
Report Preparation

302.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Report preparation is a major part of each officer's job. The purpose of reports is to document sufficient information to refresh the officer's memory and to provide sufficient information for follow-up investigation and successful prosecution.

302.1.1 REPORT PREPARATION

Employees should ensure that reports are sufficiently detailed for their purpose and free from errors prior to submission. It is the responsibility of the assigned employee to complete and submit all reports taken during the shift before going off-duty unless permission to hold the report has been approved by a supervisor. Generally, reports requiring prompt follow-up action on active leads, or arrest reports where the suspect remains in custody should not be held.

Handwritten reports must be prepared legibly. If the report is not legible, the submitting employee will be required by the reviewing supervisor to promptly make corrections and resubmit the report. Employees who dictate reports shall use appropriate grammar, as content is not the responsibility of the typist. Employees who generate reports on computers are subject to all requirements of this policy.

All reports shall accurately reflect the identity of the persons involved, all pertinent information seen, heard or assimilated by any other sense, and any actions taken. Employees shall not suppress, conceal or distort the facts of any reported incident, nor shall any employee make a false report orally or in writing. Generally, the reporting employee's opinions should not be included in reports unless specifically identified as such.

- (a) Reports will be completed during the shift and not held until end of watch. Field supervisors will survey personnel for completed reports periodically throughout the watch and review each report when it is submitted. Officers should remain in the field while completing reports unless it is absolutely necessary to return to the police facility.
- (b) It is the primary responsibility of the assigned officer to ensure that reports are fully prepared or that supervisory approval has been obtained to "Hold" a report before going off-duty. Officers desiring to "Hold" a report before going off-duty shall adhere to the following policies:
 - 1. Officers shall complete the face page of any report they have approval to "Hold" before going off-duty.
 - 2. Officers wishing to "Hold" a report before they go off-duty shall obtain their supervisor's approval and add the approving supervisor's name in the notes section of the report.
 - 3. A "Hold" will not be approved for arrest reports when suspects are booked at Orange County Jail. Officers shall ensure such reports are completed and approved by a supervisor before an officer's end of watch.

Irvine Police Department

Policies

Report Preparation

4. Personnel working the last shift of their work week must submit all completed reports by the end of their shift. Reports shall not be held over the officer's days off.
- (c) When conducting field investigations involving outstanding known suspects, or requiring urgent follow-up (not amounting to a detective call-out) officers shall ensure his or her direct supervisor and the appropriate detective personnel have been apprised of the case prior to the officer's end of watch. Reports of this nature shall be completed and approved prior to the officer's end of watch.
- (d) Reports shall be completed prior to an officer's end of watch in all instances where a field investigation leads to a detective call-out. The Detective Sergeant responsible for the investigation associated with the investigation shall determine whether it is appropriate for a field sergeant to approve the report, or if the report will be forwarded to Investigations for approval.
- (e) Reports shall be prepared legibly and reasonably free of grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors.
 1. If the report is not prepared legibly, or there are grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors, the supervisor will require the officer to promptly correct the report.
 2. Officers who choose to dictate their reports by any means shall use appropriate grammar and punctuation in their dictation as content is not the responsibility of the transcriptionist.
- (f) Officers have several options for completing their reports:
 1. The preferred method for completing and submitting reports is through the use of the on-line report system.
 2. Officers can choose to type their narrative on a computer or dictate their narrative through the department-approved dictation service.
 3. Certain county, state, and federal forms may require handwriting. In these cases the forms should be completed legibly.

302.1.2 CONTACT INFORMATION FOR FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION

Critical to any continuing investigation is the availability of complete and accurate contact information for each person listed in the report. Without this valuable data in the initial report, detectives cannot reach victims, witnesses and others with information needed to successfully resolve the case. It is, therefore, expected that Department employees who prepare initial reports of incidents or crimes will include the information, below:

- (a) Home and work addresses
- (b) Telephone numbers
- (c) Cell phone numbers
- (d) E-mail addresses
- (e) Occupation – if unemployed, ask for prior occupation;

Irvine Police Department

Policies

Report Preparation

- (f) School, if a student

If the requested information is not available, not applicable, or refused, then state this on the report by using terms “None”, “N/A”, or “Refused”, in the space where that particular information should be.

302.2 REQUIRED REPORTING

Written reports are required in all of the following situations on the appropriate department approved form unless otherwise approved by a supervisor.

302.2.1 CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

When a member responds to a call for service, or as a result of self-initiated activity becomes aware of any activity where a crime has occurred, the member shall document the incident regardless of whether a victim desires prosecution. Activity to be documented in a written report includes:

- (a) All arrests
- (b) All felony crimes
- (c) Non-Felony incidents involving threats or stalking behavior
- (d) Situations covered by separate policy. These include:
 - 1. Use of Force Policy
 - 2. Domestic Violence Policy
 - 3. Child Abuse Policy
 - 4. Adult Abuse Policy
 - 5. Hate Crimes Policy
- (e) All misdemeanor crimes where the victim desires a report

Misdemeanor crimes where the victim does not desire a report can be documented using the department-approved alternative reporting method (e.g., dispatch log).

302.2.2 NON-CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

The following incidents shall be documented using the appropriate approved report:

- (a) Any use of force against any person by a member of this department (see the Use of Force Policy)
- (b) Any firearm discharge (see the Firearms Policy)
- (c) Anytime a person is reported missing, regardless of jurisdiction (see the Missing Persons Policy)
- (d) Found property or found evidence
- (e) Traffic collisions above the minimum reporting level (see Traffic Collision Reporting Policy)

Irvine Police Department

Policies

Report Preparation

- (f) Suspicious incidents that may indicate a potential for crimes against children or that a child's safety is in jeopardy
- (g) Suspicious incidents that may place the public or others at risk
- (h) Whenever the employee believes the circumstances should be documented or at the direction of a supervisor

302.2.3 DEATH CASES

Death investigations require specific investigation methods depending on circumstances and should be handled in accordance with the Death Investigations Policy. The handling officer should notify and apprise a supervisor of the circumstances surrounding the incident to determine how to proceed. The following cases shall be appropriately investigated and documented using the approved report:

- (a) Sudden or accidental deaths.
- (b) Suicides.
- (c) Homicide or suspected homicide.
- (d) Unattended deaths (No physician or qualified hospice care in the 20 days preceding death).
- (e) Found dead bodies or body parts.

302.2.4 INJURY OR DAMAGE BY CITY PERSONNEL

Reports shall be taken if an injury occurs that is a result of an act of a City employee. Additionally, reports shall be taken involving damage to City property or City equipment.

302.2.5 MISCELLANEOUS INJURIES

Any injury that is reported to this department shall require a report when:

- (a) The injury is a result of drug overdose
- (b) Attempted suicide
- (c) The injury is major/serious, whereas death could result
- (d) The circumstances surrounding the incident are suspicious in nature and it is desirable to record the event

The above reporting requirements are not intended to be all-inclusive. A supervisor may direct an employee to document any incident he/she deems necessary.

302.2.6 MANDATORY REPORTING OF JUVENILE GUNSHOT INJURIES

A report shall be taken when any incident in which a child 18 years or younger suffered an unintentional or self-inflicted gunshot wound. The Records Bureau shall notify the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) of the incident as required by CDPH (Penal Code § 23685).

Report Preparation

302.3 REPORT CORRECTIONS

Supervisors shall review reports for content and accuracy. If a correction is necessary, the reviewing supervisor should return the report to the officer with the necessary corrections noted on the report. If the report writing program was used to complete the report, the supervisor should "Add [a] Note" to the report explaining the necessary corrections. The supervisor should then return the report to the reporting officer as soon as is practical. It shall be the responsibility of the reporting officer to ensure that any report returned to the Records Bureau for correction is corrected and re-submitted for approval in a timely manner. The supervisor shall place a notice of correction in the officers patrol file noting the correction.

302.4 REPORT CHANGES OR ALTERATIONS

Reports that have been approved by a supervisor and submitted to the Records Bureau for filing and distribution should not be modified or altered except by way of a supplemental report. Minor formatting corrections may be made by Records Bureau personnel when necessary. Reviewed reports that have not yet been submitted to the Records Bureau may be corrected or modified by the authoring officer only with the knowledge and authorization of the reviewing supervisor.