

# Traffic Collision Response And Reporting

## 502.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The public safety responsibilities of law enforcement include responding to traffic collisions, providing aid and assistance, documentation of the incident and identification of criminal activity. The Peoria Police Department prepares traffic collision reports in compliance with Arizona law. As a public service the Peoria Police Department makes traffic collision information available to the public.

## 502.2 CALL RESPONSE

Officers should respond without delay when dispatched to a traffic collision. A traffic collision with injuries reported may include a Code 2 response if the officer reasonably believes such a response is appropriate.

### 502.2.1 RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS

An officer responding to and upon arrival at a collision, should consider the following:

- The most appropriate route to the incident.
- Proper placement of the emergency vehicle to provide protection for officers and the scene.
- Potential for involvement of hazardous materials.
- Additional support that may be necessary (e.g., traffic control, medical aid, HazMat, ambulance, tow vehicles and airship landing).
- Provide first aid to any injured parties if it can be done safely, and obtain medical assistance as necessary.
- Provision of traffic control and protection of the scene.
- Clearance of the roadway.

## 502.3 COLLISION INVESTIGATION

Investigation of traffic collisions should include, as a minimum:

- Identification and interview of all involved parties.
- Identification and interview of any witnesses.
- Determination if any crime has occurred and taking appropriate enforcement action.
- Identify and protect items of apparent evidentiary value.
- Documentation of the incident as necessary (e.g., statements, measurements, photographs, collection of evidence and reporting) on appropriate report forms.
- Ensure the property at the scene is protected from theft and is removed to a place of safekeeping if the responsible party is unable to care for it. If a vehicle is to be removed for safekeeping, the vehicle shall be inventoried by an officer. To ensure that the owner's interest is protected, all containers located during a vehicle inventory shall be opened and their contents accounted for. (61.2.3.f)

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#### **502.4 TAKING ENFORCEMENT ACTION**

Officers typically cannot make an arrest for a misdemeanor that did not occur in their presence. After a thorough investigation in which physical evidence or independent witness statements indicate that a violation of Arizona law led to the collision, officers may issue a traffic citation or a misdemeanor citation to the offending driver.

Incidents involving more serious violations, such as driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, vehicular manslaughter or other felonies, shall be enforced immediately. If a driver subject to enforcement is admitted to a hospital, a supervisor shall be contacted to determine the best enforcement option.

#### **502.5 TRAFFIC COLLISION REPORTING**

##### **502.5.1 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Department members shall utilize traffic collision reporting forms prepared by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ARS § 28-669). All traffic collision reports taken by members of this department shall be submitted for approval and then forwarded to the Records Section data entry into the Records Management System.

Department members who investigate a motor vehicle collision shall complete a written report pursuant to ARS § 28-667(A) and ARS § 28-667(B):

- Either at the time of and at the scene of the accident or after the accident by interviewing participants or witnesses.
- Within twenty-four hours after completing the investigation.

##### **502.5.2 SPECIAL ENFORCEMENT SECTION (SES) LIEUTENANT RESPONSIBILITIES**

The SES Lieutenant will be responsible for:

- Monthly and quarterly reports on traffic collision statistics to be forwarded to the Patrol Deputy Police Chief of Operations or other persons as required.

#### **502.6 REPORTING SITUATIONS**

##### **502.6.1 COLLISIONS INVOLVING DEATH TO DRIVERS**

Traffic services notification: When investigating collisions where a level one (life threatening) injury has occurred, a TSU supervisor will be notified. Based upon the information provided the supervisor may have a member or members of TSU respond to the scene. TSU may take over the investigation or assist patrol officers with the investigation, depending upon the circumstances. In the event of a fatal collision, TSU shall take disposition. (41.2.4) (61.2.1.a) (61.3.2.c) (61.2.2.a) (83.1.1)

##### **502.6.2 TRAFFIC COLLISIONS INVOLVING CITY VEHICLES**

Traffic collision investigation reports shall be taken when a City-owned vehicle is involved in a traffic collision on a roadway or highway wherein any damage or injury results. A general information report may be taken in lieu of a traffic collision report at the direction of a supervisor when the collision occurs on private property or does not involve another

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vehicle. Whenever there is damage to a City vehicle, a Vehicle Damage Report shall be completed and forwarded to the appropriate Deputy Police Chief of Operations.

Photographs of the collision scene and vehicle damage shall be taken.

#### **502.6.3 TRAFFIC COLLISIONS WITH POLICE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES**

Police employees who investigate a vehicle collision involving an on-duty police employee shall complete the investigation and not issue any citations at the time of the initial investigation and will follow the below listed protocol.

After the investigation is completed and reviewed by the investigator's immediate supervisor, it shall be the responsibility of the immediate supervisor to forward the investigation to a Traffic Services Unit supervisor for review.

The Traffic Services Unit supervisor shall review the investigation and shall where possible make a determination based upon the facts of the investigation if any violations of A.R.S. Title 28 have occurred.

The Traffic Services Unit supervisor shall be responsible for issuing the citation(s) to the police employee if there have been any violations to A.R.S. Title 28, and if it is believed that a reasonable basis exists to do so. If a citation is to be issued to a police employee, the Special Enforcement Section lieutenant will be advised prior to the citation being issued.

If the traffic offense is criminal in nature, the Traffic Services Unit supervisor has the discretion of submitting the investigation to the Peoria Prosecutor's Office for long form complaint. Once the Peoria Prosecutor's Office has made a charging decision on the case, the Traffic Services Unit supervisor shall advise the Special Enforcement Section lieutenant.

If the driver of the other vehicle is determined to be responsible, a Traffic Services Unit supervisor will advise the investigator to issue the citation(s).

#### **502.6.4 TRAFFIC COLLISIONS WITH OTHER CITY EMPLOYEES OR OFFICIALS**

The Special Enforcement Lieutenant or Watch Commander may request assistance from the Arizona Department of Public Safety or other outside agency for the investigation of any traffic collision involving any City official or employee where a serious injury or fatality has occurred.

#### **502.6.5 502.6.5 PRIVATE PROPERTY COLLISIONS**

Officers will not respond to private property traffic collisions unless they involve serious injury or death, a crime, or hazardous materials. (61.2.1.f) (61.2.2.a) (61.2.2.e)

If the above listed criterion is not met, but a citizen insists an officer respond, a sworn on-duty supervisor shall determine if officer response is appropriate.

#### **502.7 TRAFFIC SERVICES UNIT**

In the event of a serious injury or death-related traffic collision, the on scene supervisor shall notify a Traffic Services Supervisor to relate the circumstances of the traffic collision and seek assistance from the Traffic Services Unit. (61.2.1.a)