3. Protect evidence from loss, destruction, or damage that is likely to occur before assistance arrives. Ensure that evidentiary items are not moved or, if moved, note the original location and position of persons, weapons, and other relevant objects and evidence.
 4. Photograph, if possible.
 5. Record the names, dates of birth, addresses, and phone numbers of all witnesses and other persons present at the scene and request they remain to make a statement regarding the incident.
 - a. Individuals cannot be detained at the scene without reasonable suspicion, probable cause, or consent.
 - b. A material witness may be temporarily detained, in very limited circumstances, to allow investigation of a crime, even if that person is not suspected of criminal wrong-doing, such as where the victim knows the suspect is acquainted with the material witness and the victim has information that the material witness has knowledge of the crime. There will be very few circumstances where an officer will be able to detain a witness at the scene of an incident, *State v. Watkins, 207 Ariz. 562 (Ct of Ap, Div 1 – 2004)*.
- C. **First responding officer responsibilities:** The first arriving sworn officer on the scene should perform the following:
1. **Approach:** Make an initial assessment of the incident and advise Communications of the nature and scope of the emergency.
 2. **Identify:** Preliminary equipment or resources needed to meet the emergency (e.g., EMS, Fire, etc.).
 3. **Communicate:** Notify Communications of a safe avenue of approach for responding units and inform supervisor responsible for the scene.

4. SUPERVISORY SCENE RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Collection of On-Officer Body Cameras

- A. The responding lieutenant shall collect all on-officer body cameras (OBCs) worn at the time of the incident, to include both involved and witness officers.
 1. This shall be done as soon as practicable and prior to any viewing of the captured media.
 2. The camera shall continue to record until collected by the responding lieutenant.

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3. Should a lieutenant not be immediately available to respond, a supervisor will be responsible for OBC collection.
- B. The supervisor who collected the camera(s) will maintain custody of the camera(s) until a member of the Homicide Unit arrives. The camera(s) will be turned over to the first arriving investigator from the Homicide Unit.
 1. This shall be done prior to viewing any captured media.
 2. Any viewing of OBC footage shall be coordinated through the Homicide Unit Sergeant or Lieutenant and follow procedures outlined in [DPM 3.4.35 On-Officer Body Camera Program, Section 5. Viewing OBC Footage of Critical Incidents](#).
- C. The Homicide Unit Sergeant will coordinate the camera(s) being turned over to the EVCIRT investigating agency.

4.2 Public Safety Statement

- A. An uninvolved supervisor shall respond and obtain sufficient information to conduct their duties at the scene. These duties shall include, but not be limited to, directing responding personnel to do the following:
 1. Determine whether a threat to public safety exists.
 2. Determine whether anyone is injured and in need of immediate medical attention.
 3. Establish a perimeter and command post.
 4. Protect the crime scene.
 5. Locate witnesses and/or evidence.
 6. Manage the response of additional resources.
 7. Make proper Department notifications.
- B. A statement concerning public safety shall be obtained from any and/or all responding members, including involved members, by asking the questions located on [DPM 2.1.10A2 Public Safety Statement Card](#).
- C. After obtaining sufficient information, the supervisor shall immediately separate the involved members and/or witnesses and order for them **not** to discuss this investigation, including the interview, with any unauthorized persons or each other.
 1. Authorized persons include: Homicide Unit investigators, EVCIRT investigators, involved members' attorneys and/or Department representative, spouse, health care provider, and clergy.
 2. The Homicide Lieutenant must approve any exceptions to this order.

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5. INVOLVED MEMBERS

- A. The involved member **shall not**:
 1. Discuss the incident with unauthorized persons.
 2. Manipulate/alter their weapon.
 3. Change/alter their appearance, unless approved by the Homicide Sergeant/Lieutenant.
- B. Members will be allowed usage of their personal cell phone for contact with immediate family members and/or attorney. Refer to [DPM 1.10.35 Cell Phone & Mobile Device Use](#) for guidance on the use of personal and Department-issued mobile devices, including privacy expectations, records retention, and public records compliance.

6. MONITORING INVOLVED MEMBERS

- A. **Involved members** shall be assigned a monitoring supervisor.
 1. The supervisor should not be the involved member's immediate supervisor.
 - a. If a supervisor is not immediately available, the scene supervisor may assign the involved member to an uninvolved officer or detective.
 2. The monitoring member shall not be the member's Department representative.
- B. **Witness members** shall be separated.
 1. If circumstances dictate the members are in close proximity, the monitoring member shall ensure they do not discuss the incident as instructed.
- C. **Background members** are members working on the incident but not directly involved or a witness.
 1. These members do not need to be assigned to a monitoring member.
- D. Supervisors and uninvolved members responsible for the separation, transportation, and monitoring of involved members shall **not** discuss tactics or the details of the incident with the members. Their overall responsibility is to protect the integrity of the investigation and to look after the welfare of the members.
- E. Members assigned to accompany/monitor involved members shall complete a detailed supplemental report including their involvement in the incident,

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responsibilities, and anything pertinent to the investigation. At a minimum, the supplemental report should include that the member:

1. Did not discuss the incident with unauthorized persons.
 2. Did not manipulate/alter their weapon.
 3. Did not change/alter their appearance.
 4. Powered off their personal cell phone or mobile device during the duration of the investigation, noting any additional communication made with the device if approved by the Homicide Lieutenant.
 5. Did not use their personal cell phone for unauthorized communication.
- F. Under [ARS 38-1104](#), police officers have the right to representation if an employer interviews a police officer and the employer reasonably believes that the interview could result in dismissal, demotion or suspension. Therefore, to assure that the police officers' rights are protected, supervisors are allowed to ask general questions about the nature of the incident, but questions regarding the specific details of the incident should be left to criminal investigators.

7. ACCESS TO INVOLVED MEMBERS

- A. Department members desiring access to involved members (Peer Support, Media Relations Officer, labor union representative, etc.) shall coordinate contact through the Homicide Unit Sergeant or designee.

8. AT THE SCENE

- A. The uninvolved supervisor at the scene shall initiate the ICS and assume command of the scene as outlined in [DPM 2.6.25 Incident Command System Protocols](#).
- B. Ensure the safety and determine the condition of the officer(s), suspect(s) and third parties.
- C. Contact Mesa Fire and Medical Department (MFMD) to assess medical needs for the officer(s), suspect(s), and/or third parties, if they have not been contacted.
- D. Request Communications contact the Command Van to respond to the scene.

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- E. Refer to [DPM 2.1.11 Concurrent Investigations](#) and ensure procedures are followed and notifications made.
- F. **Notify Department members** as outlined in [DPM 2.6.30 Major Incident Notifications](#) and below:
1. The commander of the division of occurrence, or Command Duty Officer (CDO), if applicable, shall notify all of the Assistant Police Chiefs.
 2. The Assistant Police Chief of Operations shall notify the Chief of Police.
 3. The Media Relations Office (MRO), shall be responsible for notifying community groups.
 4. The Homicide Unit Sergeant or designee will activate the EVCIRT response.
 5. Communications shall notify the PD Legal Advisor and Peer Support Team.
- G. Appoint Department members at the scene, as needed, to make a chronological record of activities and maintain a Crime Scene Log to include:
1. Person(s) entering and exiting the scene.
 2. Times of ingress and egress.
 3. The members' roles at the scene, consistent with established procedures, such as those employed in the ICS.
- H. **If an officer has been injured:**
1. Make certain the injured officer is accompanied to the hospital by an officer who will remain with the injured officer at the hospital.
 2. Do not release the officer's name to the media or other unauthorized party. All information releases shall be handled by the MRO unless otherwise directed by a supervisor with command approval.
 3. Ensure that the clothing of officers and other injured persons is collected for potential evidentiary purposes and that the duty-related equipment of the officer is safeguarded.
- I. **If officers have not been injured:**
1. After consulting (when practical) with the Homicide Sergeant or Lieutenant, it is preferable for the involved officer(s) to be moved a short distance from the scene (e.g., nearby police/fire facility, supervisor patrol vehicle, school, or other facility, etc.).
 2. The Homicide Sergeant shall be kept abreast of any change in location of involved members.
 3. Any deviation from this policy must be approved by the Homicide Sergeant or Lieutenant.

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- J. Contact with the involved officer(s) **shall** be restricted to supervisors, members of the Peer Support Team, members of the Homicide Unit, EVCIRT investigators, and the involved officer's attorney(s) or employee representative(s).
- K. Contact with involved member's spouse shall be by telephone unless otherwise authorized by the Homicide Sergeant or Lieutenant or EVCIRT investigator.
- L. To ensure the integrity of the investigation, access to the involved member(s) by the above listed Department members should be limited. Any deviation related to member allowed access to involved Department member(s) must be approved by the Homicide Sergeant or Lieutenant.
- M. Assign a primary (uninvolved) officer or sergeant to compile all investigative information for dissemination to responding detectives/supervisors. [DPM 2.6F3 Major Incident Briefing Worksheet](#) can be utilized for this briefing.
- N. See [DPM 2.1.10A1 Police Incidents Involving Death/Serious Injury, Officer Involved Shootings and In-Custody Death Investigations Checklist](#) for a quick reference guide for field supervisors.
- O. The Homicide Sergeant or Lieutenant will ensure the investigation is conducted in accordance with [INV 2.2 Investigating Critical Incidents](#).

9. RESOURCE ALLOCATION

- A. The commander of the division of occurrence or CDO is responsible for actively monitoring, leading, inspecting, and adjusting deployments and equipment to maximize the use of Department resources.

10. REPORTING GUIDELINES [ALEAP 1.6A]

- A. Refer to [DPM 2.1.1 Use of Force](#) and [DPM 2.1.11 Concurrent Investigations](#) for reporting procedures.
- B. [DPM 2.6F8 After Action Report](#) should be completed in accordance with the guidelines outlined in [DPM 2.6.25 Incident Command System Protocols](#).
- C. The scene supervisor completes all necessary steps in accordance with [DPM 2.1.15 Return to Duty Assessment - Shooting or Use of Force](#).

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REFERENCES

- [DPM 2.6F3 Major Incident Briefing Worksheet](#)
- [DPM 2.6F8 After Action Report](#)
- [DPM 1.10.35 Cell Phone & Mobile Device Use](#)
- [DPM 2.1.1 Use of Force](#)
- [DPM 2.1.10A1 Police Incidents Involving Death/Serious Injury, Officer Involved Shootings and In-Custody Death Investigations Checklist](#)
- [DPM 2.1.11 Concurrent Investigations](#)
- [DPM 2.1.15 Return to Duty Assessment - Shooting or Use of Force](#)
- [DPM 2.1.20 Firearms Use](#)
- [DPM 2.5.45 Animal-Related Incidents](#)
- [DPM 2.6.25 Incident Command System Protocols](#)
- [DPM 2.6.30 Major Incident Notifications](#)
- [INV 2.2 Investigating Critical Incidents](#)