



# COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

## GENERAL ORDER

**SUBJECT: COLLISIONS INVOLVING COTTAGE CITY VEHICLES**

**NEW REVISED RESCINDS**

APPROVED: *GM*  
GEORGIA MILTENBERGER  
ACTING CHIEF OF POLICE

Effective Date 8/22/2018

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### **I. POLICY**

Whenever a Cottage City owned or leased vehicle is involved in a collision that results in damage to any property, personal injury, however minor, or fatality, a thorough investigation will be conducted and a M.A.A. R.S. Report will be completed. Unless the collision is extremely minor or the collision's location poses a threat to the parties involved and/or other motorists, the vehicle(s) involved in the collision will not be moved until the arrival of the investigating officer, who will make the decision to move the vehicles.

### **II. PROCUDURES**

#### **A. Cottage City Police Vehicles**

1. The on-duty supervisor, Sergeant and/or Chief of Police, will be notified immediately.
2. The collision will be investigated by an on-duty Cottage City officer if the collision occurs in Cottage City or contract area. A collision outside Cottage City will be investigated by the local jurisdiction, i.e. PGPD or MSP. The PGPD will investigate the collision when there is only one Cottage City officer working and the collision occurred in Cottage City.
3. The on-duty Cottage City Supervisor, if available, will respond to the scene, coordinate with the investigating officer, and conduct a preliminary supervisory investigation to determine adherence to department policies and procedures. The

results of the supervisory investigation will be documented in memorandum format and along with a copy of the M.A.A.R.S. Report, forwarded to the Cottage City Commission Chair, via the chain-of-command.

4. If the officer requires hospitalization, the supervisor or an on-duty Cottage City officer, will respond to the scene and take possession of the officer's weapon(s) and vehicle equipment for proper storage at the station.
5. Photographs will be taken to depict at least the following:
  - a. Actual and/or "claimed" damage to the vehicle(s), property, etc.
  - b. Positions of the vehicle(s),
  - c. The overall geographic location of the collision to show terrain, road characteristics, sight-distance, i.e. intersection, bad curve, etc.
  - d. An overall photo of the vehicle(s) involved showing their respective tag numbers, and
  - e. Anything else that photographs would help explain.
6. The collision will not be investigated by the officer operating or occupying the police vehicle involved in the accident.
7. The on-duty supervisor will ensure that the accident report and any other required reports are submitted within the time constraints of the PGPD Field Report Manual for supervisory approval.
  - a. No report will be delayed more than 72 hours after the collision was reported.
  - b. If a longer delay is anticipated, an initial written report will be submitted with the basic available information, and a Supplement Report with the delayed information will be completed at a later date.
8. The investigating officer will make every reasonable effort to obtain the insurance information pertaining to all other vehicles involved in the collision.
9. Regardless of the severity of the collision, the Lieutenant and/or Chief of Police will be notified of the collision.

- a. If the Lieutenant is not available, a request will be made of the Dispatcher to notify the Chief of Police.
  - b. If the Chief of Police is not available, the senior ranking member of the department will notify the Town Manager
10. Since most collisions of this nature result in civil litigation, officers will not make any statements at the scene in regard to liability or fault for any motor vehicle collision.
11. When completing the M.A.A.R.S. Report, the investigating officer should list the driver of the police vehicle's station address and phone number and not a home address.
12. If the accident results in a fatality, the investigating officer will ensure that the incident is handled by the PGPD Accident Reconstruction Unit.
13. If the Cottage City officer requires medical treatment and is transported to the hospital by ambulance or by another officer, the following procedures will be adhered to:
  - a. The injured officer's firearm will be taken into custody by the supervisor, because if hospital staffs intend to sedate the officer, they will require the removal of the gun.
  - b. The injured officer's badge should also be taken to protect against theft.
14. The injured officer's name will not be released to any member of the media, on or off the record, until the officer's family is notified.
15. Towing of the police vehicle will be handled in this manner:
  - a. The Cottage City authorized tow company will tow the vehicle.
  - b. The vehicle will be towed to the Cottage City police lot and stored.
  - c. All equipment not permanently affixed to the vehicle or mounted on the vehicle i.e. the officer's personal belongings, briefcase, etc. will be removed and stored at the station.

## B. Collisions Involving Other Cottage City Vehicles

If a Cottage City officer investigates a collision involving a City vehicle that is not a police vehicle, the procedures listed in the preceding paragraphs will be followed, as well as those listed below:

1. If the Cottage City vehicle needs to be towed, the towing will be handled as if the vehicle was a police vehicle.
2. The investigating officer should encourage all occupants of the Cottage City vehicle to refrain from discussing liability issues, even if the driver of the Cottage City owned or leased vehicle admits fault.
3. Every effort will be made by the investigating officer to get the other vehicle's insurance information, including the name of the carrier, policy number, the insurance agent's name, address, and phone number.
4. If the accident resulted in serious injuries and/or serious property damage, notifications will be made as if the vehicle was a police vehicle.

## III. REPORT DISTRIBUTION

Certain pertinent information about the accident, especially if litigation is likely, must be received in a timely manner by the Cottage City Management. Regardless of fault, Cottage City Management will need:

- A. Copy of the M.A.A.R.S. Report
- B. Insurance information pertaining to all vehicles, property, etc.
- C. Photographs or Xerox copies.