

# Medina Police Department

Subject: <b>Accident Investigation</b>		Policy Number: <b>2190</b>	<b>Accident Investigation 2190</b>
Reference: <b>Chief's Directive</b>		Pages: <b>4</b>	
Personnel: <b>Sworn and Non-Sworn Personnel</b>			
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## **2190 - ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION**

### **2190.1 – PURPOSE**

Traffic accident investigations are conducted by our department in order to protect the rights of citizens, detect traffic violations, and to determine enforcement, engineering, and educational needs.

### **2190.2 - POLICY**

- A. Officers will respond to, investigate, and complete the Minnesota Motor Vehicle Accident Report when the accident occurred on public property or private property held open to the public, and:
  - 1. The accident resulted in a reported injury or fatality of a person;
  - 2. The accident resulted in damage to one person's property with combined damages in excess of \$1,000.00;
  - 3. The accident resulted in damage to government-owned property, (including City of Medina property) or to a government-owned vehicle.
  - 4. State Accident Reports will be filed electronically with the Department of Public Safety within ten (10) days.
  
- B. Officers will respond to investigate, and complete the Medina Police Department's Initial Complaint Form when:
  - 1. The accident resulted in no reported injuries, and;
  - 2. There are citizens requesting police documentation of their accident, and;
  - 3. Citizens are reporting the accident, after the fact, by phone.

### **2190.3 - ACCIDENTS INVOLVING SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH**

In order to ensure that motor vehicle accidents involving serious injury or death are handled consistently, the case management of such accidents may include, but is not limited to:

- A. Serious injuries are those injuries that are likely to require admission to a medical facility on an in-patient basis. Accidents with injuries of questionable severity will be investigated as if they were serious injury/fatal accidents. A field supervisor will be responsible for assessing the accident scene and any associated injuries to determine if the initial investigation should be conducted by a Medina Police Officer or requests additional assistance from outside agencies.
- B. If an accident is determined to involve serious injury or fatalities, officers should:
  - 1. Notify the Chief of Police or appropriate designee.
  - 2. Request accident reconstruction or mapping personnel for local, county, or state resources.
  - 3. Request response from the Hennepin County Crime Scene Investigations (CSI).
  - 4. Whenever possible, investigating officers should obtain a signature authorizing the release of medical information from injured persons who are conveyed for treatment. The forms are available in all medical facilities and will ensure proper documentation of injuries which is particularly critical in cases that may result in criminal charges against a driver. The medical release form should be attached to the officer's original report.
  - 5. Collect witnesses' statements and all investigative or supplemental reports from officer assisting on the detail.
  - 6. Request additional personnel or resources (i.e. community service officers, reserve officers) for traffic assistance should the event be on-going.
  - 7. Request the coroner in cases involving a fatality and complete the State of Minnesota Fatality Report.

#### **2190.4 - DEPARTMENT VEHICLE TRAFFIC SAFETY/ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION**

Proper and safe driving of department vehicles is an important job-related responsibility of employees. Injuries and damaged property resulting from preventable employee accidents reflect adversely upon the department's image as a public safety agency.

Therefore, the following procedure is intended as a positive education program aimed at reducing preventable motor vehicle accidents by correcting accident-causing driving

The following definitions will apply for reporting purposes under this policy:

- A. Accident: Any contact between a police department or employee driven vehicle and another vehicle, pedestrian, or object, resulting in evident damage or reported injury.

B. Incident: Any time a department-owned vehicle:

1. Has contact with an occupied, privately owned vehicle; or
2. Is in motion and has contact with a pedestrian or bicyclist; and
3. There is no evident damage or reported injury.

A senior officer should respond to all motor vehicle accidents involving police department vehicles or employees and the Chief of Police or sergeant notified as soon as possible.

Under no circumstances will a department employee investigate an accident in which they were involved.

### **2190.5 - ACCIDENT REPORT COPIES**

Copies of police accident reports can be obtained for a fee, per the current schedule in effect, by a person who was involved in that accident.

An involved person is a driver, a registered owner, a passenger, a lessee, a pedestrian, an officer of a corporation named in the report, or the legal parents or guardian of an involved person if he or she is a juvenile.

Surviving spouses, next of kin, a trustee appointed by law, or a representative of his or her estate may, upon written request, obtain a copy of the accident report.

With a written request signed by an involved person, a copy of the accident report will be furnished to his or her legal counsel or to a representative of the requester's insurer.

All requests made at the front counter will be handled by obtaining a current photo identification and cash or check for the fee. The clerk receiving the identification will verify the existence of the report and that an authorized person submitted the request. A copy of the accident report will then be made and given to the applicant, together with a receipt for the money received.

Any authorized person may view and copy the accident report himself or herself free of charge at the front counter. "Official Record" copies may not be taken out of the records office.

In accident cases where a juvenile is charged with a criminal offense, the juvenile's name must be blanked out before making copies for the public or other departments of the City. To victims who come in for a copy of such an accident report, inform them to call the "Secretary to Division Supervisor of Juvenile Court" and request the form "Plea for Restitution" and file with the juvenile court. The juvenile's name does not have to be blanked out on the copy sent to the State Highway Department.