

Major Incident Notification

356.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The policy provides guidelines for officers and supervisors regarding notifying command personnel and the Office of the Chief of critical incidents. Generally, in-person, text message, or telephonic notifications to a command officer outside of normal business hours should be used for incidents which require immediate decision making from a Lieutenant or higher.

For most notifications outside of normal business hours, an email or C-Brief will suffice, which can be reviewed during regular business hours. For patrol supervisors, notifying the district or a precinct Lieutenant will satisfy the reporting requirement.

DEFINITION:

Serious physical injury or Serious injury – an injury which creates a risk of death or protracted impairment. This includes injuries serious enough to being admitted to a hospital.

356.2 POLICY

Incidents that are of a significant nature require notification to VPD supervisors and command personnel. Notification is critical to advise superiors, deploy needed resources, respond to questions from the community, and to properly address inquiries from members of the media. Most situations where the media show a strong interest are of interest to the Chief of Police and the affected Chain of Command.

356.3 MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR VERBAL NOTIFICATION

Supervisors shall make reasonable attempts to obtain as much information as possible and provide verbal notification to their chain of command as soon as practical for the following incidents:

1. When officers are involved in an:
 - (a) Officer involved shooting or death on or off-duty. (Policy 309 – Officer Involved Shootings and Deaths)
 - (b) Officer injury involving hospitalization.
 - (c) Officer involved vehicle collision that results in serious physical injury or fatality.
 - (d) Major use of force resulting in a serious physical injury.
 - (e) When VPD arrests and lodges in jail any active law enforcement officer from any jurisdiction or known high profile person.
 - (f) When a supervisor believes any employee under their supervision should be temporarily relieved from their duties (Policy 1030 - Fitness for Duty).
2. When a VPD employee is arrested or is the subject of a criminal investigation.
3. Aircraft crash involving casualties.

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4. UAS collision which results in serious injury to any person. (Policy 613 UAS Collisions or Damage)
5. Explosive Device detonations (Policy 416 - Response to Bomb Calls).
6. Anytime a victim of a hate crime or biased incident experiences serious physical injury or death. (Policy 337 – Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents)
7. Death or serious physical injury of a VPD employee.
8. Any major incident that necessitates calling of law enforcement agencies for assistance (Major Incident Mutual Aid request) requiring significant law enforcement resources from outside of Clark County, WA.
9. Any mass casualty (three (3) or more deaths or serious physical injury) event.

356.4 MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN NOTIFICATION

In addition to the situations outlined in 356.3, Supervisors shall provide written notification in the form of an e-mail, text or other appropriate form of electronic or written communication to their Chain of Command as a soon a practical for the following incidents:

1. Whenever a specialty unit is activated.
2. When an officer receives medical treatment or evaluation while on duty.
3. Officer involved collision that results in damage to a police or citizen's vehicle or property.
4. Police discharge of a weapon other than an OIS (e.g., dog shooting or negligent discharge). No notification is necessary for of animal euthanization pursuant to Policy 311.
5. Aircraft Crash.
6. Credible bomb threats that result in the search or evacuation of a building.
7. Missing children or suspicious runaways that meet the appropriate risk level for DECU notification.
8. Missing endangered adults that meet the appropriate risk level for DECU notification.
9. Notification of any high risk or SWAT operations conducted in the City by outside agencies.
10. Whenever a public alert is generated (Policy 333 - Public Alerts – NOTE: Public Affairs Manager is included in the notification)
11. UAS collisions which causes damage to property, excluding the UAS itself, exceeding \$500.(Policy 613 - UAS Collisions or Damage)
12. Whenever a member who is subpoenaed to testify, agrees to testify or provides information on behalf of or at the request of any party, other than the City Attorney or Prosecuting Attorney (Policy 347 – Subpoenas and Court Appearances).
13. Death of a VPD employee's spouse, domestic partner or child(ren).

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356.5 COMMAND BRIEF (C-BRIEF)

Supervisors shall include the following incidents in a C-Brief to include the date, time, location, names of involved persons, brief description of the incident and case number:

1. Child and elder abuse major investigations.
2. Homicide, Burglary I, Assault I, Arson I, Rape I, Robbery I, Kidnapping I
3. Serious injury vehicle collision.
4. Other significant or media worthy events.
5. Significant damage to City property.
6. Any hate crime or bias incident that does not result in serious injury or death to the victim(s).

356.6 NOTIFICATION OF A SPECIALTY UNIT

In determining whether to contact a specialty unit, the patrol supervisor will consider:

1. Potential danger to the public.
2. Available resources.
3. Complexity of the case.
4. Whether the incident is part of a series of crimes.
5. The particular vulnerability of the victim.
6. The severity of injuries.

356.6.1 MAJOR CRIMES UNIT NOTIFICATION

Supervisors shall use the following list as a guide when determining whether to notify the Major Crimes Unit (MCU) sergeant:

1. There are multiple victim and/or witness interviews and the lack of resources and/or complexity limits the patrol officer's ability to do timely and thorough interviews.
2. Sexual assaults that have occurred within the past 24 hours, victim submits to a SART exam, suspect has been identified and their location is known, when the complexity and/or age of the victim warrants expertise of a detective.
3. Serious crimes that fit the pattern of crimes being handled by the Investigations.
4. Processing of felony crime scenes for evidence such as photographs, fingerprints and/or DNA that exceeds the skills/abilities of investigating officers.
5. Death investigations, suicides and accidental deaths when there are suspicious circumstances.
6. Felony assaults against officers of a complex nature (e.g., multiple victim officers, vehicle used as a weapon, large or multiple scenes) or where serious injuries are sustained by the officer or suspect.

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356.6.2 CHILDRENS JUSTICE CENTER UNIT NOTIFICATION

Supervisors shall notify the Children's Justice Center (CJC) sergeant regarding the following incidents:

1. Felony physical assault of juveniles by family member/adult involving injury or use of a weapon.
2. Sexual assault of juveniles occurring within the past 72 hours, and/or when the suspect is a family member or has access to the child victim.

356.6.3 DIGITAL EVIDENCE CYBERCRIME UNIT NOTIFICATION

Supervisors shall notify the DECU sergeant as soon as practical regarding the following incidents:

1. Missing Persons:
 - (a) Endangered:
 - i. Abduction or suspected abduction.
 - ii. Left under suspicious circumstances requiring immediate detective follow-up (DV victim, child communicating with adult, person traveling does not arrive in reasonable time, phone/wallet left behind, etc.).
 - iii. If youth, age makes them highly vulnerable. (12 and under)
 - iv. If elderly, age makes them vulnerable and there is extensive follow-up needed beyond patrol capabilities.
 - v. Medical or mental health issues make them highly vulnerable and detective follow-up may assist in finding the subject (Autistic, homicidal, danger to self, etc.).
 - (b) Child Exploitation:
 - i. Suspect appears to be adult and is making active plans to meet the child.
 - ii. Child is chatting and there is limited time to take-over account.
 - iii. When a supervisor is unsure what to do or how to proceed with a serious felony online child exploitation crime.
 - iv. Child sex trafficking if unable to reach the SIU.
2. Registered Sex Offenders (RSO):
 - (a) RSO is found with minor under suspicious circumstances.
 - (b) An RSO is in custody when an exposure has occurred.
3. Public Threat:
 - (a) Whenever any other circumstance creating an immediate risk of great bodily harm or immediate grave risk to public safety may require a detective to obtain and/or interpret electronic records on an emergency basis.
4. Forensics:

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- (a) Suspect in violent felony crime has phone open and it needs to be kept in a safe state for examination (murder, rape, assault 1).
 - (b) Immediate video extraction for violent felonies.
 - (c) Violent felony victim phones needing immediate examinations.
 - (d) When suspect in major felony crime is suspected of using anti-forensics tactics (encryption, advanced wiping technologies, etc.) and on-site assistance is needed.
5. Polygraph:
- (a) When the suspect in custody for a serious felony crime is willing to take a polygraph prior to being booked.
6. K-9:
- (a) When a unit is in need of locating an electronic device that cannot wait until business hours.

356.6.4 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT NOTIFICATION

Supervisors shall notify the Domestic Violence (DV) Unit sergeant of felony domestic violence calls as soon as practical when the outstanding suspect represents a threat of danger to the victim or serious physical injury is sustained by the victim.

Notification to the DV Sergeant:

1. When the Danger Assessment is identified as Extreme Risk, or the point total is 18+ points.
2. If the suspect in the case is outstanding, the notification should be verbal to minimize delay if a response by the DV Unit is appropriate
 - (a) This includes cases where officers investigate a DV crime and PC is not established for any crime and the Danger Assessment is identified as Extreme Risk, or the point total is 18+ points.
3. If the suspect in the case is in custody, then the notification should be via email or text.
4. When PC is established for a felony DV crime and the complexity of the investigation warrants the expertise of a detective.
5. On DV Sexual Assault Crimes meeting the same or similar criteria for MCU notification: Sexual assaults that have occurred within the past 24 hours, victim submits to SART exam, the suspect has been identified and their location is known, when the complexity and/or age of the victim warrants expertise of a detective.

356.6.5 PROPERTY CRIME UNIT NOTIFICATION

Supervisors shall notify the Property Crimes Unit sergeant through email anytime one of the following events occur. Include in the notification a brief synopsis of the incident, suspect information and applicable case number(s):

1. **Thefts/ Forgeries**

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- (a) Over \$25,000.00 loss suffered by the victim; **and**
 - (b) Named or identifiable suspect(s) or vehicle information; **and/or**
 - (c) Surveillance photos/videos (if available) have been collected and evaluated to ensure that the depictions of the suspect(s) are of a quality that will likely lead to an identification.
2. **Burglaries**
 - (a) Over \$25,000.00 loss suffered by the victim; **and**
 - (b) Named or identifiable suspect
 3. **Auto Theft**
 - (a) Named or identifiable suspect(s)

If the investigating officer has reason to believe the incident they are investigating is linked to a series of crimes by modus operandi or by named suspect(s), the officer should notify the Property Crimes Unit (PCU) sergeant via email. The goal is to concentrate on cases where the biggest impact can be made on the crimes being committed, not just the dollar amount.

356.6.6 CRIME REDUCTION UNIT (CRU) NOTIFICATION

Supervisors shall notify the Crime Reduction Unit as soon as practical on what reasonably appears to be gang related crimes including serious injury assaults, drive-by shootings, home invasion robberies, firearm related crimes, evidence collection, or multiple victim/witness interviews are needed at a scene.

356.6.7 SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT (SIU) NOTIFICATION

Supervisors shall notify the SIU as soon as practical in the following circumstances:

1. Any Human Trafficking-related Call for Service (CFS) or incident that is actively occurring.
2. Any Public Order call for service or incident that meets the criteria in Policy 464 – First Amendment Assemblies, that is actively occurring.
3. Credible threats of a mass casualty event, especially involving schools.

356.6.8 SPECIAL OPERATIONS NOTIFICATION

Supervisors shall observe the following guidelines regarding notification:

1. Contact the K-9 sergeant if you have canine questions, or the Special Operations Lieutenant or designee. Do not contact off duty canine handlers with canine questions. If you need a canine and one is not working, contact dispatch to have one paged out.
2. For any SWAT consultation or activation, any member of SWAT team leadership can be contacted. This can include but not limited to the Tactical Services Sergeant, Special Operations Lieutenant, or any assigned team leader. If activation is exigent any supervisor can request CRESA to activate the team.

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356.6.9 TRAFFIC UNIT NOTIFICATION

Supervisors shall contact the Traffic Unit sergeant in the event of a serious injury, death, extensive property damage or vehicular homicide / assault cases related to a traffic collision. In the absence of the Traffic sergeant, contact Special Operations Lieutenant or designee to investigate a serious traffic collision.

356.7 PSU NOTIFICATION

The District Lieutenant or Precinct Commander shall notify the Professional Standards Unit (PSU) of all serious officer involved collisions, officer involved shootings (OIS) and all incidents in which an officer uses force that could result and/or does result in serious physical injury or death. A representative of the PSU will respond to the scene.

356.8 PUBLIC INFORMATION COORDINATOR (PIC)

The District Lieutenant or Precinct Commander shall ensure timely notification to the Public Affairs Manager after members of staff have been notified and the incident would likely be of interest to the media and/or members of the public, there have been inquiries from the media via dispatch, and/or media is on scene.