



Jeffrey R. Gahler,
Sheriff

HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

Agency Vehicle Crashes

Distribution:	All Personnel	Index:	ADM 0602
Responsible Unit:	Planning and Research Division	Rescinds:	
DLI Program:		MD Code:	

Issued:	10/01/16	Revised:	N/A	Reviewed:	09/02/16	Next Review:	09/02/17
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1. Purpose

To provide Harford County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) employees with guidance on the proper procedures to follow when vehicles owned or leased by the HCSO or Harford County are being operated by HCSO personnel and involved in motor vehicle crashes.

2. Policy

All motor vehicle crashes of vehicles owned or leased by the HCSO or Harford County that are operated by HCSO personnel will be reported and investigated.

3. Procedures

A. Required Notifications

- Any crash involving a HCSO or Harford County vehicle will be reported immediately by the employee involved or by another employee should the employee involved be incapacitated.
 - Crashes occurring within Harford County will be reported to the precinct in the area of occurrence.
 - Crashes occurring outside of Harford County will be reported to the primary law enforcement agency or the State Police Barrack in the area of occurrence and the nearest HCSO precinct.
- The supervisor on-duty at the precinct receiving an initial crash notification will ensure that the involved employee's commander is immediately notified

B. Division Commander Responsibilities

- Unless impractical, the Division Commander or designee of the involved employee will respond to all Agency vehicle crashes involving serious injury, a fatality or significant property damage.
- The Division Commander or designee will be responsible for notifying the employee's Bureau Commander who will then notify the Colonel and Sheriff.
- The Division Commander or designee will assign an investigator to supplement allied resources for all crashes occurring outside Harford County.

4. The Division Commander or designee will notify the HCSO Office of Media and Public Relations.

C. Investigations

1. Initial Investigation

- a. Crashes occurring within Harford County will be investigated by a deputy from the HCSO precinct responsible for the area of occurrence.
 - (i) The investigation should be handled by a supervisor.
 - (ii) If a supervisor is unavailable, the duty officer will make a determination as to the most appropriate deputy to handle the investigation.
 - b. Crashes occurring in Baltimore City will be investigated by the Baltimore Police Department (BPD); upon notification, the employee's supervisor or precinct duty officer will ensure that the BPD has been notified and a request for an investigation is made.
 - c. Crashes occurring outside of Harford County will be investigated by a police department having jurisdiction in the area of occurrence; upon notification, the employee's supervisor or precinct duty officer will ensure the appropriate department has been notified and an investigation requested.
2. For crashes being investigated by an allied agency, employees will obtain all appropriate information from the investigating agency including the agency name and contact information, case number and investigating officer.
 3. For crashes occurring outside of Harford County, supplemental investigations will be completed by a supervisor or deputy senior in rank to the involved employee; deviations from this requirement must be approved by the employee's Division Commander.
 4. The HCSO Crash Team will be notified of all serious or fatal crashes involving HCSO vehicles to support the operation by providing the necessary response of an Advanced Crash Investigator (ACI) and/or Crash Reconstructionist (CR) in accordance with the provisions of HCSO policy OPS 1104.

D. Required Information and Reports

1. A Motor Vehicle Accident Report (MVAR) prepared in the Automated Crash Reporting System (ACRS) will be completed for all motor vehicle crashes involving a HCSO vehicle in Maryland.
2. A criminal investigation will be conducted when there is damage as a result of an intentional act committed by a suspect or suspect's vehicle against the County.
3. Damage to an Agency vehicle not attributed to a motor vehicle crash or criminal act will be reported in accordance with the provisions of HCSO policy ADM 0705 – Lost or Damaged Equipment.
4. The shift supervisor or duty officer will complete the Harford County Supervisor's Incident Report and email a copy to the "Dep-Property Damage" Distribution List prior to the end of the work shift.

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5. For Agency vehicle crashes involving a fatality, the investigating deputy will ensure that the required data is entered for the METERS fatal crash map.
6. The follow-up investigator of an HCSO vehicle crash occurring outside of Harford County will obtain a copy of the motor vehicle accident report completed by the department conducting the initial investigation.
7. A supplemental detailed crash diagram is required when an HCSO vehicle crash that involves death, injury or unusual circumstances is initially investigated by the HCSO.
8. Photographs will be taken in every case of crashes involving HCSO vehicles.
9. Whenever feasible, a HCSO Driver and Witness Statement (Form SO-020), will be obtained from the witnesses and drivers of other vehicles involved in an Agency vehicle crash investigated by the HCSO.
10. The involved employee will complete a Driver's/Witness Statement (Form SO-020) for any Agency vehicle crash requiring a MVAR.
11. An Employee's Report of Incident (Form SO-016) will be submitted, prior to the end of the work shift, by the employee involved or by another employee should the employee involved be incapacitated.

E. Detailed Crash Investigation File (Green Folder) will include:

1. Approved copy of the ACRS Report;
2. Supervisor's Incident Report;
3. HCSO employee driver statement (Form SO-020);
4. Other vehicle, property owner, or witness statement (Form SO-020);
5. Employee's Report of Incident (Form SO-016);
6. Supplemental Reports;
7. Printed photographs of damage and entire scene (also uploaded to digital image server);
8. License and registration information for all drivers and vehicles; and
9. Provide documentation as to whether the vehicle was equipped with an in-car camera, and verification that the video was successfully downloaded.

F. Report Flow for Completed Investigations

1. All completed Detailed Crash Investigation Files will be forwarded by the supervisor to the Traffic Unit for review, approval, and appropriate data entry.
2. The Traffic Unit will forward the approved Detailed Crash Investigation File to the supervisor of the employee involved in the crash.

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3. The employee's supervisor will review the Detailed Crash Investigation File and provide an endorsement to include preventability and any recommended disciplinary action, if warranted.
4. The Detailed Crash Investigation File will be forwarded to the employee's Division Commander, with each supervisor in the chain of command providing an endorsement, to include preventability and any recommended disciplinary action.
5. The Division Commander will review the Detailed Crash Investigation File, prepare an endorsement to include preventability and any recommended disciplinary action. The Division Commander will contact the Bureau Commander to discuss the potential for disciplinary action.
6. If disciplinary action is warranted, the Division Commander will contact the Office of Professional Standards, and follow the procedures established to handle the disciplinary process.
7. The Division Commander will forward the original Detailed Crash Investigation File to the Crash Review Committee.
8. At the conclusion of the Crash Review Committee process, the Detailed Crash Investigation File will be forwarded to the Traffic Unit to secure in compliance with the established filing and retention schedule.
9. All documents relating to disciplinary action will be handled by the Office of Professional Standards and the Human Resources Manager in accordance with established policy.

Approved



JEFFREY R. GAHLER

SHERIFF

DATE 9/20/16