



Jeffrey R. Gahler,
Sheriff

HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

Damage to Agency Vehicles

Distribution:	All Personnel			Policy Number:	ADM 0602
Responsible Unit:	Administrative Services Division			Rescinds:	
Original Issued Date:	11/10/21	Revision #:	2	Latest Revision Date:	04/15/25
Latest Required Review was Completed:			08/16/24	Next Review Due:	07/31/27

1. Purpose

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

2. Policy

All damage to, or crashes involving vehicles owned or leased by the HCSO or Harford County that are operated by HCSO personnel will be reported and investigated.

3. Definitions

MOTOR VEHICLE CRASH: an occurrence involving a motor vehicle that results in damage to property or injury to a person but does not include an occurrence that is caused intentionally.

4. References

[ADM 0603](#) Crash Review Committee
[ADM 0604](#) Crash Preventability
[ADM 0705](#) Lost or Damaged Equipment
[OPS 0103](#) Body-Worn Cameras
[OPS 0104](#) Response to Police-Involved Deaths
[PER 0216](#) Penalty Assessment Matrix

5. Procedures

A. Required Notifications

1. Law Enforcement Deputies involved in a crash involving a citizen fatality, will be handled in accordance with the procedures in [OPS 0104](#) Response to Police-Involved Deaths.
2. Any crash involving an HCSO or Harford County vehicle will be reported immediately by the employee involved or by another employee should the employee involved be incapacitated.
 - a. Crashes occurring within Harford County will be reported to the precinct in the area of occurrence.
 - b. 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.
3. The supervisor on duty at the precinct receiving an initial crash notification will ensure that the Commander of the employees involved is notified.

B. Division Commander Responsibilities

1. Unless it is impractical, the Division Commander or designee of the involved employee will respond to all Agency vehicle crashes involving serious injury, fatality, or significant property damage.
2. The Division Commander, or designee will be responsible for notifying the employee's Bureau Commander who will then notify the Colonel and Sheriff.
3. 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 Public Information Office.

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 supervisor will respond to the investigation.
 - ii. If a supervisor is unavailable, the duty officer/watch commander will decide 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 involving deputies or corporals 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).

D. Required Information and Reports

1. A Motor Vehicle Crash Report (MVCR) prepared in the Automated Crash Reporting System (ACRS) will be completed **when:**

- a. The crash involves injury or death to either an HCSO employee or others;
 - b. The crash involves damage to property other than HCSO property or vehicle; or
 - c. When there is any damage caused by an identified third party (not including damage resulting from intentional or criminal acts), including damage to windshields.
 2. A detailed crash investigation contained in the Records Management System (RMS) will include:
 - a. Approved copy of the ACRS Report;
 - b. All driver's license records;
 - c. All vehicle's registration records;
 - d. Supervisor's Incident Report ([SIR](#));
 - e. HCSO employee driver statement ([SO-020](#));
 - f. Other vehicle/property owner or witness statement;
 - g. Employee's Report of Incident ([SO-016](#));
 - h. Supplemental reports;
 - i. Photographs of damage and entire scene;
 - j. License and registration information for all drivers and vehicles;
 - k. Provide documentation as to whether the vehicle was equipped with an in-car camera and/or the deputy was equipped with a body-worn camera, and verification(s) that the video(s) was successfully downloaded; and
 - l. A crash review is completed in the RMS by each supervisor in the affected member's chain of command.
 3. The follow-up investigator of an HCSO vehicle crash occurring outside of Harford County will obtain a copy of the motor vehicle crash report completed by the department conducting the initial investigation.
 4. 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.
 5. Photographs will be taken in every case of damage to HCSO vehicles.
 6. 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.
 7. A HCSO Driver and Witness Statement ([SO-020](#)), will be obtained from the witnesses and drivers of other vehicles involved in an Agency vehicle crash investigated by the HCSO.
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8. The employee involved will complete a Driver's/Witness Statement ([SO-020](#)) for any Agency vehicle crash requiring an MVAR.
9. An Employee's Report of Incident ([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. Report Flow for Completed Investigations

1. All completed crash investigation files will be reviewed by the respective supervisors in the affected member's chain of command for accuracy.
2. Supervisors, Division Commanders, Bureau Chiefs, and the Chief Deputy will evaluate each Agency crash to determine preventability using the guidelines established in policy ADM 0604 Crash Preventability.
3. Each supervisor will notify the next rank in the chain of command once an assessment has been completed in the RMS, to include preventability and recommended disciplinary action.
4. The Division Commander, Bureau Chief, and the Chief Deputy, will review the crash investigation files in the RMS and determine preventability and any recommended disciplinary action, if warranted.
5. If disciplinary action is warranted, the Division Commander will reference [PER 0216](#) Penalty Assessment Matrix and follow the procedures established to handle the disciplinary process..
6. The Division Commander will notify the Crash Review Committee (CRC) of the crash investigation files in the RMS by sharing the assessment of the crash with the CRC Chairman.
7. The CRC Chairman will enter all preventable crashes into IAPro after the Chief Deputy's final decision.
8. Completed Crash Review cases are available in the RMS for the Office of Professional Standards.
9. All documents relating to disciplinary action will be handled by OPS and the Human Resources Director in accordance with the established policy.

F. Damage to an Agency vehicle not attributed to a motor vehicle crash as listed in Section 5.D.1.above or a criminal act will be reported in accordance with the provisions of HCSO policy ADM 0705 Lost or Damaged Equipment.

1. The incident will be documented in the Records Management System (RMS) Missing/Damaged equipment module when:
 - a. Damage is from a vehicle crash and there is no damage or injury to other people or their property;
 - b. Damage to the HCSO vehicle (excluding windshields) caused by objects falling from or set in motion by an unidentified vehicle;
 - c. Crashes with animals in the roadway when no injuries exist;
 - d. There is a non-traffic motor vehicle crash which is not an intentional act; or

- e. A deputy intentionally disables a suspect vehicle.
- 2. The shift supervisor or duty officer will complete the [Harford County Supervisor's Incident Report \(SIR\)](#) and email a copy to the "Dep-Property Damage" Distribution List prior to the end of the work shift.
- 3. A Driver's/Witness Statement ([SO-020](#)) is not required for these incidents.
- 4. 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.

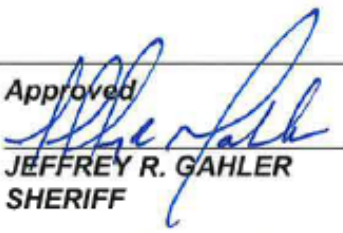
6. Summary of Changes

A. On 08/16/24 the following changes were made:

- 1. Law Enforcement Deputies involved in a crash involving a citizen fatality, will be handled in accordance with the procedures in OPS 0104 Response to Police-Involved Deaths;
- 2. Supervisors, Division Commanders, Bureau Chiefs, and the Chief Deputy will evaluate each Agency crash to determine preventability using the guidelines established in policy ADM 0604 Crash Preventability;
- 3. Each supervisor will notify the next rank in the chain of command once an assessment has been completed in the RMS, to include preventability and recommended disciplinary action;
- 4. The Division Commander, Bureau Chief, and the Chief Deputy will review the crash investigation files in the RMS and determine preventability and any recommended disciplinary action, if warranted;
- 5. Remove - The Division Commander will obtain a "T" control number from the Office of Professional Standards (OPS). The Division Commander will also obtain from OPS the number of previous preventable and non-preventable crashes involving the agency employee in the previous three-year rolling period; and
- 6. The CRC Chairman will enter all preventable crashes into IAPro after the Chief Deputy's final decision.

B. On 04/15/25 the following changes were made:

- 1. Section 5.D.1 added: criteria to be used to determine when an ACRS report is to be completed; and
- 2. Section 5.F added a new section describing the process for handling vehicle damage when an ACRS report is not completed.

Approved

JEFFREY R. GAHLER
SHERIFF
DATE 4.21.25