



SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT
Wyndmoor, Pennsylvania

Policy 3-02

Policy Title: Records Management and Field Reporting

Date of Issue: December 1, 2022

Rescinds: None

By Authority of:

Chief of Police

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards and guidelines regarding field reporting and the administration and handling of records.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Springfield Township Police Department that all personnel will comply with this order regarding records and reports.

III. Records Access and Security

- A. All records for the Springfield Township Police Department are maintained in the department's electronic Records Management System (RMS) and are available to all officers 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.
- B. Those records which are maintained in paper format are held in secure filing cabinets within the police station. Access to these filing cabinets is restricted to supervisors, who need a key to access the cabinets, which can be done 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.
- C. Records may only be accessed by department personnel for legitimate police business.

IV. Release of Agency Records

- A. Any release of records shall be in compliance with applicable laws, including:
 - 1. Pennsylvania Criminal History Record Information Act (Title 18, Chapter 91).

2. Pennsylvania Right to Know Act (Act 3 of 2008), 65 P.S. Sections 67.101, et seq.

- B. Any time a member of the department disseminates records to another law enforcement agency or agency that is permitted by law to have copies of reports, or by court order / subpoena, a review of the request shall be made and, if deemed appropriate, the appropriate employee shall disseminate the information requested. Any release of records shall be in accordance with applicable laws and department policies. Any release shall also be logged.

V. Juvenile Records

- A. When juvenile records are created, they are identified and labeled as such by the RMS. Paper files shall be filed separately from adult records.
- B. Procedures relating to the fingerprinting, photographing, and identification of juveniles shall be done in accordance with department policy.
- C. Juvenile records and security of those records shall be done in accordance with department policy.
- D. There is currently no requirement that juvenile records be purged when a juvenile turns 18. Any record for a charge that occurred while the person was a juvenile shall continue to be maintained separately.
- E. Juvenile records shall remain in the agency's files until expungement orders are received through court order. Personnel shall destroy the records that are ordered to be expunged.

VI. Records Retention

Records shall be retained as guided by Pennsylvania Municipal Records Act and Chapter 91 of Title 18 (Pennsylvania Criminal History and Records Information Act).

VII. Uniform Crime Report (UCR)

- A. The department will comply with applicable requirements of Uniform Crime Reporting Acts.
- B. The Office of the Chief of Police is responsible for the collection of UCR data through the department's records management system (RMS).
- C. The department shall submit a monthly crime statistics report to the Pennsylvania State Police. The review and submission of this report is the responsibility of the Office of the Chief of Police.

VIII. Security of Records Computer Systems

- A. The Records Management System (RMS) and Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) are backed up using cloud-based storage.
- B. All agency routers and other electronic transmission devices are secured in locked rooms accessible only to authorized personnel.

IX. Access to and Release of Computerized Records

- A. All full-time employees shall be granted access to records based on their position. Access to RMS and CAD, or any other database, shall be authorized through the assignment of rights when the employee's access is initially established.
- B. It is the responsibility of the employee not to release information they gain through any access rights given by this agency, unless the release of that information is authorized by law, department policies and procedures, or by the policies and procedures governing the database where the information is retrieved. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - 1. CLEAN / NCIC
 - 2. J-NET
 - 3. RMS
 - 4. CAD
- C. All employees shall comply with all department policies regarding the dissemination of criminal history information.

X. Reporting Procedures

- A. A report shall be completed and entered into RMS when one or more of the following occurs within the jurisdiction of the Springfield Township Police Department:
 - 1. Citizen reports of crimes;
 - 2. Citizen complaint or call for service;
 - 3. Incident resulting in an employee being dispatched or assigned;
 - 4. Criminal and non-criminal cases, whether on-view or dispatched;
 - 5. Incident involving arrests or non-traffic citations.

- B. All reports shall be entered electronically into RMS. The only forms that cannot be submitted electronically are the Keys Locked in Vehicle (KLIV), Disabled / Push Bumper, and Notification of Victims' Rights forms, which shall be completed by hand and later scanned into RMS.
- C. The effectiveness and efficiency of a professional police organization partially rests and begins with the ability of its personnel to accurately collect and record data. The information required for reports will vary depending on the type of report. At a minimum, all reports will include:
 - 1. Date and time the call was received;
 - 2. Name of investigating officer and any assisting officers;
 - 3. Address or location of the incident;
 - 4. Time of suspected occurrence;
 - 5. Appropriate nature
 - 6. Event and Report numbers;
 - 7. For all persons involved:
 - i. Full name, including middle initial and nicknames
 - ii. DOB and Age
 - iii. Race, Ethnicity, and Sex
 - iv. Address(es) and Phone Number(s)
- D. In addition to the information contained above, criminal reports should also include:
 - 1. Suspect's social security number, driver's license number, eye color, hair color, height, weight, and any other information available.
 - 2. Losses or damage, type of loss or damage, and serial and model numbers of items involved in the loss if known, to include a cost of loss by item.
- E. An Arrest Report shall be completed for any person arrested or taken into custody, including protective custody. Arrest Reports are also required for summary offenses.
- F. Initial Reports
 - 1. Officers shall be primarily responsible for their individual incident / CFS management.
 - 2. Supervisors shall be responsible to ensure officers properly manage their case / incident reports.

3. Officers shall submit initial reports on the same day they are received by the officer unless exempted with approval by a supervisor.
4. Anytime an officer receives a complaint, whether dispatched from Montgomery County Emergency Dispatch Services (MCEDS) or received from a citizen, the officer should consider making contact with the reporting person to make sure the exact problem is understood in order to take proper action.
5. All crash reports shall be submitted no later than five (5) calendar days from the date the crash was reported. Crash reports will automatically transfer into, and link with, RMS. Reportable crashes shall contain the following information and will remain open-patrol follow-up until complete:
 - i. The nature (i.e. hit and run)
 - ii. If persons injured and how many
 - iii. If persons killed and how many
 - iv. If property damage
6. Officers shall verify spelling of all names and addresses, and spell-check and proofread all report narratives, prior to submitting reports to their supervisor. Officers are completely responsible for the accuracy and completeness of their reports.
7. If a citizen is making a complaint about a crime or there is the possibility of a criminal investigation, the officer should make every effort to make face-to-face contact with the reporting person as well as possible victims and witnesses. Interviews should not take place over the phone.

G. Submitting Reports

1. Upon the submission of initial reports, the following reviews will occur:
 - i. The supervisor shall review the report for completeness and accuracy. Any reports needing corrections should be returned to the responsible officer. Reports should then be distributed to agency personnel for follow-up, as appropriate.
 - ii. The supervisor shall ensure that the proper referrals were made and appropriate forms completed.
2. The Criminal Investigative Section Detective will be notified, through a review notification in RMS, of any criminal report for review and assignment, if necessary.
3. Information from crime reports that may be of importance for all patrols shall be disseminated / distributed department-wide in an email.

4. Any non-criminal report requiring follow-up shall be forwarded to the appropriate employee or supervisor.
5. No incident reports shall be distributed outside of the department unless specifically authorized by department policy or the Chief of Police, or his designee.

H. Follow-Up Reports Performed by Patrol Officers

1. Patrol officers have 7 consecutive calendar days (not work days) to complete a supplement report or follow-up on an active case. After the 7 days, and at least every 7 days thereafter, a supervisor will assess the case to determine an appropriate extension period, if needed. This assessment will be made based upon the submission of a supplement report showing what has been done and why the report cannot be completed. Extensions will be authorized on a case by case basis. Those follow-ups requiring immediate action or a timelier response than 7 days will be acted on appropriately. Follow-ups will be completed sooner if required for end of month submissions.
2. Supervisors will take corrective action with officers who have open follow-ups longer than 7 days with no legitimate reason or have not acted on a report in a timely and appropriate manner.
3. The primary officer is responsible for tracking the open follow-ups to ensure they are being completed in a timely, accurate, and appropriate manner. Active case responsibility is determined by the assignment section of the incident / CFS within the RMS.
4. Follow-ups or parts of follow-ups should be considered for assignment to other officers if the assigned officer will be off for an extended period of time to ensure timely completion of the report, and will be considered on a case by case basis, by the supervisor. If reassignment does occur, this should not be considered a permanent reassignment of the follow-up. Officers initially responsible for a report are considered responsible to the conclusion of the report (e.g. Closed-No Further Action, Closed-Arrest, Inactive).
5. Each supervisor shall monitor the follow-ups assigned to the officers under their command. This should be accomplished by reviewing open reports assigned to personnel under their command on a daily basis when on duty.
6. The availability of all follow-up reports and related information is at times critical. Therefore, all patrol officers shall ensure all information pertaining to active investigations and crashes are entered into the incident / CFS prior to the end of their shift and leaving for the day. It is imperative that information is readily available to other employees when the officer is off-duty.

I. Follow Up Reports Performed by Detectives within Special Operations

1. Reports assigned to the Criminal Investigative Section for follow-up shall be reviewed by a Detective, to confirm the necessity of Detective follow-up and to ensure that the report is

complete. Reports not meeting the requirements for Detective follow-up shall be returned to the officer's supervisor, so it may be reassigned back to the investigating patrol officer.

2. Detectives have 30 consecutive days (not work days) to complete a supplement report or follow-up or as otherwise approved by a supervisor. After the 30 days, and at least every 30 days thereafter, the Detective Supervisor, or his designee, will assess the case to determine an appropriate extension period, if needed. This assessment will be made based upon the submission of a supplement report showing what has been done and why the report cannot be completed. Extensions will be authorized on a case by case basis.

J. Follow-up Contact

1. As part of an ongoing follow-up, officers will at times receive messages from persons involved in their assigned cases. Officers shall return telephone or e-mail messages by the end of their next scheduled shift. If this is not possible, the officer shall inform their supervisor so other arrangements may be made to have the person contacted.
2. Officers shall make periodic follow-up contact with victims, complainants, and / or witnesses, as appropriate, especially upon the conclusion of an investigation. This builds public confidence in the agency as well as indicating that the law enforcement officers involved are genuinely concerned about those associated with the case. Coordination should be made between the supervisor and officer to determine a plan for follow-up contact, but at a minimum contact shall be made within 15 calendar days, and every 15 calendar days thereafter, from the initial complaint.
3. Careful consideration must be given to the information released to those persons associated with the case. Information released should not taint any future testimony of the victim, complainant, or witness, jeopardize possible future investigations, or violate the law concerning the dissemination of investigative information. The victim's rights law, as stated in the policy concerning Crime Victims Compensation and Services, may require more frequent contact and access to more information than a complainant or witness.
4. Information concerning the time, method, and content of the follow-up contact shall be documented in the report.

K. Copies of initial and supplement reports are stored electronically in the department's RMS.

L. Each report shall be assigned a unique PD case number. Report numbers are electronically assigned by the RMS. This nine digit number consists of the first four digits representing the calendar year, followed by a dash, followed by a sequential 5-digit number (e.g. YYYY-#####).

M. Patrol Log

1. Uniformed officers will complete a Patrol Log and place it into their supervisor's secure mail box at the end of their shift.
2. Patrol Logs shall contain the following information:

- a. Officer name
 - b. Day / Date worked
 - c. Start of shift time
 - d. End of shift time
 - e. All significant incidents
 - f. All self-initiated activities
 - g. All self-initiated activities that do not require an entry into the records management system or incident / CFS (e.g. foot patrols, abandoned vehicle patrol, parking enforcement, meals, breaks, vehicle maintenance, and all time spent at the police station, etc.).
3. Command Staff, Criminal Investigators, and other members of the department, as determined by the Chief of Police, do not need to complete a Patrol Log unless they were on special assignment or covering a patrol shift.
 4. Supervisors shall review Patrol Logs placed into their secure mail boxes.
 5. The Patrol Log shall be used to document the activities of officers assigned to the Patrol Division.
- N. Information on any report or record submitted by any employee shall be accurate and sufficiently detailed. Submission of knowingly false information may result in disciplinary action in accordance with department policies.

XI. Handling Calls by Phone or Electronic Means

- A. Telephone reporting is an effective alternative to handling non-emergency calls for police service without dispatching an officer. The same level of police service shall be provided when taking and preparing reports by phone.
- B. Officers may take non-criminal complaints by phone. If the caller prefers an officer to respond to take the report, the officer should respond.
- C. Officers shall respond for complaints that are, or could be, criminal, however, when a caller reporting a criminal incident is located such a distance from the jurisdiction that returning to the area is not practical or cannot be accomplished in a timely fashion, the complaint may be taken by phone.

- D. The department recognizes the public's preferential shift towards electronic and online reporting of incidents. Any complaint received via email or through the department website shall be acted upon. Officers assigned to these complaints should not act solely on the electronic message, but use it as a catalyst to handle the call / investigate the complaint as set forth in this policy. The officer should attempt to respond to the location in question, or at a minimum make telephone contact with the complainant. The potential anonymity of electronic reporting gives rise for concern, therefore, the identities of the parties involved in the complaint need to be identified to perform a proper and thorough investigation.

XII. Master Name Index

- A. The Records Management System (RMS) maintains an automated alphabetical file of all names contained within the files. The master name file will contain the names of all:
 - 1. Complainants;
 - 2. Victims;
 - 3. Persons issued citations or warnings;
 - 4. Arrested persons;
 - 5. Suspects;
 - 6. Witnesses;
 - 7. Operators of vehicles involved in crashes; and
 - 8. Names of interest.

XIII. Records of Activity

- A. All reports entered into the records management system are maintained in the automated files. These records, at a minimum, will provide:
 - 1. Service calls and crimes by type;
 - 2. Service calls and crimes by location; and
 - 3. Stolen, found, and recovered property files.
- B. Evidentiary property files are maintained in accordance with department evidence policies.

XIV. Traffic Records System and Access

- A. Reportable and non-reportable crashes that are investigated will be recorded in the records management system and / or the electronic crash reporting records management system. The following information shall, at a minimum, be entered into the RMS for each crash:
 - 1. Type of Crash (Reportable or Non-Reportable)
 - 2. Location
 - 3. Date and Time
 - 4. Violations (Cited and/or Warned)
 - 5. Names of Operators and Owners

- B. Information from traffic citations and written warnings shall be entered into the RMS. This information is utilized for citation tracking and in-house statistics. At a minimum, the system will maintain the following information:
 - 1. Violation
 - 2. Name of violator
 - 3. Officer issuing the citation or warning
 - 4. Location of the violation
 - 5. Date and time of the violation
 - 6. Vehicle registration number and owner name

- C. RMS can be queried to provide information on roadway hazards and their locations. These files contain information on the location of:
 - 1. Crashes
 - 2. Traffic Incidents
 - 3. Traffic Citations and Warnings
 - 4. DUI Arrests

XV. Traffic Citations

Officers are only permitted to use the electronic traffic citation software to issue or file citations. This software has the capability to automatically upload the data from the citations into both RMS, as well as the Administrative Offices of the Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) database.

XVI. Non-Traffic Citations

- A. Non-traffic citations are not incorporated into the electronic software mentioned above, therefore, officers must use paper non-traffic citations issued by AOPC.
- B. Officers requiring paper copies shall document the citations received, in a log maintained with the citations. This log shall record the citation numbers and the person who received the citations.
- C. Citations are bundled in packets of twenty-five.
- D. The "Police Copy" of an issued non-traffic citation shall be removed and submitted for filing through the officer's supervisor. The remaining copies shall be delivered to the appropriate Magisterial District Office.

XVII. Written Warnings

Officers are only permitted to record written warnings using the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's MV-433A form.

XVIII. Verbal Warnings

Officers are permitted to provide written warnings. Records of verbal warnings shall be noted in the RMS.

XIX. Retention of Records Outside of the Records Section

- A. The following records are authorized to be maintained outside of the Records Section in other operational components of the department:
 - 1. Case files on active cases being investigated; shall be transferred to the Records Section when completed or classified as inactive. Case files shall be kept in a location that is accessible to other officers, not left in lockers or briefcases, and stored only in a location owned or controlled by the department.
 - 2. Case files required for court proceedings; shall be returned to the Records Section at the conclusion of the proceedings. Case files shall be kept in a location that is accessible to other officers, not left in lockers or briefcases, and stored only in a location owned or controlled by the department.

3. Reports completed by officers and submitted pending supervisory review and transfer to the Records Section.
4. Active Warrants.
5. Property Records.
6. Any other record authorized by the Chief of Police.