


# The Tarrant County College District Police Department

## GENERAL ORDER

	SUBJECT	GENERAL ORDER NUMBER
	<b>TRAFFIC CRASH INVESTIGATION</b>	<b>317.00</b>
	CALEA STANDARDS	EFFECTIVE DATE
	<b>61.1.5k, 61.2.1, 61.2.2, 61.2.3, 61.2.4, 83.2.6</b>	<b>December 15, 2021</b>
	APPROVAL	REVISION DATE
	<b>Shaun Williams, Chief of Police</b>	<b>November 29, 2021</b>
		PAGES
		<b>5</b>

**Policy Statement** - It is the policy of the Tarrant County College Police Department to provide crash investigations for the District Community and visitors to the campus. Officers will make every effort to assist involved parties with each crash to the fullest extent required by law.

**Purpose** - To establish uniform procedures and provide guidelines for investigating and reporting traffic crashes occurring on District property. There is no statutory requirement to work a crash on private property, a private drive or parking lot where a fee is charged. Crashes which occur entirely in a Business or Government owned parking lot which is open to the public **MAY** be investigated.

### 317.01 - ON-SCENE RESPONSE AND INVESTIGATION

#### A. Definitions:

1. Parking Lot Way/Trafficway – A parking lot way is a land way which is used primarily for vehicle circulation within parking lots and for vehicular access to parking lot aisles. Parking lot ways in parking lots open to the public are trafficways.
2. Parking Lot – An area used primarily for parking road vehicles. When paved and marked, it commonly includes the following areas:
  - a. Parking stalls – Areas reserved primarily for parked road vehicles.
  - b. Parking lot aisles – Areas used primarily for vehicular access to parking stalls. Parking lot aisles are not Parking Lot Ways or Trafficways.

#### B. Response.

1. This department will respond to the scene of traffic crashes occurring on District property and on city streets adjacent to the campus, (when requested or no other Police presence has been established) including but not limited to the following:
  - a. Death or injury A 61.2.2 a.
  - b. Property damage
  - c. Hit and run A 61.2.2 b.
  - d. Impairment due to alcohol or drugs A 61.2.2 c.
  - e. Hazardous materials A 61.2.2 e.
  - f. Damage to public vehicles or property A 61.2.2 d.

- g. Disturbance between principals A 61.2.2 f.
- h. Major traffic congestion as a result of the crash A 61.2.2 g.
- i. Damage to vehicles to the extent towing is required A 61.2.2 h.

2. An officer who is dispatched to or otherwise arrives at the scene of a crash, where the property damage is minimal, and there are no or visible/reported injuries and the involved vehicles do not require towing:

- a. establish control over the scene;
- b. distribute state courtesy forms, if applicable, to each driver;
- c. supervise exchange of liability insurance information;
- d. supervise exchange of personal contact information;
- e. remove vehicles and debris from District property; and
- f. record details of the crash ie. driver(s)/vehicle(s) information and financial responsibility notations in CAD.

C. **Crash Investigation and Reporting Criteria.** Police officers will investigate traffic crashes that meet criteria established by the department and that occur on District property. A CR-3 is required for items 1-7, if the accident occurs in an area that fits the definition of a "Trafficway" or "Parking Lot Way" (see definitions in A, 1 and 2 of this order). This department requires investigation and reports of all crashes as follows:

A 83.2.6

- 1. Injury or Death to include HIT & RUN - Offense Report; Citation; Any required state supplement  
A 61.2.1 a.
- 2. Damage to District property - Incident or Offense Report. A 61.2.1 b.
- 3. Towing of one or more vehicles involved - A 61.2.1 b.
- 4. Damage and both parties do not wish a report – State Courtesy Form(s)  
A 61.2.1 b.
- 5. Duty Upon Striking Unattended Vehicle - Offense Report - Citation  
A 61.2.1 c. Revised 11/29/2021
- 6. Impairment due to alcohol or drugs - Offense Report; DWI paper work required in General Order 307.00; Any required state supplement A 61.2.1 d.
- 7. Hazardous materials - Incident Report; Any required state supplement  
A 61.2.1 e.

D. **Parked vehicles.** Damage to parked vehicles in a parking stall will not be investigated as a traffic accident. Damage to parked vehicles in a parking lot stall or parking lot aisle, **will** be investigated as a traffic accident if the situation originated on a trafficway resulting in damage or injury. Example: One unit leaves a trafficway and strikes a parked vehicle. In this case a CR-3 will be required.

E. **"Delayed Injuries"**. Delayed injury crash reports are not investigated. A "delayed injury" crash is one where the complainant did not seek immediate medical help or intentionally or without good cause delayed reporting the injury.

F. Supervisors have the discretion to require the completion of a CR-3, when it is not required by the State, when they feel it would better serve the involved parties. The CR-3 will then be kept locally and attached to the CAD event or related offense/incident report.

## 317.02 - ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

### A. **Initial On-Scene Actions.** The first officer on the scene of a crash will:

1. Administer necessary first aid to seriously injured persons until relieved by EMS personnel or other qualified persons; **A 61.2.3 b.**
2. Summon additional assistance (Ambulance, Fire Rescue/Suppression Personnel, Wreckers, etc.)
3. Protect the crash scene; **A 61.2.3 e.**
4. Establish safe traffic patterns around the scene;
5. Locate witnesses and record pertinent information; **A 61.2.3 d.**
6. If the crash involves life-threatening injuries or death, notify the department Advanced Accident Investigator or a Mutual Aid Department Accident Investigator and keep the scene secure; and
7. In the event of fire or hazardous materials, isolate the hazard scene and evacuate non-essential personnel. If possible the officer will identify the hazardous material involved and request assistance through communications of personnel equipped and trained to handle hazardous material. **A 61.2.3 c.**

### B. **Use of Accident Investigators.** The designated department Advanced Accident Investigator (AAI) will investigate all fatality crashes, life-threatening injury crashes, crashes involving TCC PD fleet vehicles on/off district property, and crashes occurring in connection with a police pursuit. If the AAI is not available, a Mutual Aid Department Investigator will be requested. In the event a Mutual Aid Department Investigator is unavailable, a TCC PD Supervisor will conduct the basic crash investigation.

### C. **Basic Accident Investigation.**

1. **Officer in Charge.** The officer assigned to work the crash will be in charge of the scene unless relieved by supervisory personnel, who will then assume responsibility for the crash investigation. **A 61.2.3 a.**
2. **Elements of the Investigation.** A basic crash investigation includes:
  - a. Interviewing principles and witnesses;
  - b. Examining and recording vehicle damage;
  - c. Examining and recording the effects of the crash on the roadway;
  - d. Taking measurements as necessary;
  - e. Having photographs taken if life-threatening injuries or death is involved; and/or TCC District property damage.
  - f. Collecting and preserving physical evidence;
  - g. Supervision of information exchange by each driver primarily of the required personal and financial responsibility information, distribution of state courtesy forms to each driver.(NOTE: ***if citation is issued a CR-3 must be completed***)
  - h. Assuring that adequate traffic control is established for safety and evidence preservation by using as many as necessary of the following:
    - (1) Additional personnel for traffic direction;

- (2) Flares, fuses, cones, or emergency rectangle triangles properly set in the roadway to indicate both emergency warning and lane closures;
    - (3) Barricades or detour signs;
    - (4) Closure of roadway or parking lot; and
    - (5) Removal of vehicles from main-traveled portion of the roadway.
  - i. Removal of vehicles, debris, and persons from the roadway and parking lots.
- 3. **Victim's Property.** The officer investigating the crash will ensure that property belonging to crash victims is protected from theft. The officer will: **A 61.2.3 f.**
  - a. Identify personal property (purses, wallets, etc.) belonging to a crash victim who is transported by ambulance to a hospital and turn it over to ambulance personnel so the property may be inventoried and the person properly identified at the hospital;
  - b. Arrange for the victim's other property to be left with the vehicle for safekeeping if the vehicle is impounded. Valuable items such as cash and jewelry that cannot be transported with the victim should be seized by the officer for storage in the police property room.
- 4. **Charges.** The appropriate charges will be filed for causative factors revealed during a traffic crash investigation, to include issuance of citations. **A 61.1.5 k.**
- 5. **Classification.** Crash classification procedures will be those specified by the Texas Department of Public Safety.
- 6. **Report Deadline.** All necessary reports will be turned in prior to the officer's dismissal from duty (The CR-3, Offense Reports, etc. must be turned in by the officer's end of duty, the diagram of major crashes may be considered follow-up to be completed later **if** authorized by a supervisor). If any report is incomplete, all reports will be photocopied and the copies sent with an explanation of additional needed work, to the shift supervisor. The shift supervisor will ensure that the investigation is completed as soon as possible. (NOTE: ***all CR-3 reports are mandated to be filed with the Department of Public Safety no later than 10 days from the date of the incident. (The CR-3 must indicate complete or requiring more investigation)***)

D. **Crash Investigation Follow-Up.** Follow-up activities, which may be necessary to ensure a complete crash investigation, include the following: **A 61.2.4**

- 1. obtaining available information regarding the extent of injuries for all crashes in which one or more parties is/are transported to a hospital via Emergency Medical Services.
- 2. collection of data away from the crash scene. This includes locating witnesses, gathering data relevant to establishing mechanical condition of the vehicle prior to the crash, and inspecting vehicle damage;
- 3. obtaining statements from all witnesses related to a crash involving life-threatening injuries or an crash involving death (as soon as possible after the crash);
- 4. reconstruction of:

- a. all crashes involving life-threatening injuries or death which shall include applicable speed estimates, scale diagrams, drag factor analysis, and plotting of time elements involved in the collisions;
  - b. other crashes involving injury or TCC PD vehicles that shall include speed estimates if excessive speed appears to be a causative factor, detailed but not to scale diagrams, drag factor analysis, and analysis of vehicle damage.
- 5. On authorization of the Chief of Police, consultation with experts may be conducted as necessary.
- 6. Documentation of criminal charges arising from the crash, including case reports, investigative narratives, diagrams for courtroom testimony, and related offense reports will be the responsibility of the investigating officer.
- E. **Supervisor Review.** The Investigation Section designated supervisor will review the investigation and coordinate the filing of all appropriate charges.
- F. *Transportation Code Sec. 550.068* prohibits any change in a material fact in a crash report after it has been completed except by the person who prepared the report or by written supplement that indicates the name of the person who made the change.
- G. **Non-Injury/Damage “Fleet” Crashes.** When an employee driving a District owned or leased vehicle or a vehicle furnished because of employment (on/off-duty) strikes or is struck by another person’s vehicle or property, but there is no observable damage or apparent injury, an Advanced Accident Investigator (AAI) is to be dispatched (or, if no AAI is on duty, a supervisor) to the scene. The AAI or supervisor will confirm that there is no apparent damage or injury and fully document the incident with an Incident Report. A copy of the report is to be sent to the District Risk Management Office for retention should a claim later be filed against the District or employee.

### 317.03 - HIT AND RUN CRASHES

- A. **Follow-Up.** If workload allows and the suspect vehicle is registered to an owner/address in a 100 mile radius of the investigating campus, a field follow-up investigation may be initiated. Unless the report is field cleared and documented on a CR-3 (when required per 317.01, C), the field follow-up will be noted on the department supplement. **A 61.2.4**
- B. **Suspect Vehicle Impoundment.** A suspect vehicle abandoned at or near the scene may be impounded if the registered owner cannot be contacted.

### 317.04 – DUTY UPON STRIKING UNATTENDED VEHICLE

#### A. Texas Transportation Code Section 550.024

*Sec. 550.024. **DUTY ON STRIKING UNATTENDED VEHICLE.*** (a) The operator of a vehicle that collides with and damages an unattended vehicle shall immediately stop and:

(1) locate the operator or owner of the unattended vehicle and give that person the name and address of the operator and the owner of the vehicle that struck the unattended vehicle; or

(2) leave in a conspicuous place in, or securely attach in a plainly visible way to, the unattended vehicle a written notice giving the name and address of the operator and the owner of the vehicle that struck the unattended vehicle and a statement of the circumstances of the collision.

(b) A person commits an offense if the person violates Subsection

(a). An offense under this section is:

(1) a Class C misdemeanor, if the damage to all vehicles involved is less than \$200; or

(2) a Class B misdemeanor, if the damage to all vehicles involved is \$200 or more.

**B. Follow-Up.** If workload allows and the suspect vehicle is registered to an owner/address within a 100 mile radius of the investigating campus, a field follow-up investigation may be initiated. Unless the report is field cleared and documented on the CR-3 (when required per 317.01, C), the field follow- up will be noted on the department supplement. . **A 61.2.4**