



# 300 Report Writing Policy

## **PURPOSE & SCOPE**

This policy establishes the guidelines for taking and completing police reports. It also defines responsibilities in report routing and assignments.

## **EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY**

Employees shall ensure that their reports are accurate, complete, and submitted to a supervisor for approval on time. Prior to submitting dictated reports, the reporting employee shall review the report for accuracy. Employees shall ensure that all CLETS entries and other required notifications are completed as required by law and no later than the end of shift.

## **REQUIRED REPORTING**

Unless otherwise approved by a supervisor, a written report is required when an employee responding to a call for service, or as a result of self-initiated activity, becomes aware of any of the following:

- The occurrence of a felony crime.
- The occurrence of a misdemeanor crime and the victim desires a report.
- The occurrence of Domestic Violence regardless of the victim's desire to prosecute.
- The occurrence of elder/dependent adult or child abuse.
- The occurrence of an identity theft crime.
- A report of a missing or abducted child or adult.
- Any hate crime.
- A detention or investigation of a person for W&I § 5150.
- A W&I § 300 placement.
- An arrest of any person.
- When police personnel use force against a person.
- When a person is threatened by another and requests a report to document the threat.
- Found property or found evidence.
- All incidents involving homicide, suicide, or death of a suspicious nature.
- Traffic collisions as required by this policy manual.
- Industrial injury pursuant to Cal OSHA requirements.
- Any criminal drug overdose.
- Aircraft Accident (incident report, FAA completes investigation unless evidence of a crime).
- When information is received of a nature that would reasonably require a written report for reasons of officer safety, public assistance, investigative potential, suspicious circumstances or District liability.

The above reporting requirements are not intended to be all-inclusive. A supervisor may direct an employee to document any incident as deemed necessary.

## **REPORT COMPLETION**

Unless authorized by a supervisor, employees shall complete the following reports by the end of the employee's duty shift and prior to leaving work:



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- Any report or supplement involving an in-custody and booked suspect. When the suspect is booked between 0200 and 0700 hours the report must be completed before the end of the following day.
- When solvability factors exist requiring immediate or timely follow-up action by an officer or a detective.
- Any report involving a missing or abducted adult or child.
- Any sex crime report including indecent exposure.
- Hate crimes.

Before leaving work, every report number issued during the work shift will meet one of the following criteria:

- Completed and approved.
- Submitted for delay (to be completed within 48 hours or before the end of the work week).
- A manual report waiting for data entry. Only the following are allowed as manual reports:
  - ▶ W&I § 5150 Reports
  - ▶ Warrants
  - ▶ Missing Persons / Runaways
  - ▶ Bike Reports
  - ▶ Found Property Report (for items not turned over to Lost & Found)
  - ▶ CHP 180 Form

Rejected reports will be completed by the end of the shift on the day they are rejected.

### **REPORT ON HOLD**

All other reports are due at the end of the current shift; however, when an employee is unable to complete these reports during duty hours he/she may request the report to be held over for completion for no more than 48 hours after the end of the duty shift on which the original incident was handled. The hold-over request shall be made by submitting a "Report on Hold" form to the on-duty supervisor. When a report is held over for completion, the employee shall ensure all entries into CLETS and other similar notification are completed as required by law and on the same shift the incident was investigated. When a "Report on Hold" form is approved, the employee shall complete and submit the report on or before the date indicated by the approving supervisor, or no later than the end of the employee's last regularly scheduled duty day for the week.

### **ON-DUTY REPORT WRITING**

When authorized by a supervisor, an employee may remain out of service to write reports on major investigations. In such cases, the employee shall not be dispatched to calls for service without prior approval of the field supervisor or field commander. In all other situations officers will remain available while writing reports.



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### **CANCELLED REPORT NUMBER**

When an employee draws a case number for a report and later determines it is not needed, or that the number was drawn accidentally or in error, the employee will complete and submit a Cancelled Number Report form before the end of shift.

### **SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITY**

Supervisors or their designee(s) shall review all reports for content, accuracy, grammar, and timeliness of submission. When corrections are necessary, the reviewer will return the report to the employee for correction. The reviewer will ensure that any report returned for correction is corrected and processed in a timely manner. Supervisors are responsible for the reconciliation of case numbers with reports issued or assigned to their staff in the ARMS or CARS system. Supervisors will know the status of reports in the status binder for employees they supervise. When a report is not accessible in the system, the supervisor will submit a request to the Assistant to the Chief of Police and/or IT for assistance.

### **MANAGER RESPONSIBILITY**

The Chief of Police or designee shall be responsible for the weekly monitoring of the report status binder to ensure that ARMS and CARS remain current and that supervisors under his/her command are properly reviewing and approving reports.

### **REPORT FORMAT**

For all crime reports, unless otherwise noted in this General Order, officers shall complete a Crime Report Form by filling in the data blocks in the ARMS database. Officers will attach an Arrest/Detention Report (Arrest Report) when an arrest is made. Reports shall be written in the following format unless specifically provided for elsewhere in this policy manual or other authorized Department procedures:

- **ADDITIONAL NAMES**  
All involved parties and identifying information shall be listed in the appropriate ARMS fields.
- **SYNOPSIS**  
The synopsis provides an overview of what the report will establish.
- **SOURCE OF ACTIVITY**  
This section describes how the reported incident was initiated including the date, time, location, nature, and how the employee became aware of the incident.
- **INVESTIGATION**  
Officers will write a chronological narrative, including elements of the crime, description of the incident, any investigative steps taken, and a summary of any obtained statements. Officers will include a detailed description of the scene when pertinent to the investigation and draw a diagram and or include photographs when necessary. Officers shall include information regarding any evidence observed or seized. The narrative should also include the completion of an area check consisting of the locations checked and the parties contacted. The Investigation section of the narrative will be divided into the following four subsections, which need not be titled:



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- **Initial Observations/Actions of the Officer.** This segment should describe the actions or conditions perceived at the time of the officer's arrival at the scene and the investigative actions taken by the officer.
  - **Summary of Statements.** Statement summaries shall accurately convey all pertinent information that could establish elements of the crime, MO, description and location of suspects and/or suspect vehicles, presence or absence of evidence, and any other relevant information. When multiple statements are obtained each shall be complete and stand-alone from the summary of others.
  - **Examination Completed by Officer.** This segment shall include a detailed description of the methods and results of the officer's examination of the scene and his/her efforts to locate and identify evidence, validate or corroborate statements, and additional information germane to the investigation not already covered.
  - **Conclusions and Deductions.** This segment provides an analysis, explanation, or reconstruction of the investigated incident and summarizes the circumstances and sequence of events to clearly establish the elements of the crime or circumstances of the incident investigated. This section shall include the summary and/or status of actions taken by the officer including, but not limited to the following: the disposition of evidence, the suspect(s) vehicle, and/or involved property; the status of suspects, victims, witnesses, etc.; notification of other parties; the relationship to other cases.
- **FOLLOW-UP**

Officers will list any follow-up to be completed and when and by whom it will be attempted. This shall include mailing addresses and specific information pertaining to where a report should be forwarded.
  - **DISPOSITION**

Officers will indicate one of the following applicable dispositions at the beginning of the ARMS report:

    - **OPEN – WORKABLE**
      - Follow-up pending (list or indicate the planned follow-up).
      - Pending the District Attorney's office review (no arrests).
    - **OPEN – SUSPENDED**
      - Case is complete, nothing can be done, all leads are exhausted and the case remains unsolved.
      - Counter reports, no further investigation possible due to lack of investigative leads.
    - **CLEARED – Arrest Adult**
      - Arrest is made of an adult and the case is completed.
    - **CLEARED – Arrest Juvenile**
      - Arrest is made of a juvenile and the case is completed.
    - **CLEARED – No Arrest Adult**



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- Case is completed pending the District Attorney's Office review (no arrests).
- Case is complete no arrest made (no charges requested).
- The suspect is identified but unable to be prosecuted.

### **CLEARED – No Arrest Juvenile**

- Case is completed pending the District Attorney's Office review (no arrests).
- Case is complete no arrest made (no charges requested).
- The suspect is identified but unable to be prosecuted.

### **CLEARED – UNFOUNDED**

- Complaint is false or baseless.
- No offense occurred or was attempted.

### **CLOSED – Information Only**

- No further police action required
- Found Property, Mental Health Case, Campus Incident, etc.

## **PROPERTY REPORTS**

When using a property report form to list property, officers shall detail each item as accurately as possible to aid in comparing property to items listed in property reports. Property report forms will be attached to a report to document the following:

- Booking of evidence.
- Listing of found property.
- Listing of items seized for safekeeping.

## **MISDEMEANOR ARREST REPORTS**

Officers may write a short narrative on the back of the citation or write an arrest report in ARMS using the format outlined above for misdemeanor arrest reports.

## **RECORDED STATEMENTS**

Recorded statements shall be taken when possible for crimes of violence, when an arrest occurs or is anticipated, and in the investigation of all serious felonies. Officers should ensure that statements are audible and contain all necessary elements. Officers shall book into evidence all recordings taken during criminal investigations.