

WATERTOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER



JOANNA W. VITEK
CHIEF OF POLICE

Effective Date: June 1, 2009	Rescinds: Amends: September 1, 2005	Number: B 6 211
Subject: Field Reporting Procedures		Re-evaluation Date: June 2012
Distribution: ALL PERSONNEL	Related CALEA Standards:	

This order consists of the following numbered sections:

1. Purpose
2. Policy
3. Definitions
4. Procedures

1. PURPOSE

This procedure establishes guidelines primarily for operational personnel (i.e. officers, detectives, and reserves) to follow when completing departmental written reports. The purpose of this general order is to standardize the report writing methods and reporting requirements of the Watertown Police Department.

2. POLICY

It is the policy of the Watertown Police Department to standardize the method under which the operational elements of this agency work. Such standardization will result in an organization, which is both effective and efficient.

3. DEFINITIONS

- a. **REPORT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM** - The computerized software system utilized by the Watertown Police Department to create, process, manage, and store written reports. Such written reports are originally created in the field by officer.
- b. **REPORT NUMBER** - A sequential number predicated by the year, which is issued by the Watertown Police Department Communication Center or Records Division to identify and track calls for service.
- c. **SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT:** Any law enforcement event that is recorded in a written form, normally computerized, with an accompanying case number. Supplemental reports are supporting documents to a written report of the same case number.
- d. **WRITTEN REPORT** - Any law enforcement event that is recorded in a written form normally computerized, with an accompanying case report number.

4. PROCEDURES

- a. Specific Criteria for the Creation of: Written Reports
 - i. Section 1: Synopsis: A brief description of the incident approximately three to five sentences in length.
 1. The synopsis will include the following:
 - a. How you came upon the event
 - b. What was discovered in your investigation
 - c. Disposition of case
 - ii. Section 2: Narrative
 1. The report will be written in the first person.
 2. The first sentence in the report must establish date, time (military), and complete venue of crime/incident.
 - a. Example: "On 01/01/99, at approximately 2300 hrs., I responded to 123 America St., Watertown, Codington County, SD, in response to a burglary complaint."
 3. The complete names, with gender identifiers, of all victims, witnesses, and suspects will be initially used to identify the participants in the crime/incident (see example #1). Subsequent name referrals in the same report need only include the last name, unless

- involved persons have the same last name. In that case, first and last names are to be used (see examples # 2 and #3).
- a. Example #1 Mr. John Smith
 - b. Example #2: Smith
 - c. Example #3: John Smith, Joseph Smith
4. The narrative section should be written in chronological order to the writer.
 5. The narrative should answer the questions: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How.
- iii. Section 3: Disposition
 1. Will be written in narrative form, explaining what happens with the case and suspect (if applicable).
 - a. Example #1: "The suspect was arrested for burglary and grand theft. The suspect was transported to the Codington County Detention Center and released to the jailers on duty (need first and last names of the jailers). The case is referred to the State Attorney's Office."
 - b. Example #2: "This case is pending and referred to the Detectives Bureau for further investigation"
 - c. Example #3: "This case is pending and referred to the State Attorney's Office with the arrest of James Jones, DOB 10-20-67, for the crime of Burglary and Grand Theft."
 - d. Example #4: "This case is referred to this officer for further investigation"
 2. In the case of death investigation reports, this section will contain the disposition of the decedent's body
 - a. Example: "The decedent's body was released to the Funeral Home, 3321 Smith St., Watertown, SD., on the authority of the Coroner."
 - b. Incidents Requiring a Written Report
 - i. Animal Bite
 - ii. Any Injury resulting from physical resistance to:
 1. An arrest by officer or
 2. Lawful detainment by a civilian
 - iii. Felony
 - iv. Fraud with monetary loss
 - v. Impersonation / Identity Theft
 - vi. Incidents involving NCIC/FCIC entries.
 - vii. Officer Firing a Weapon
 - viii. Pursuit
 - ix. Assault
 - x. Stalking
 - xi. Theft
 - xii. Unattended Death
 - xiii. Use of Force (See C-100 for requirements)
 - xiv. Vandalism
 - xv. Welfare checks as needed
 - xvi. All other reported crimes
 - c. Incidents requiring a written report upon an arrest/citation
 - i. All signed complaints
 - ii. All Class 1 misdemeanors
 - iii. All non-traffic class 2 misdemeanors
 - iv. Protective custody for alcohol or mental health
 - d. Report Approval Process
 - i. Supervisory review is a function of the first line supervisor and is intended to ensure that the assignment has been satisfactorily completed and reported consistent with this general order. The report approval process within the report management system will adhere to the following guidelines.
 1. Field Training Officers
 - a. Approve/Disapprove assigned trainee's
 2. Corporals

- a. Approve/Disapprove/Archive any report
 - 3. Sergeants
 - a. Approve/Disapprove/Archive any report.
 - 4. Captains and above
 - a. Approve/Disapprove/Archive any report.
 - ii. All written reports, supplemental reports and other investigation reports and enclosures will be turned in at the end of the officer's shift unless specific approval is obtained from the shift supervisor. Absolutely no such documents will be held or not completed by the officer without such approval.
 - iii. Initial reports generated by Detectives will be turned in within five (5) working days of the case initiation.
- e. Report Routing Procedures
- i. One or more of the above designated supervisors will Approve/Disapprove the report.
 - ii. Approved reports will be forwarded to Records for archiving into the records management system.
- f. Sworn Affidavits/Departmental Forms
- i. Victim, witness, and suspect statement should be obtained and used to support investigations conducted by the Watertown Police Department.

JOANNA W. VITEK
Chief of Police
Watertown Police Department
Watertown, South Dakota