WEST NORRITON TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Subject: Field Reporting		Policy # 3.4.1
Accreditation 3.4.1		
Effective Date: August 27, 2008	Revised Date: December 3, 2008	
By Authority Of: Chief A. Dale Mabry	Signature: ADMabry	

3.4.1 FIELD REPORTING

A. PURPOSE:

It shall be the objective of the Chief of Police to establish procedures and provide report forms to facilitate the accurate and thorough investigation and recording of facts and investigations for all incidents. It shall further be the objective of the Chief of Police to establish procedures for the storing and filing of said report forms for the purpose of future reference, ease of retrieval and further investigation. To enter data into the computer, it is imperative that all officers be as thorough and correct as possible when filling out all reports.

B. POLICY:

It shall be the policy of the West Norriton Township Police Department to complete and file reports, for all incidents that come to their attention, in a prompt and appropriate manner.

C. Patrol Unit

1. On all reports, officers will follow department procedures.

2. Officers will put UCR numbers in the UCR section.

3. Officers will put tab area in the grid section and zone in the Patrol Zone section.

4. The report should be filed with the supervisor by the end of the officer's shift. On reports that officers will be unable to complete by the end of the shift or if all information is not available, the officer will at a minimum, fill in the following blocks:

   a. Offense type
   b. UCR code number
   c. Zone and tab
   d. Name and address
   e. Date and time of occurrence
   f. Date and time of arrival
   g. Officers name and number

5. Officer will then attach a slip to signify that the report is "Incomplete" and then place it in the regular report bin for processing.

6. Reports will be processed and then returned to the officer for completion, via the placement in bin marked "Patrol Sgt."

7. Officer will then complete report and re-enter it, via normal procedures. At no time shall an officer leave an initial report incomplete for a period exceeding one day.

8. On all incomplete reports, case folder, etc., it is the officers' responsibility to notify his supervisor at the earliest time that he has reports to finish. In the event the information is not available at the time and the officer goes off duty for a time exceeding two days, the officer will notify his supervisor and the supervisor will then be responsible to see the report is completed.

D. Supervisor

1. Supervisor will check all reports for clarity and accuracy, paying special attention to the needed computer information.

2. Supervisor will then prepare reports for processing by clipping reports together by date and time sequence.

E. Objective

1. The reporting system is designed to provide the members of this department with a concise set of instructions as to the proper report forms to be used in a given set of circumstances, as well as instructions concerning the execution of each report form. The forms themselves, and other material included therein, are to serve as interviewing aids in many instances.

F. Purpose of the Report

1. From the standpoint of members of the department, it is important that every completed assignment be recorded. This protects the department and the officer from unwarranted accusations that improper police action was taken or nothing done at all.

2. Reports are necessary to serve as the official memory of the department, but beyond this, they serve to insure that the report of the investigation is available for other members of the department who may be called upon to investigate the matter further.

3. Even more important, supervising officers must give supervision and guidance to their subordinates in individual investigations. One way to accomplish this is to record the action taken on a report which is to be turned over to the reporting officers' superior for review and approval. In addition to reviewing the propriety of actions taken in individual cases, supervisory personnel will use reports to evaluate the work performance of members under their command.

G. Report Forms

1. For a better understanding of the reporting system, it may be observed that the incidents brought to the attention of the department for investigation are ordinarily first answered by the uniform patrolman. It is he who conducts the preliminary investigation of the matter. This involves an interview with the complainant to obtain the full details as to what happened. The patrol officer then prepares the first report on the matter.

2. Many incidents, particularly those involving crimes, require subsequent investigation. For the most part, this follow-up investigation will be performed by detective personnel.

3. An officer responding to a complaint will use the proper department forms to make a record of the matter. Most reports are generated by the ALERT records management program used by the West Norriton Township Police Department.

4. An Initial Incident report is a preliminary investigation which forms the basis for further investigation. It is not a report of a complete investigation in most cases.

5. Supplementary Reports will be completed and forwarded for approval and review.

6. Some crimes and offenses will be brought to the patrolman's attention by means of an on-view report or a report made directly to the officer by a private citizen.

H. Elements Common to Most Reports

1. Completion of Boxes

   a. All boxes must be completed if possible, however, there are occasions where some of the boxes will not apply to the case being reported. These boxes will be marked "NA" (Not Applicable).
   b. Except when circumstances clearly indicate otherwise, all boxes will be completed with the required information or one of the following items:

      i. NONE - means that the answer of information required is negative.
      ii. REFUSED - means that the person was asked but refused to offer information. Use "Ref."
      iii. UNKNOWN - means there is information applicable to the incident, but it cannot be obtained. The reason should be explained in the body of the report. Use "Unk."

   c. If any particular box provides inadequate space, write "see below" in the box and record the details in the narrative section.

2. Name

a. All proper names, including names of businesses and firms, must be spelled out in full. In recording proper names, the last name is first followed by the first name and middle initial. The last name is to be printed in capital letters.
b. With common names such as Smith or Brown, include the full name, using both the first and middle names if at all available.
c. If the name is given to the officer by another person, and it is impossible to determine the correct spelling, it should be indicated in the report following the name by a question mark (?) within parentheses.
d. If the name is that of a person in the military service, it will be followed by his rank and serial number. If the name is that of a company or business, the last-name first principle does not apply and the name of the company or generally used will be recorded. For example: J. C. Penney - not Penney, J.C.
e. When a large firm with several branches is involved, use the name of the firm followed by the branch, store number and/or name.

3. Addresses

   a. Apartment, suite and/or room number are integral parts of an address. Indicate each address by street number and, if no street is available, use the distance and direction from a known geographical location. Addresses recorded in the boxes provided should represent the permanent residence address. If the individual is temporarily staying in West Norriton Township, the temporary address will be indicated in the narrative section of the report if sufficient space is not found in the box for address. For example: an address may be recorded as 365 Park Avenue, New York, New York, temporarily at the Motel Capri, Room 14.

4. Telephone

   a. Include extension number whenever applicable. Whenever a phone number is not obtainable, write "UNK." Where no phone exists, write "NONE." Indicate phone number entirely by numbers when possible: 610-539-1234, ext. 15.

5. Dates

   a. When writing dates in a report, the month will be indicated by the numerals 1 to 12, followed by a hyphen, the day of the month, hyphen and year. Example: January 1, 1974 will be written 1-1-74.

6. Time

   a. Use the 24 hour system. For example: 0800 instead of 8:00 AM. Indicate a spread of time by a dash between the first and last known times. For example: 0300-0745.

7. Witnesses

a. Obtain as complete information as possible, keeping in mind the instructions above regarding names and addresses and residence and business phone numbers. Record the sex, race and age using the standard abbreviations.

8. Tab of Occurrence

   a. This is the area where the incident occurred. This may be different from the tab where the reporting officer is assigned for duty.

9. Sex, Race, Age

   a. The sex, race, age of suspects and witnesses should be obtained as accurately as can be determined on observation, interview or by questioning of person who might be able to provide the information. With reference to victims, this information should be tactfully obtained, generally by means of observation. For example, in taking a report of a purse snatching from a female victim, the age of the victim may be estimated by the reporting officer if otherwise not obtainable. In recording such information, the following standard abbreviations will be used:

      i. Sex M - Male F- Female
      ii. Race W - White B - Black
      iii. I - American Indian (includes Alaska natives)
      iv. A - Asian/Pacific Islanders (includes Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, Polynesian)
      v. H - Hispanic (includes Puerto Rican, Cuban, Mexican, Spanish, Portuguese)
      vi. N - Non-Hispanic (includes all other nationalities, i.e, German, French, British, etc.)

      When listing race you should always have two initials, one of the four basic categories and one denoting Hispanic or Non-Hispanic. Examples below:

WN	White America	WH	White Puerto Rican
BN	Black German	BH	Black Cuban

      vii. Age - It is mandatory to list age when an incident has a victim. In the event a business is the victim, no age is required. When estimating, a spread of years may be used such as 25-29.

10. Occupations

   a. A number of report forms provide for the recording the occupation of individuals. Here should be recorded the general line of work by means of which a person ordinarily earns his livelihood. For example: a bricklayer currently unemployed would be listed as “bricklayer”. An officer in a bank

would be shown as “banker” which a bookkeeper in a bank would be shown as “bookkeeper”. If any individual is unemployed by reason of retirement, the word “retired” would be indicated. In cases of unemployed, married women, the entry would normally be “house-wife”.

11. Stolen Property and Values

    a. In writing reports of theft, an estimated value and physical description of the stolen items must be included or the report will be considered incomplete. Officer will:

        i. Obtain serial numbers, initials, or any identifying characteristics or marks on stolen items, when available.Indicate if a recovery of stolen property has been made. In case of stolen vehicles, the reporting officer, based on the information provided him regarding the auto concerned, will record the value. For all other types of property of value, a conservative estimate made by the victim should be used.

12. Documentary Evidence

    a. If a statement, worthless check, or any other type of documentary evidence is obtained, the original copy shall be attached to the original copy of the case report, and it shall be stated in the body of the officer’s report that the documents are attached. If an arrest is effected, this information shall also be included in the report.

13. Unfounded Reports

    a. If upon completion of investigation of a complaint, the responsible reporting officer determines that in fact there has been no crime or incident; there was no cause for police action; and that there was no reasonable grounds for the complaint as given, the officer will submit, following normal procedures, the case report describing his investigation and his reason for recommending that the complaint be classified UNFOUNDED.
    b. Unless specifically so instructed, officers will submit case reports on all police action taken by them whether on duty or off-duty.

14. Investigation Unit

    a. Completed report generated by this unit will follow normal procedures.
    b. “Incomplete Reports” will follow same procedures as the Patrol Unit as far as listing needed information. The difference will be that the report will go directly to the Deputy Chief for processing and be returned by clerk to the Deputy Chief for forwarding to investigation for completion.