



# Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department

GENERAL ORDER

7.4

## DEPARTMENT VEHICLE CRASHES AND DAMAGE

### POLICY

It is the policy of the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) to thoroughly investigate and document all crashes and damage involving department vehicles or on-duty personnel while ensuring the rights of all involved employees and members of the public.

### DEFINITIONS

Certified Chemical Test (CCT) – A chemical test as defined in IC 9-13-2-22 that tests for the presence of alcohol or controlled substances in blood, breath, or urine.

Damage to Police Vehicle – Any damage to a police vehicle or accessory that is attached to the police vehicle that does not involve a Motor Vehicle Crash.

Fatal or Possible Fatal Crash– A Motor Vehicle Crash where a person dies or sustains serious bodily injury with substantial risk of death.

Motor Vehicle Crash – Any unintentional incident occurring on a public street, or private property open to the public, involving a moving motor vehicle and other property or person when the vehicle or property sustains damage or a person is injured.

Police Vehicle – Any vehicle owned, leased, or confiscated by the City of Indianapolis and driven by or under the control of any IMPD personnel or a private vehicle driven by or under the control of any on-duty IMPD personnel.

Serious Bodily Injury (SBI) – Bodily injury that creates a substantial risk of death or causes serious permanent disfigurement, unconsciousness, extreme pain, permanent or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member or organ, or loss of a fetus.

### PROCEDURE

#### I. Non-Fatal/Possible Fatal Police Vehicle Crashes

- A. Employees involved in a crash in a department vehicle or while on-duty, within IMPD's jurisdiction, will:
1. Notify Communications of the location of the crash, conditions of individuals involved, and need of additional resources to ensure the safety of the scene.
  2. Render medical aid to any injured party and notify communications for additional support including Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the Indianapolis Fire Department (IFD), if needed.
  3. Ensure the scene is properly protected so no further injury or damage occurs.
  4. Request an on-duty supervisor to respond.
- B. When the involved employee is incapacitated or otherwise unable to complete these procedures, the first responding officer on scene will complete the procedures listed in Section I.A.



- C. Involved vehicles should not be moved unless their placement creates a hazardous condition, and is specifically directed to be moved by the crash investigator, incident commander, or responding supervisor.
- D. The dispatched field supervisor will:
1. Respond to the incident as soon as reasonably possible.
  2. Assume initial investigative control of the scene and establish incident command as needed or required under General Order 1.9 – *Incident Command*.
  3. Ensure the scene is properly protected and all witnesses are located and isolated.
  4. Make notification to the involved-officer's Commander and the District Commander.
  5. Request an evidence technician to respond to photograph the scene.
  6. Request a Crash Investigator, if none are available the supervisor will assign the crash investigation responsibilities to a district officer.
  7. Make contact with the involved employee and observe them for indications of intoxication, including:
    - a. The odor of alcoholic beverage or intoxicating substances on their breath or person,
    - b. Alcoholic beverage containers, intoxicating substances, or paraphernalia in view,
    - c. Slurred, thick-tongued, or raspy speech,
    - d. Red, glassy eyes or unusual pupil size for lighting conditions,
    - e. Poor manual dexterity,
    - f. Abusive or inappropriate attitude,
    - g. Unsteady driver balance, and
    - h. Other indications of intoxication.
  8. Administer a portable breath test (PBT) in accordance with General Order 4.20 – *Portable Breath Test* to the involved employee if there is in no sign of intoxication.
    - a. If the test registers 0.01 to 0.05 Breath Alcohol Content (BrAC), the supervisor will notify Internal Affairs (IA). A Certified Chemical Test (CCT) will be administered to the employee to confirm the PBT results.
    - b. If the test is greater than 0.05 BrAC, the supervisor will notify the Special Investigations Unit (SIU). A CCT will be administered to the employee to confirm the PBT results.
    - c. If the test registers 0.00 BrAC, no additional investigative units are required to respond.
    - d. Involved employees will not consume any foods or liquids prior to taking the PBT or blood test, unless directed to by EMS for medical reasons.
  9. Notify SIU if the employee refuses a PBT or if the officer exhibits signs of intoxication. Employees who refuse to submit to a PBT or CCT will be suspended without pay pending termination.
  10. Ensure any injured members of the public are transported to the appropriate hospital, as needed.



- a. Injured individuals who are under arrest will be transported to Eskenazi Hospital Detention Ward in accordance with General Order 8.1 – *Prisoner Handling, Transportation, and Escape*.
  - b. All other injured individuals requiring hospitalization should be transported to the hospital of their choice or the hospital EMS personnel deems necessary.
11. Ensure injured employees are transported to the appropriate facility, as needed.
- a. Injured employees should be sent to the appropriate treatment facility in accordance with General Orders 3.26 and 3.28 regarding on-duty and off-duty injuries.
  - b. Employees who are under arrest and require hospitalization must be transported to Eskenazi Hospital Detention Ward.
- E. The Crash Investigator or reporting officer will investigate and document the crash in accordance with General Order 7.1 – *Traffic Crash Investigations*.

**II. Fatal or Possible Fatal Police Vehicle Crashes**

- A. The involved employee or responding officers will follow the procedures listed in Section I.A.
- B. The involved vehicles must not be moved. Responding officers and supervisors will coordinate blocking traffic to preserve the scene.
- C. The dispatched field supervisor will:
  - 1. Respond to the incident as soon as reasonably possible.
  - 2. Assume initial investigative control of the scene and establish incident command as needed or required under General Order 1.9 – *Incident Command*.
  - 3. Ensure the scene is properly protected, involved people receive medical attention, and all witnesses are located and isolated.
  - 4. Make notification to the involved-officer’s Commander and the District Commander.
  - 5. Request the Fatal Accident Team (IFAT) and SIU to respond.
- D. The supervisor will not administer a PBT to the involved employee.
- E. SIU and IFAT will assume joint investigative control of the incident.
- F. SIU or IFAT will ensure the involved employees are transported to a hospital for a blood draw to be completed within 3 hours of the crash.
- G. Involved employees will not consume any foods or liquids prior to the blood test, unless directed to by EMS for medical reasons.
- H. IA will respond to all police vehicle crashes involving death or serious bodily injury even if there is no substantial risk of death.
- I. Injured individuals and officers will be transported following the procedures listed in Section I.D.10 & 11.

**III. Out of Jurisdiction Crashes**

- A. The local law enforcement agency will have jurisdiction over investigating the crash.
- B. The involved employee will:
  - 1. Notify communications, as soon as possible, of the crash and request an on-duty supervisor.
  - 2. Obtain a copy of the report and photos from the local jurisdiction.
- C. The dispatched supervisor will:
  - 1. Respond to the scene if in Marion County or a surrounding county. If the accident occurred in a further county, the supervisor may respond to the scene or call the agency of jurisdiction.
  - 2. Administer a PBT if the officer does not exhibit signs of intoxication and it would not impede the jurisdiction-agency's investigation.
- D. IA will respond if the crash involves SBI and occurs in Marion County or a surrounding county. IA will perform a follow up investigation on all other SBI crashes.

**IV. Crash Reporting Requirements**

- A. The involved employee will:
  - 1. Notify their direct supervisor of the crash as soon as reasonably possible.
  - 2. Obtain a damage estimate.
  - 3. Obtain any accident reports, other incident reports, and pictures relevant to the crash.
  - 4. Complete a Vehicle Accident Blue Team entry within three working days of the incident.
    - a. The Blue Team must include a description of the circumstances that lead to the crash, injuries to people involved, and damage to vehicles.
    - b. The accident report, pictures, and damage estimate must be attached to the Blue Team.
    - c. The report must be forwarded to the supervisor who responded to the scene, or the employee's direct supervisor, if no supervisor responded.
- B. The responding supervisor will:
  - 1. Review the employee's Vehicle Accident Blue Team report and:
    - a. Note if a PBT was administered and the results.
    - b. Document their actions taken during the investigation.
    - b. Determine a finding of "preventable" or non-preventable" regarding the officer's involvement in the crash.
    - c. Forward the Blue Team up the employee's chain of command within three working days of receipt.
  - 2. Complete an Injured Officer Report in the IMPD Admin App., if an employee was injured.
  - 3. Complete the officer's reporting responsibilities if the involved employee is incapacitated or otherwise unable to complete these procedures within three working days of the incident.



- C. The Crash Investigator or reporting officer will:
  - 1. Complete a Standard Crash Report (ARIES).
  - 2. Complete an Incident Report, if needed.
  - 3. Make any arrests/citations, if needed.
- D. If a department vehicle crash involves SBI, IA will complete the Vehicle Accident Blue Team.

**V. IFD, EMS, and Other City-County Vehicle Crashes**

- A. Crash investigations involving EMS and other City County vehicles will be conducted in accordance with General Order 7.1 – *Traffic Crash Investigations* and General Order 4.18 - *OVWI Arrest Procedures*.
  - 1. PBTs will not be conducted on city employees solely for being involved in an accident in an EMS or City-County vehicle.
  - 2. If a PBT is administrated to the city employee as part of an OVWI Investigation and the test registers over 0.05 BrAC, SIU must be requested.
- B. Crash investigations involving IFD vehicles will be conducted in accordance with General Order 7.1 – *Traffic Crash Investigations* and General Order 4.18 - *OVWI Arrest Procedures*.
  - 1. An IMPD supervisor will respond to non-fatal/possible fatal crashes involving IFD vehicles within Marion County and perform a PBT if the IFD employee exhibits no signs of intoxication.
    - a. If the test registers 0.01 to 0.05 Breath Alcohol Content (BrAC), the supervisor will notify the IFD supervisor on scene. IMPD will assist in transporting the IFD employee for a CCT to confirm the PBT results, at the request of IFD supervisors.
    - b. If the test is greater than 0.05 BrAC or refused, the supervisor will notify the IFD supervisor and request SIU.
    - c. If the test measures 0.00 BrAC, the IFD supervisor will be notified.
  - 2. IMPD supervisors will not conduct a PBT on a fatal or possible fatal crash involving IFD vehicles.

**VI. Damage to Police Vehicles**

- A. When an employee observes damage to their police vehicle, including pool cars temporarily assigned to them, they will:
  - 1. Mark out at the location where the damage was observed and request any additional resources to ensure the safety of the scene or to treat injured people.
  - 2. Complete an incident report if the damage is a result of a criminal act or involves potential civil liability.
    - a. If the damage occurs during an incident where a report is already required (e.g., arrest, etc.) then a separate incident report is not required and the circumstances leading to the damage should be included in the original report.
    - b. If the damage occurs outside of IMPD's jurisdiction, then the incident report from that jurisdiction's agency should be obtained.



3. Ensure photographs are taken at the scene, if practical.
4. Complete a Damage to Police Vehicle Blue Team entry within three working days of the incident.
  - a. The Blue Team entry should describe the damage to the vehicle and any known circumstances that lead to the damage.
  - b. The damage estimate, associated incident reports, and photographs must be attached to the Blue Team.
  - c. The completed Blue Team must be routed to the responding supervisor; or, if no supervisor responded, the employee's direct supervisor.

**B. Supervisor Responsibilities**

1. An on-duty district supervisor should respond to the scene if the incident occurred within Marion County or the adjacent counties.
2. The responding supervisor, or employee's direct supervisor if no supervisor responded, will review the Damage to Police Vehicle Blue Team entry.
  - a. The supervisor will document in the Blue Team their investigation of the incident and determine a finding of "Negligence" or "No Negligence" regarding the employee's involvement.
  - b. The supervisor will forward the Blue Team up the employee's chain of command within three working days of receiving the Blue Team.
3. Supervisors are required to complete the Blue Team entry if the involved employee is unable to within three working days of the incident.

**VII. Damage Estimates**

- A. Department vehicles must be taken to Indianapolis Fleet Services Riverside Garage during normal working hours for an estimate of damage as soon as possible, even if there is no visible damage to the vehicle.
- B. Estimates for other vehicles driven by employees must be taken to the appropriate entity for a damage estimate.
- C. The involved officer will ensure their direct supervisor receives the damage estimate.
- D. The involved employee is responsible for following up with any repairs required by the authorized repair facility.
- E. If the involved employee is incapacitated or otherwise unable to obtain a damage estimate these responsibilities will fall upon the employee's direct supervisor.

**VIII. Training Exercises**

- A. Training Bureau supervisors are responsible for completing the initial investigation of incidents that occur while involved in a training exercise, including:
  1. Crashes that are not fatal, possible fatal, or SBI and
  2. Damage to police vehicles.
- B. Training Bureau supervisors will follow the procedures listed in this general order when investigating crashes and damage to police vehicles that occur during training exercises.