

Report Preparation

344.1 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. Report writing is the subject of substantial formalized training and on-the-job training.

344.1.1 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.

344.2 REQUIRED REPORTING

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

344.2.1 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

Alameda Police Department

Alameda Police Department Policy Manual

Report Preparation

3. Child Abuse Policy
4. [Senior and Disability Victimization](#) Policy
5. Hate Crimes Policy
6. Suspicious Activity Reporting Policy

- (e) All misdemeanor crimes where the victim desires a report

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

344.2.2 NON-CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

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

- (a) Anytime an officer points a firearm at any person
- (b) Any use of force against any person by a member of this [department/office] (see the Use of Force Policy)
- (c) Any firearm discharge (see the Firearms Policy)
- (d) Anytime a person is reported missing, regardless of jurisdiction (see the Missing Persons Policy)
- (e) Any found property or found evidence
- (f) Any traffic collisions above the minimum reporting level (see Traffic Collision Reporting Policy)
- (g) Suspicious incidents that may indicate a potential for crimes against children or that a child's safety is in jeopardy
- (h) All protective custody detentions
- (i) Suspicious incidents that may place the public or others at risk
- (j) Whenever the employee believes the circumstances should be documented or at the direction of a supervisor

344.2.3 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.

Alameda Police Department

Alameda Police Department Policy Manual

Report Preparation

- (d) Unattended deaths (No physician or qualified hospice care in the 20 days preceding death).
- (e) Found dead bodies or body parts.

344.2.4 INJURY OR DAMAGE BY CITY PERSONNEL

Miscellaneous 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.

344.2.5 MISCELLANEOUS INJURIES

Any injury that is reported to this [department/office] 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.

344.2.6 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 Section shall notify the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) of the incident as required by CDPH (Penal Code § 23685).

344.2.7 ALTERNATE REPORTING FOR VICTIMS

Reports that may be submitted by the public via online or other self-completed reporting processes include:

- (a) Lost property.
- (b) Misdemeanor thefts of property, other than firearms or materials that threaten public safety, when there is no suspect information, serial number or ability to trace the item.
 - 1. Misdemeanor thefts of cellular telephones may be reported even though they have a serial number.
- (c) Misdemeanor vandalism with no suspect information and no hate crime implications.
- (d) Vehicle burglaries with no suspect information or evidence.
- (e) Stolen vehicle attempts with no suspect information or evidence.
- (f) Annoying telephone calls with no suspect information.
- (g) Identity theft without an identifiable suspect.

Alameda Police Department

Alameda Police Department Policy Manual

Report Preparation

- (h) Online or email fraud solicitations without an identifiable suspect and if the financial loss classifies the crime as a misdemeanor.
- (i) Hit-and-run vehicle collisions with no suspect or suspect vehicle.
- (j) Supplemental property lists.

Members at the scene of one of the above incidents should not refer the reporting party to an alternate means of reporting without authorization from a supervisor. Members may refer victims to online victim assistance programs (e.g., Federal Communications Commission (FCC) website for identity theft, Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) website for computer crimes).

344.3 GENERAL POLICY OF EXPEDITIOUS REPORTING

In general, all officers and supervisors shall act with promptness and efficiency in the preparation and processing of all reports. An incomplete report, unorganized reports or reports delayed without supervisory approval are not acceptable. Reports shall be processed according to established priorities or according to special priority necessary under exceptional circumstances.

344.3.1 GENERAL USE OF OTHER HANDWRITTEN FORMS

County, state and federal agency forms may be block printed as appropriate. In general, the form itself may make the requirement for typing apparent.

344.3.2 TELEPHONE REPORTS

- (a) **PURPOSE AND SCOPE** - It is the policy of the department that authorized personnel may obtain information by telephone for the purpose of completing a written report. This method of obtaining information is only acceptable when the incident being reported meets the below criteria:
 - 1. Crimes in progress or having just occurred require a police response.
 - 2. Phone reports will only be taken if the incident being reported is "cold" in nature and rapid response by a police unit would not aid in the apprehension of the suspect or in securing evidence at the scene.
 - 3. Incidents with suspects or additional follow-up investigation will not be taken by telephone.
- (b) **PROCEDURE** - The following circumstances require dispatching of a field unit, even if the incident would otherwise qualify as a phone report:
 - 1. When a crime is in progress or has just occurred, and police presence may result in the apprehension of the suspect.
 - 2. When police presence is likely to prevent property damage or personal injury.
 - 3. When there is need to process or collect physical evidence.

Alameda Police Department

Alameda Police Department Policy Manual

Report Preparation

4. When the incident requires on-the-scene preliminary investigation, i.e., for serious injury, loss items of significant value or sensitivity, and when there are investigative leads requiring immediate attention.
 5. When the citizen insists on the presence of an officer.
- (c) **QUALIFYING REPORTS** - If the police purpose would be better served by sending an officer to the scene to investigate, one will be sent. This decision will be made by the Patrol Sergeant. The following types of incidents may qualify as phone reports, if an authorized person is available to handle:
1. Misdemeanor crimes against property.
 2. Simple assaults with no or minor injuries and the suspect is not known.
 3. Runaway reports with the runaway being over 15 years old and with a prior runaway report on file.
 4. Harassing or annoying telephone calls, unless an officer is needed for the complainant's immediate protection.
 5. Lost property.
 6. Supplemental reports to existing reports on file.
 7. Miscellaneous reports.
- (d) If in the course of the report taking an investigative lead is developed, the report taker will advise the Patrol Sergeant and the follow-up investigation will be assigned to a patrol officer to handle.
- (e) If after a report has been taken by telephone and an investigative lead is developed, the report will be assigned to a patrol officer for follow-up investigation until the investigation is suspended, cleared, or unfounded.

344.4 REPORT CORRECTIONS

Supervisors shall review reports for content and accuracy. If a correction is necessary, the reviewing supervisor should complete the ~~Case Review~~ Report [Correction form](#) stating the reasons for rejection. The original report and the correction form should be returned to the reporting employee for correction as soon as practical. It shall be the responsibility of the originating officer to ensure that any report returned for correction is processed in a timely manner.

344.5 REPORT CHANGES OR ALTERATIONS

Reports that have been approved by a supervisor and submitted to the Records Section for filing and distribution shall not be modified or altered except by way of a supplemental report. Reviewed

Alameda Police Department

Alameda Police Department Policy Manual

Report Preparation

reports that have not yet been submitted to the Records Section may be corrected or modified by the authoring officer only with the knowledge and authorization of the reviewing supervisor.