

# Seattle Police Department Manual

## **13.010 – Collisions Involving Department Vehicles**

Effective Date: 05/01/2020

### **13.010-POL**

This policy applies to all collisions involving department vehicles (includes any marked or unmarked vehicle that is owned, leased, rented, seized, donated, or acquired through a collaborative program), regardless of the amount of damage or lack thereof. This policy applies to all sworn and non-sworn Department employees.

This policy does not apply to collisions occurring during authorized driver training involving no misconduct or gross negligence.

For policy on damage discovered during a pre-shift inspection, please see Manual Section 13.080(5).

#### **1. Sworn Personnel from Traffic, Patrol, or the Traffic Collision Investigation Squad (TCIS) Investigate Department Vehicle Collisions in the City**

Generally, for department vehicle collisions that occur outside the city, the agency with jurisdiction will investigate. TCIS may respond by request on a case-by-case basis after evaluating the request.

#### **2. Employees Will Not Investigate Their Own Collision**

#### **3. Employees Will Notify a Sergeant of Department Vehicle Collisions**

The sergeant will then notify an on-duty lieutenant or captain.

A sergeant will respond to all department vehicle collisions that occur in Seattle or within a reasonable distance of the city limits.

A sergeant is not required to respond in-person to a department vehicle collision outside the city if all the following apply:

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- After considering the travel distance and the factors below, an on-duty lieutenant approves,
- Damage to the vehicles involved is minor,
- There are no injuries,
- The employee was not involved in a pursuit or emergency driving,
- There is no indication that the employee was involved in reckless or criminal behavior,
- The appropriate outside agency is investigating the collision.

## **4. Officers Shall Document All Collisions Involving Department Vehicles**

Officers will use a Police Traffic Collision Report (PTCR) when there is:

- At least \$1,000 in damage to any involved vehicle, or
- Any involved person injured, or
- Any traffic crime committed

Officers will use a Report titled "Collision - Traffic" to document department vehicle collisions, in any one of the following circumstances:

- Damage appears to be less than \$1,000, or
- Location of collision is restricted to police employees only, or
- At a facility not open to the public, and damage appears to be less than \$1,000

A supervisor may order the completion of a collision report if circumstances warrant.

Officers will not use SECTOR to document department vehicle collisions.

Involved employees will complete a diagram on a Sketch Sheet (form 5.7.1) if a PTCR is not completed by SPD.

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## 5. Supervisors Shall Review All Collisions Involving Department Vehicles

Supervisors will use Blue Team for every department vehicle collision, regardless of visible damage or monetary loss.

The supervisor lists an employee that is a driver or occupant as "involved employee" on the Blue Team report and assigns the role of either "driver" or "passenger," as appropriate.

If the department vehicle was parked or unoccupied, the supervisor lists the employee(s) as a "witness officer".

For more detailed instructions on completing the Blue Team entry, supervisors may refer to the *Officer Involved Collision Blue Team Guide* located on the Department's InWeb homepage.

### 13.010-TSK-1 Department Employee Involved in a Collision

Upon being involved in a collision, the **involved employee**:

1. **Checks** for injuries and renders first aid.
2. **Notifies** a supervisor immediately.
3. **Remains** on the scene until relieved by a supervisor.
4. **Completes** a Statement (form 9.27)
5. **Completes** a diagram on a Sketch Sheet (form 5.7.1) only if a PTCR is not completed by SPD.
6. **Provides** the completed forms to the investigating Traffic or Patrol officer.

### 13.010-TSK-2 Traffic or Patrol Officer Responding to a Department Vehicle Collision

In responding to a department vehicle collision, the **investigating Traffic or patrol officer**:

1. **Completes** a PTCR if:
  - At least \$1,000 in damage, or

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- Injury, or
- Traffic crime

If a PTCR is not required, writes a "Collision – Traffic" Incident Report.

2. **Takes no enforcement action** for collisions involving department vehicles that occur during an emergency response.

- TCIS will assume follow-up responsibilities for these collisions.

## 13.010-TSK-3 Patrol or Traffic Sergeant Investigating a Department Vehicle Collision

In responding to a department vehicle collision, the **investigating Patrol or Traffic sergeant**:

1. **Responds** to all department vehicle collisions.
2. **Notifies** an on-duty lieutenant or duty captain.
3. **Summons** medical aid for any injured person, or anyone complaining of injury.
4. **Determines** if TCIS should be called, per criteria listed in Seattle Police Manual Section 15.260-Collision Investigations.
  - a. If TCIS does not respond, **oversees** the investigation and proceeds to step 5.
  - b. If TCIS does respond, **yields** the investigation to TCIS detective or supervisor.
5. **Examines** the damage at the collision scene.
6. **Takes** digital photos of the collision scene including, at minimum:
  - The police vehicle,
  - The other vehicle(s) or property involved and two different views of the scene.
7. **Obtains** a Statement (form 9.27) from the involved employee.

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8. **Includes** a diagram of the collision scene on a Sketch Sheet (form 5.7.1) with all reports filed, only if a PTCR is not completed by SPD.
9. **Completes** a Blue Team entry for Vehicle Collision.
  - a. **Includes** the involved employee's driver license information and a complete description of the circumstances surrounding the collision in the Blue Team Incident Summary. Supervisors will include:
    - Officer's driving response
    - Unit type (vehicle description: marked, subdued, type of light bar)
    - Vehicle action
    - Light conditions – day light, night, dusk/dawn
    - Emergency equipment used – lights, siren
    - In-car video status
    - Officer's DOL status – active, suspended
10. **Uploads** photos to the Digital Evidence Management System (DEMS) or Evidence.com via Axon Capture.
11. **Attaches** a copy of the PCTR or Report, officer statement, sketch sheet, and impound sheet to the Blue Team entry. And forwards the Blue Team entry through the involved officer's chain of command.
12. **Forwards** the Blue Team entry to the involved officer's sergeant or, in the event of a non-sworn driver, to his or her supervisor.
13. **Forwards** the original paperwork to Records.

## 13.010-TSK-4 Reviewing Sergeant Investigating a Department Vehicle Collision

In reviewing a department vehicle collision, **the involved employee's sergeant** (who may be the same sergeant overseeing the collision investigation):

1. **Reviews** the Blue Team entry, recommends in the comment section preventable or non-preventable.

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2. **Makes** written recommendations in Blue Team entry comments section concerning whether the collision was preventable or non-preventable.
3. **Forwards** the Blue Team entry to the involved employee's lieutenant.

## 13.010-TSK-5 Duties of a Lieutenant in Reviewing a Department Vehicle Collision

In reviewing the documentation of a department vehicle collision, a **lieutenant**:

1. **Makes** written recommendations in Blue Team entry comments section concerning whether the collision was preventable or non-preventable.
2. **Forwards** Blue Team entry to the involved employee's section/precinct captain.

## 13.010-TSK-6 Duties of a Section/Precinct Captain in Reviewing a Department Vehicle Collision

In reviewing the Blue Team entry of a department vehicle collision, a **Section/Precinct Captain**:

1. **Makes** written recommendations in the Blue Team entry comments section concerning whether the collision was preventable or non-preventable.
2. **Forwards** Blue Team entry to the QA Intake Unit in IAPro, which will disseminate the entry to the Collision Review Board.