

# CITY OF BARSTOW

CALIFORNIA

POLICIES and PROCEDURES MANUAL:

POLICE

Subject: *MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS*

## INTRODUCTION

*This procedure explains proper reporting of all traffic collisions by specifying the circumstances under which reports are to be completed.*

## POLICY

- 1. Traffic accidents on all public dedicated roadways, when occurring within the city limits of Barstow, will be investigated, and a written report on the proper traffic accident will be made.*
- 2. Traffic accidents involving other law enforcement and governmental agencies occurring within the city limits of Barstow will be investigated by the Barstow Police Department and the proper accident report made. (Governmental agencies involved in accidents may elect to investigate their own accidents in addition to the Barstow Police Department accident investigation).*
- 3. Accidents involving City property, regardless of the extent of damage, will be fully investigated, photos taken and proper accident form initiated by the Barstow Police Department. Officers shall secure insurance data from all parties involved in such an accident.*
- 4. In all cases involving school buses with or without passengers, the California Highway Patrol shall be requested through the Watch Commander to initiate the accident report.*
- 5. Accident reports will be taken on private property when a City owned or operated vehicle other than a police vehicle is involved, or when there is an injury, death, or criminal violation, i.e., hit and run, drunk driving, etc.*
- 6. Absent the above, private property accident reports are not required.*

## ACCIDENTS INVOLVING CITY PROPERTY

- 1. Whenever City equipment is involved in an accident, photographs will be taken. As a general rule, the following guidelines shall be used regarding photographs of vehicle accidents:*

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- a. *In all cases where City vehicles or automotive equipment, other than police vehicles, make contact with another vehicle or private property, photographs will be taken of the damage sustained by the private vehicle or private property and also of the City equipment involved.*
- b. *In all cases of possible City liability accidents, it is necessary for photographs to be taken of the object contacted (sidewalk, steps, etc.) regardless of whether the object reveals a defect or not.*
- c. *Where a tree limb has fallen on an automobile or other private property, photographs should be taken of the damaged area before and after the limb is removed.*

## ACCIDENTS ON CITY PROPERTY

*Accidents on City property shall include, but necessarily be limited to, City sidewalks, City buildings, structures, and facilities. These areas shall be treated as roadways under VC 21113 for investigative purposes.*

## ACCIDENTS INVOLVING OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

*Traffic accidents involving other law enforcement and governmental agencies occurring within the city limits of Barstow will be investigated by the Barstow Police Department and the proper accident report made. (Governmental agencies involved in accidents may elect to investigate their own accidents in addition to the Barstow Police Department accident investigation).*

## PRIVATE PROPERTY ACCIDENT REPORTS

1. *The Police Department will respond to private property traffic accidents and will issue each driver an Exchange of Driver Information Card. If such action is inappropriate in the individual officer's discretion, the officer may take a report.*
2. *This order does not affect the investigation of accidents involving City-owned or operated vehicles, other than police vehicles, complaint of pain or injury; death; or when criminal violations are present.*

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## ACCIDENT RESPONSE

The following section will help to establish specific guidelines for response to and investigation of different types of traffic accidents which may occur.

### INJURY ACCIDENT

If a nearby area unit is available, it will be dispatched to the location and will respond Code 3. Photographs will be taken at the scene, if needed.

### NON-INJURY ACCIDENTS

An officer will respond to non-injury accidents in a normal driving manner.

### ACCIDENTS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

An officer will be assigned to all private property accidents. Response shall be contingent upon the manner in which the accident was reported (injury/non-injury).

### ACCIDENTS INVOLVING OFF-DUTY PERSONNEL

Notification shall be made to the Watch Commander in the event of an injury or serious accident.

### ACCIDENTS INVOLVING CITY-OWNED VEHICLES

These are handled as normal traffic accidents. If there is an injury or involved, or the circumstances warrant it, the on-duty Watch Commander will notify the appropriate Department head.

## CONCLUSION

In summary, it is of paramount importance that employees of the Barstow Police Department follow these procedures. An accurate account of the incident, proper documentation and adequate identification of all involved parties is essential. Compliance with this order will eliminate many problems and provide proper documentation of the incident.

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