
	Florida State University Police Department	
Traffic Crash Investigations		
Revision Effective Date: 09/01/17	General Order 717	Attachments: Traffic Crash Manual and Forms
Rescinds/Amends: Rescinds: 23 (11/10/14), 09-23, 14-23 (4/7/14)	Distribution: Department Wide Pages: 6	CFA Reference: 18.03, 18.04, 18.05

Policy

A. Traffic Crash Investigations Policy

It is the explicit policy of the Florida State University Police Department (FSU PD) to exercise all pertinent responsibilities involving the investigations of traffic crashes. This shall include: caring for the injured, protection of the scene and all associated evidence, providing for crowd and traffic control, identification of witnesses, completion of traffic crash reports in accordance with procedures enacted by the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV), and evaluating and notifying appropriate officials and persons.

Procedure

B. Written Reports of Crashes (Long-Form)

1. A Florida Traffic Crash Report Long Form is required when any of the following occur:
 - a. a motor vehicle crash results in death in accordance with Section 316.027(b), F.S. Any fatality as a result of a traffic crash shall be referred to the Traffic Homicide Unit of a law enforcement agency having appropriate jurisdiction. Officers of the FSU PD shall assist the Traffic Homicide Unit as necessary. [CFA 18.03 A].
 - b. a motor vehicle crash results in personal injury or complaints of pain or discomfort in accordance with Section 316.027(1)(a) & 316.066 (1)(a). [CFA 18.03 A]
 - c. a motor vehicle crash involves leaving the scene (i.e., hit-and-run) involving damage to attended vehicles or property in accordance with Section 316.027 and 316.061(1), F.S. [CFA 18.03 B].
 - d. a motor vehicle crash involves a DUI violation in accordance with Section 316.193, F.S. [CFA 18.03 D]. See the provisions under the General Order titled, "DUI Enforcement and Zero Tolerance Violations/0.02."
 - e. a crash involves a commercial motor vehicle.
 - f. When a motor vehicle crash renders a vehicle inoperable to a degree that a wrecker is required to remove it from the scene.

2. When a Florida Traffic Crash Report, Long Form is required, the Officers at the scene of the crash shall ensure the driver of each vehicle involved in the crash provides to all other parties suffering injury or property damage the following information:
 - a. The name and address of the owner and the driver of the vehicle.
 - b. The license number of the vehicle.
 - c. The name of the liability carrier for the vehicle.
3. Long Forms must be submitted to the DHSMV within 10 days after the traffic crash investigation is completed.

C. Written Reports of Crashes (Short Form and Driver Exchange of Information Form)

1. For any crash resulting in only damage to property and/or vehicles; including government owned in which a Long Form is not required, and which occurs on the public roadways of Florida (as defined by chapter 316 of the Florida Statutes), Officers shall complete a Florida Traffic Report Short Form or provide a Driver Exchange-of-Information Form (F.S. 316.066(1)(c)). [CFA 18.03 C]
2. If a Short Form is completed, the Officers at the scene of the crash shall ensure the driver of each vehicle involved in the crash provides to all other parties suffering property damage the following information:
 - a. The name and address of the owner and the driver of the vehicle.
 - b. The license number of the vehicle.
 - c. The name of the liability carrier for the vehicle.
3. If a Short Form is not completed (crash not requiring a law enforcement report), the Officer should inform the involved individuals that the driver of any vehicle that was in any manner involved in a crash resulting in damage to a vehicle or other property shall, within 10 days after the crash, submit a written report of the crash to the DHSMV (F.S. 316.066(1)(e)). The driver's report shall be submitted on a form approved by the DHSMV. The driver may complete the report electronically to the DHSMV at: <http://firesportal.com/Pages/Public/selfreport.aspx> (Self-Reported Traffic Crash)

D. Primary Unit Responsibilities

The first officer at a traffic crash scene shall be considered the primary officer and shall take charge until directed otherwise by a supervisor. The primary officer shall:

1. Immediately upon arrival, advise the Communications Section of the circumstances.
2. Protect the crash scene [CFA 18.04 C]. The primary considerations are to prevent any further crashes, deaths, or injuries; ensure safe traffic patterns; and protect any short-lived evidence [18.04 D, 18.04 E].
3. Request additional assistance if it appears that a major traffic tie-up will occur as a result of the crash [18.04 B].
4. Administer emergency medical care, provide basic life support, and/or summon EMS [CFA 18.04 A.; 18.04 B].

5. Identify witnesses and obtain statements [CFA 18.04 F]. In addition, depending upon the nature and severity of the crash, constant care must be maintained to prevent a breach of the peace by drivers, passengers, or other persons present at the crash scene.
6. The primary officer shall request additional back-up officers should it appear that a disturbance will develop or that contamination of the scene will occur [CFA 18.04 B; 18.04 C; and 18.04 D].
7. Investigate the crash.
8. Determine contributing factors if possible.
9. Issue traffic citations for those violations noted, unless:
 - a. The officer cannot determine who committed the violation(s).
 - b. The person responsible cannot be issued a citation.
 - c. The driver has fled or died at the scene.
10. Arrange for the towing of vehicles unable to be driven or whose condition renders them unsafe to drive, and, if necessary for pedestrian and vehicular safety, arrange for the removal of any debris [CFA 18.04 G]. Additional information on towing procedures may be found in the General Order titled, "Traffic Assistance Policy and Vehicle Towing/Impoundment Procedures."
 - a. If the vehicle is towed, and items of value are in the vehicle, a vehicle inventory shall be listed in the Vehicle Report prior to the tow [CFA 18.05].
 - b. Personal items of substantial value belonging to the crash victim should be submitted with a property receipt to the Police Services Technician. The receipt shall be marked "Hold for Owner" until it the items can be reclaimed by the owner or confirmed family member [CFA 18.05].
11. Officers will take precautions to protect the owner's property from theft if the owner is unable to care for it [CFA 18.05].
12. Complete the initial crash report, including witness statements and all pertinent crash information.
13. Ensure that the non-issuance of a citation will be provided to and reviewed by the Shift Supervisor prior to the end of the shift to ensure that no oversights have occurred.

E. Primary Unit Responsibilities Involving A Serious Injury

The first officer at the scene involving a serious injury shall take all necessary precautions to ensure that no other injuries or crashes occur. This shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Positioning the police vehicle utilizing all available warning lights and flashers in such a manner as to warn motorists and pedestrians.
2. Care for the injured [CFA 18.04 A].
3. Protect the scene and associated evidence, particularly any short-lived evidence [CFA 18.04 C & D].
4. Notify the Communications Section and supervisory personnel regarding the seriousness of the crash.
5. Provide for crowd control and safe/orderly traffic control [CFA 18.04 E].
6. Complete the initial crash report, including witness statements and all pertinent crash information.
7. Assist as necessary in the event that another agency's Traffic Homicide Investigator is called.
8. Not filing charges until the investigation is complete.

F. **Crashes Involving Biological and Chemical/Hazardous Materials [CFA 18.03 E & 18.04H]**

In the event of crashes involving biological and chemical/hazardous materials, the officer at the scene shall:

1. Call Tallahassee Fire Department (TFD), and EMS as required.
2. Secure the scene and notify appropriate supervisory personnel.
3. Advise the Communications Section of the situation and the need for additional assistance for the following:
 - a. Safe traffic control.
 - b. Crowd control.
 - c. Evacuation of nearby buildings if necessary.
 - d. Identification of other dangerous conditions.
 - e. Completion of appropriate forms.

G. **Crashes Involving Departmental Vehicles Where There Is Personal Injury or Damage to Private Property [CFA 18.03 C].**

A supervisor of higher rank than the participant, if available, shall respond to assess preliminary facts, provide aid to the injured, and preserve the scene.

1. When there is personal injury or damage to private property, which requires a Traffic Crash Long Form, another law enforcement agency of appropriate jurisdiction shall be called to conduct the investigation. They shall be advised of any traffic blockage or other hazards created by the crash.
2. The Chief of the FSU PD shall be notified by the chain of command.

H. **Crashes Involving Departmental Vehicles with Other Vehicles, Governmental or Private [CFA 18.03 C].** (See section L. for exceptions)

Should an FSU PD vehicle be involved in a crash with another vehicle (governmental or private), another law enforcement agency of appropriate jurisdiction shall be notified to investigate the crash. If ~~another agency is not readily available, and~~ the crash occurs within the FSU PD jurisdiction and does not require the completion of a Traffic Crash Long Form, as described in section B, ~~the Operations Captain or Lieutenant may authorize the~~ a Shift Supervisor not involved in the crash ~~to~~ may investigate the crash or assign another officer to investigate the crash. The Chief of the FSU PD shall be notified by the chain of command. If the crash occurs within the FSU PD jurisdiction

I. **Crashes Involving Departmental Vehicles with Property, University-Owned or Governmental [CFA 18.03 C]** (See section L. for exceptions)

Should an FSU PD vehicle be involved in a crash with any University-owned or Governmental property, with the exception of vehicle versus vehicle, FSU PD shall investigate the crash.

J. **Follow-Up Activities**

Follow-up activities to vehicle crashes shall include:

1. Collection of information at locations away from the crash.

2. Obtaining formal statements from witnesses.
3. Reconstruction of the crash if necessary.
4. Requesting expert and technical assistance from other state agencies.
5. Preparing supplemental reports to support any criminal charges.

K. Crashes Involving University Owned State Vehicles

When an officer has to investigate a crash involving a University owned vehicle (see section L. for exceptions for FSU PD vehicles), a report shall be written utilizing the appropriate traffic crash report form. If there are mitigating circumstances that would prevent a traffic crash report from being completed, then a damaged vehicle report shall be submitted utilizing an offense incident report form. The damaged vehicle report shall include all pertinent information, including a description of the crash, parties involved, vehicle descriptions, estimates of damages, etc.

L. Crashes Involving FSU PD owned vehicles and/or FSU PD owned property

Should an FSU PD vehicle be involved in a crash with another FSU PD vehicle and/or FSU PD owned property on campus, a FSU PD Shift Supervisor who was not involved in the crash may investigate and document the incident, providing there are no injuries and only minimal damage. The FSU PD Shift Supervisor will determine the necessity of a traffic crash report and document the incident in the FSU PD Records Management System.

M. Reporting Forms/Documentation

Traffic Crash reports should be completed using the TRACS System. If TRACS is unavailable, Officers may utilize the appropriate DHSMV Traffic Crash Reporting Forms. An FSU PD Records Management System Case number will be obtained for traffic crashes in which a report was completed. The DHSMV Report number will be documented in the FSU PD Records Management System. For crashes involving FSU PD Vehicles, hit & run traffic crashes with damage to attended vehicles or property, DUIs, or death or serious injury, a narrative detailing the incident will be completed in the FSU PD Records Management System.

Glossary

Crash—Occurrence in a sequence of traffic related events that usually produces unintended injury, death, or property damage.

DHSMV—Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles.

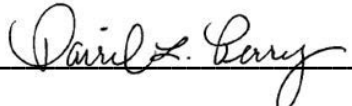
Traffic Homicide Investigator—A law enforcement officer who has successfully completed specialized training in traffic homicide crash investigation.

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Attachments—

DHSMV Traffic Crash Manual
DHSMV Long & Short Form-Event Section (HSMV 90010 S(E))
DHSMV Long & Short Form-Narrative/Diagram Section (HSMV 90010 S(N/D))
DHSMV Long & Short Form-Vehicle/Person Section (HSMV 90010 S(V/P))
DHSMV Driver’s Exchange and/or Driver Report of Traffic Crash (Self Report) (HSMV 90011S)

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