


STRATFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT 	Type of Directive: Policy and Procedure	Updated: 04-19-2024
	Title: Incident Reports and Records Keeping	No. 7.14
	Issuing Authority: Chief Joseph McNeil	Issued: 07-23-2020
	Reference: 1.7.5, 1.10.1, 2.5.6 History: 04-25-23	

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for taking, completing, submitting, storing, disseminating and destroying police reports and supporting documentation.

POLICY:

It shall be the policy of the Stratford Police Department to document calls for service and investigations as required. These official documents will be filed and maintained according to state regulations. This policy shall apply to sworn, non-sworn, temporary, and volunteer members of this department. Incident reports shall mean any report submitted as an initial or supplemental report including, but not limited to, incident reports, accident reports, warrants, etc.

PROCEDURE:

Processing Of Reports

Officers are responsible for completing an incident report for any call for service that requires documentation. Reports are required for the following categories:

- Citizen reports of crime;
- Citizen complaints;
- Incidents resulting in an Officer being dispatched or assigned;
- Criminal or non-criminal cases initiated by law enforcement employees; and
- Incidents involving arrests, citations, or summonses.

All reports should be completed as soon a practical and without undue delay. The public should have access to reports within five (5) business days unless the case involves lengthy follow-up investigation.

Unless it is not available, officers shall include, at minimum, the following information on all applicable reports:

- Date and time of occurrence of the incident. If the exact time and date cannot be established because the incident occurred sometime in the past, the officer should provide the best estimate of the narrowest time frame when the incident could have occurred.

- Names of principal parties involved in the incident, to include; the identity of the reporting party, suspects, victims, witnesses, and other involved parties.

At minimum, the officer should obtain the following information on each individual named in the report if possible:

- Full name of the individual (first name, middle name/initial, and last name).
- The address of the individual named in the report.
- Age, gender, and race of the individuals involved (required for NIBRS reporting).
- Home, work, and mobile telephone numbers if available.
- Exact location of the incident. The location should always reflect where the incident actually took place, as opposed to the location where the report is being taken.
- The officer should attempt to capture all the circumstances surrounding the incident.
- The report should also include the actions of the officers, the investigative findings of the officers, and any observations the officers made. This would also include whatever information, advice, or direction officers gave to the individuals encountered during the course of the preliminary investigation.

Officers will submit all required reports for incidents/accidents assigned to them. Reports shall be completed in a timely manner and high priority reports and arrest paperwork will be completed and turned in by the end of the officer's shift.

If a report cannot be completed by the end of the shift the officer will notify the desk sergeant or appropriate supervisor as to the status of the case prior to leaving.

Shift Supervisors (Lieutenants and Sergeants) are responsible for incident reports generated by their shifts. Shift Supervisors will review and sign all reports within five (5) working days and will acknowledge completion by signing and dating the report in the area designated, or making the appropriate electronic notation in the RMS system. The supervisor signing the report will indicate the status of the report and ensure proper follow-up investigation is conducted. Follow-up investigations shall be monitored by shift supervisors to ensure timely completion by the investigating officer.

All completed signed original reports and any associated paperwork with that report will be turned over the Records Division for the proper filing and storage of the report.

Control of Reports

The Records Division shall be in a secured area and the supervisor of the Records Division shall oversee its functions.

Access to files and records stored within the Records Division shall be limited to authorized personnel.

Original case report files will not be removed from the Records Division. Reports will, under normal conditions, be released by records division staff only upon written request.

Department personnel will request copies of records through the records division commander. The records division personnel will make the copies and deliver them to the requesting officer as soon as possible.

Copies are not to be made without the knowledge and consent of the records division commander or the commanding officer.

Records information will not always be accessible to police personnel at all times. Officers may, if necessary, request records division personnel to make copies of reports for investigative purposes, preparation for court, or other lawful purposes at their earliest opportunity.

Access to the records files will be only with the knowledge and consent of the Chief of Police, Deputy Chief, and Administrative Captain when the records division commander is not available.

Release of records will meet Freedom of Information restrictions, as well as all Connecticut General Statutes. Requests for Criminal History Information will be supplied pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act in accordance with Connecticut General Statute 1-15.

Maintenance and Destruction of Records

It shall be the responsibility of the records division supervisor to ensure that records remain neat and that papers, reports, books and logs are maintained, kept current and filed properly.

No case records or documents of any kind will be destroyed without the written permission of the public records administrator of the State of Connecticut, except motor vehicle case dispositions, which are shredded.

On an annual basis the records division commander shall ensure a request is sent to the public records administrator requesting destruction of records per Connecticut General Statute 7-109, as well as schedule VII of the State of Connecticut.

Any records being destroyed that are considered confidential will be shredded or destroyed in a manner that will ensure continued confidentiality.

Arrest Reports

Arrest reports will be filed in numerical order by case number assigned. As dispositions are received the disposition card will be filed in the appropriate file drawer by records clerk.

Juvenile Records

Records and identification materials on juveniles shall be clearly labeled "Juvenile" and be kept separate from adult identification materials.

If a juvenile is apprehended in connection with the arrest of an adult, the report must be clearly identified as a juvenile record and identifying information on the juvenile removed from the adult record.

Any juvenile charged with a crime shall be required to submit to the taking of his/her fingerprints, photographs, and physical description. During the period of time that the juvenile arrestee's photograph, fingerprints, and the records of the arrest are retained at this Department, they shall be used only for identification purposes in official criminal investigations.

Upon receipt of a court order outlining the exact offense record that is to be erased or upon receipt of a list of juveniles whose records are to be erased, all copies of identification and arrest reports will be removed from the juvenile records.

Reporting Methods

Every reported complaint, request for service, report of criminal activity, or other reportable incident will be received or reported through the communications center or the online reporting system. Every complaint, request for service, report of criminal activity, or other reportable activity will be classified by dispatch using the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System.

Initial Classification of an activity will be based on the best information available to dispatch at the time of classification. The final classification of an activity will be based on the information forwarded to dispatch from the officer in the field. The officer in the field must notify dispatch of any change of the original classification. All activity will be recorded as a CAD report, CAD report with a comment, or an incident report.

CAD reports are generated and completed by dispatch. CAD reports with narrative are generated by dispatch, and include a short narrative of the activity. Incident reports must be completed by an officer on any incident.

Accident Reports

Accident reports will be filed electronically and maintained in the report management system.

Maintenance of Court Dispositions

Records of court dispositions will be maintained by records division. All criminal court dispositions will be entered into the computer utilizing the appropriate entry screen.

Motor vehicle court dispositions will be maintained in the accident records manual file.

All records of court dispositions will be maintained in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes 54-142(a).

Manual Inspection and Evaluation

The Administrative Captain, or his designee, will be responsible for conducting an annual inspection and evaluation of the reporting procedures and the report recording and controlling systems utilized by this department. The results of the inspection, including any recommended changes, shall be submitted the Chief of Police for his review and possible implementation.