

Traffic Collision Reporting

501.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Irvine Police Department prepares traffic collision reports in compliance with the California Highway Patrol Collision Investigation Manual (CIM) and as a public service makes traffic collision reports available to the community with some exceptions.

501.2 RESPONSIBILITY

The Office of Professional Development will be responsible for distribution of the Collision Investigation Manual. Traffic detectives will receive all changes in the state manual and ensure conformity with this policy. The Irvine Police Department will use the CIM as a guide, and reserves the right to make modifications to fit the needs of the Department. Any modifications must be approved by the Chief of Police or their designee before being implemented.

501.3 TRAFFIC COLLISION REPORTING

All traffic collision reports taken by members of this department should be forwarded to a supervisor for approval.

Traffic collision reports taken by Traffic Bureau personnel will be forwarded to Traffic Bureau sergeants.

Certain traffic collision reports can be forwarded to traffic detectives, such as fatal traffic collision reports.

501.4 REPORTING SITUATIONS

501.4.1 TRAFFIC COLLISIONS INVOLVING CITY VEHICLES

Traffic collision investigation reports shall be taken when a City-owned vehicle is involved in a traffic collision wherein damage or injury results. A general information report may be taken in lieu of a traffic collision report (CHP 555 form) at the discretion of a supervisor when certain criteria are met (see 501.4.3 Supervisor Responsibilities below). Whenever there is damage to a City vehicle, a Vehicle Damage Report shall be completed and forwarded to the appropriate Division Commander.

Photographs of the collision scene and vehicle damage shall be taken at the discretion of the traffic investigator or any supervisor.

If an Irvine Police or City vehicle is involved in a collision in another city, either that city or the California Highway Patrol will conduct the collision investigation and prepare the report. This decision will be made by the police agency which has jurisdiction of the area.

It shall be the officer's responsibility to notify the agency for that jurisdiction.

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Department Traffic Detective Responsibility: In all cases where another police agency prepared the collision report, a traffic detective will attempt to obtain a copy of that report within 24 hours after the collision.

501.4.2 TRAFFIC COLLISIONS WITH POLICE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

In all Irvine Police Department vehicle collisions where the damage is minor to moderate, the Irvine Police Department will conduct the traffic collision investigation.

When an employee of this department, either on-duty or off-duty, is involved in a traffic collision in a department vehicle within the jurisdiction of the Irvine Police Department resulting in a serious injury or fatality, the Traffic Lieutenant or the watch commander, should notify the California Highway Patrol for assistance. If the CHP is not able to respond, the incident supervisor will contact a neighboring police agency and request they conduct the traffic collision investigation.

501.4.3 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The field supervisor will, as soon as practical, prepare the appropriate Department Vehicle Damage Report form relating the circumstances of the incident and any damage.

Within one business day of the accident, the employee's immediate supervisor shall make distribution of the report as follows:

- Assistant Chief of Police
- Employee's Division Commander
- Employee's Lieutenant
- Office of Professional Standards
- Technical Services

Generally a traffic collision report is required, however, In the event of minor traffic collision involving a City vehicle a police report is not necessary if all of the following criteria are met:

- (a) Solo-vehicle collision
- (b) Minor damage to City property only
- (c) No injuries
- (d) Discretion of a supervisor
- (e) City Vehicle Damage Report is completed.

501.4.4 TRAFFIC COLLISIONS WITH OTHER CITY EMPLOYEES OR OFFICIALS

The Traffic Lieutenant or on-duty watch commander may request assistance from the California Highway Patrol for the investigation of any traffic collision involving any City official or employee where a serious injury or fatality has occurred.

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501.4.5 TRAFFIC COLLISIONS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

In compliance with the Collision Investigation Manual, traffic collision reports should not be taken for traffic collisions occurring on private property, unless there is a death or injury to any person involved, a hit and run violation, suspected DUI driver involved, unlicensed or suspended driver involved, or City property involved. If a CTI or officer responds to a complaint of pain or minor property damage situation, they shall assist the involved parties with exchanging of information. No report case number or additional documentation will be made.

501.4.6 TRAFFIC COLLISIONS ON ROADWAYS OR HIGHWAYS

The closest officer, as determined by the vehicle tracking system or by Communications, will be dispatched to the collision location and will be authorized to respond Code-3. Civilian employees will not be assigned Code-3 responses. Civilian Employees include:

- (a) Civilian Traffic Investigator (CTI)
- (b) Community Services Officer (CSO)
- (c) Parking Enforcement Officer (PEO)

Once personnel arrive on scene, a CTI will respond for the purposes of reporting. If a CTI is not available, a traffic officer or closest patrol officer will be responsible for the investigation and report.

501.4.7 NON-INJURY / NO DETAIL COLLISIONS

A CTI will be the primary responding unit to non-injury traffic collisions. Normal driving practices shall be followed. If a CTI is not available, a traffic officer or the closest patrol officer will be assigned.

A “No-detail” collision shall be dispatched to the closest officer as determined by the vehicle tracking system or by Communications. Normal driving practices shall be followed. Once personnel arrive on scene, a CTI will respond, if available, for the purposes of reporting.

501.4.8 TRAFFIC COLLISION "COUNTER REPORT"

A counter report is a property damage only collision reported by an involved party at the police facility. The involved party will complete the counter report; however, an officer or Front Desk employee may assist. Counter reports will be made at the Front Desk of the Irvine Police Department and may be made by one or more of the involved drivers. Counter reports shall not include a primary collision factor and are not submitted to the State of California. Counter reports will not be taken for private property collisions. The words “Counter Report” must be entered in the special conditions box listed on the face sheet of the report.

501.4.9 TRAFFIC COLLISION "LATE REPORT"

A late traffic collision report is a fatal or injury collision where the involved vehicles and parties are no longer at the scene of the collision and documentation is requested at a location away from the collision scene. Investigating officers shall determine if the collision was reported after the first opportunity to make such a report before indicating a late-reported status. The words “Late Report” must be entered in the special conditions box listed on the CHP Form 555, page 1.

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501.5 REPORT FORMATS

501.5.1 COLLISION INVESTIGATION DOCUMENTATION

A collision shall be documented as an investigation when one or more of the following conditions apply:

- (a) A motor vehicle traffic collision results in the death of a person on or off a highway.
- (b) A motor vehicle traffic collision results in personal injury on or off the highway where the injuries are greater than *complaint of pain/possible injury*.
 - 1. *Complaint of pain/possible injury* will be considered any injury not severe enough to qualify as *other visible injuries/suspected minor injury* or greater.
 - 2. The investigating officer will be responsible for a further investigation of the injuries of every party who is transported to a medical facility for treatment to properly document the severity of the injuries and determine whether the injuries justify an investigation or report.
- (c) Supporting data is required for prosecution of either a felony or misdemeanor. The requirement for an investigation should be based upon the needs of the Traffic Detective and/or prosecuting attorney.
- (d) City, county, state, or federal vehicle involved in a collision with a loss in excess of \$750.00 or when a second vehicle is involved (reporting exceptions allowed by a supervisor and/or the Traffic Detective).
- (e) Hit-and-run collisions with workable information (includes front desk reports).
- (f) Circumstances of collision and evidence suggest potential City liability.
- (g) Any involved party requests that a report be taken.

501.5.2 COLLISION INVESTIGATION FORMAT

A collision investigation will consist of both the front and back page of the CHP Form 555. Injured persons, witnesses, and passengers shall be listed on the CHP Form 555. Extra face sheets shall be used when more than three vehicles are involved. A complete factual diagram shall be attached, including two perpendicular or triangulated measurements from all tires/axles of each involved vehicle. A separate sketch shall also be included.

The following are the headings to be used for the collision investigation format:

- (a) **FACTS**
 - 1. Notification
 - 2. Scene
 - 3. Parties
 - 4. Physical Evidence
 - 5. Hit and Run
 - 6. Hazardous Material

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- 7. Other Factual Information
 - (b) STATEMENTS
 - (c) OPINIONS AND CONCLUSION
 - 1. Summary
 - 2. Area of Impact
 - 3. Intoxication
 - 4. Cause
 - (d) RECOMMENDATIONS

501.5.3 COLLISION REPORT DOCUMENTATION

A collision should be documented as a report any time the conditions for a complete investigation are not met. A report should be completed under the following circumstances:

- (a) A non-injury or confirmed *complaint of pain/possible injury collision* on a highway.
- (b) A late-reported injury collision unless otherwise directed by the on-duty supervisor. A late-reported fatal collision shall be documented as an investigation.
- (c) Hit-and-run collisions where there is no workable information.
- (d) Any involved party requests that a report be taken.

501.5.4 COLLISION REPORT FORMAT

A collision report will consist of both the front and back page of the CHP Form 555. Injured, witnesses, and passengers shall be listed on the CHP Form 555. Extra face sheets shall be used when more than three vehicles are involved. A sketch shall be drawn and shall reflect the reporting officer's opinion of how the collision occurred.

The following are the headings to be used for the collision report format:

- (a) NOTIFICATION
- (b) STATEMENTS
- (c) SUMMARY
- (d) AREA OF IMPACT
- (e) CAUSE

If the collision is DUI related, information relevant to the DUI should be added to the report before the "Cause" section.

501.5.5 COLLISION REPORT NOTIFICATION

During the course of the report or investigation, the reporting officer shall provide the collision report information to those involved parties who are not incapacitated, including the officer's name, report case number and, if applicable, the location where the involved party's vehicle was towed.

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501.6 NOTIFICATION OF TRAFFIC BUREAU SUPERVISION

In the event of a serious injury or death related traffic collision, the watch commander shall notify the Traffic Lieutenant to relate the circumstances of the traffic collision and seek assistance from the Traffic Bureau. In the absence of a Traffic Lieutenant, the watch commander or any supervisor may assign a CTI or patrol officer to investigate the traffic collision if Traffic personnel are unable to respond.