I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide members of the Harford County Sheriff’s Office with guidelines regarding telephone reporting procedures.

II. POLICY

The Harford County Sheriff’s Office is committed to being effective, efficient and responsive to the needs of our communities. Therefore, it is the policy of the Agency to allow citizens to report qualifying offenses via telephone.
Harford County Sheriff’s Office
Policy #MAN2700: Telephone Reporting

2700.1 QUALIFYING OFFENSE/ INCIDENT
A. The following complaints may be documented using the telephone reporting procedure with exceptions as noted:

  Complaint: Theft under $500.00.
  Exclusion: Theft of firearm(s), explosives or explosive components.

  Complaint: Malicious destruction of property where the value of the damage does not exceed $500.00.
  Exclusion: Extensive or widespread damage or an indication of multiple, related destructions of property (i.e. multiple offenses in a sector, such as broken windshields, tire slashing, etc.).

  Exception: If the caller is calling from outside of Harford County and the crime occurred in Harford County but was not detected until the caller left the area.

2700.2 OFFENSES SHALL NOT BE REFERRED TO TELEPHONE REPORTING WHEN:
A. The offense/incident is in-progress or has just occurred.
B. The offender is known and has not left the scene or the probability exists that immediate apprehension could be made if a patrol vehicle is dispatched.
C. Solvability factors such as: witnesses, physical evidence, tag number of suspect vehicle, etc., exist.
D. The offense/incident is related to or part of another offense which is not reportable by telephone.
E. The offense appears to be motivated, wholly or in part, by the race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disability of any person.
F. The offense relates, or appears to relate to, homeland defense (i.e.: theft of official identification, uniforms, components of explosive devices or malicious destruction to official buildings or property if such destruction appears to relate to homeland defense).

2700.3 OPTIONAL USE OF SERVICE
A. If the criteria are met, the Department of Emergency Operations (DEO) call taker shall advise the caller that the complaint may be reported via telephone reporting. If the caller elects to use this method of reporting, the call shall be transferred to the precinct where the crime occurred.
B. The Department of Emergency Operations (DEO) dispatcher shall dispatch a deputy to handle an offense/incident in the following instances:
   i. A caller requests a deputy respond in lieu of his or her complaint being documented by the booth security officer via telephone reporting.
ii. The offense/incident does not meet the criteria for telephone reporting.

C. A complainant shall not be referred to the precinct for telephone reporting when a deputy has already responded to an incident scene.

2700.4 REPORTING PROCEDURES

A. Only incidents that meet the criteria set forth in this policy shall be documented via telephone reporting.
B. The booth security officers at Headquarters, Northern and Southern Precincts shall take telephone reports.
C. The caller whose reported incident meets the criteria shall be informed by the DEO Call Taker that his/her call will be forwarded to the appropriate booth security officer. The caller should also be informed that no deputy will be responding and that his/her complaint will be documented by the booth security officer.
D. The booth security officer shall document the complaint/incident utilizing the Field Based Reporting (FBR) Incident Report and upon completion, he/she shall assign the complaint a “Disposition Code 35” (Telephone Report Written).
E. If NCIC entries need to be made, the report shall be faxed to records by the booth security officer and a phone call to records will follow explaining the entry that is needed.
F. The completed FBR Incident Report shall be reviewed by the appropriate supervisor.
G. The shift supervisor shall determine the need for any required telephone follow-up.
H. If a telephone follow-up is required, the booth security officer’s supervisor shall forward a copy of the report to the booth security officer who took the initial telephone report.
I. The booth security officer may advise the complainant to mail, e-mail, or deliver to him/her, a list of stolen property including property values.
J. The booth security officer shall complete a follow-up utilizing the FBR supplement and submit it to the shift supervisor for review and disposition.
K. Stolen property listings shall be attached to the FBR Supplement.
L. Completed and approved supplements shall be forwarded to Central Records.
M. If the investigation shows that the report no longer meets the criteria for telephone reporting (i.e. crime has risen above $500, etc.) a deputy shall be assigned to make contact with the victim and conduct a follow-up.

Reference: CALEA – N/A