



# SYKESVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Responding to Traffic Crashes

General Order 6-30      Effective: 09/01/17

Authorized by: *Michael A. Spaulding* Chief of Police

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## I. PURPOSE

To provide officers with guidance when responding to traffic crashes.

## II. POLICY

Members of the Sykesville Police Department will respond to traffic crashes and stabilize the scene in order to prevent further injury, loss of life or property damage and if necessary facilitate investigation of the crash.

## III. PROCEDURES

### A. Assigning Resources

1. Upon being informed of a crash, the call taker will gather the:
  - a. name, address and phone number of the caller;
  - b. exact location of the crash;
  - c. severity of the crash;
  - d. number of injuries, if known;
  - e. number of vehicles involved and whether drivers are at the scene;
  - f. traffic conditions;
  - g. need for fire and rescue services; and
  - h. need for other emergency services.
2. Based on the information provided by callers, communications personnel may notify additional resources that may be needed (e.g., additional units, ambulances, State Highway Administration).

### B. Initial Responsibilities

1. The first officer to arrive at the scene of a crash will position his vehicle to protect the scene and provide adequate notice to oncoming traffic of the incident.
2. The first-responding officer's initial duties include:

- a. identifying and providing emergency medical care to any injured parties within the scope of his training;
- b. providing an update of the incident to the communications center with any pertinent information such as the number and extent of injuries, number and type of vehicles involved and status of traffic lanes;
- c. requesting any additional resources, as needed, to protect life and property and to restore the roadway and traffic flow to their pre-crash conditions;
- d. establishing a safe traffic pattern by employing appropriate temporary traffic control (TTC) measures;
- e. preservation of evidence; and
- f. identifying any witnesses to the crash.

C. Scene Management

1. The first arriving officer will establish command and will remain in charge of the scene until he is relieved by another trooper senior in rank or seniority.
2. Generally, the initial officer dispatched will be responsible for completing the investigation and any reports associated with the crash; however the on-duty supervisor may, at his discretion, assign these duties to another officer.
3. Supervisors will ensure that sufficient law enforcement resources (from MSP or allied agencies if necessary) are dispatched to the scene of all crashes.
4. Appropriate agencies should be contacted to assist with TTC (SHA, Town Public Works, etc.).
5. Officers responding to any type of crash should be alert to the potential for fire and hazardous materials exposure and should generally remain upwind and at least 1,500' away from the crash if hazardous materials may be present.
6. Prior to approaching the scene, officers should make an effort to locate hazardous materials placards or conditions that indicate a potential fire hazard and relay this information to communications personnel.

7. Fire/EMS agencies will have initial operational control over any scene that involves fire, hazardous materials or personal injuries.
8. The highest ranking officer on scene will coordinate with the on-scene commander until such time that the scene is turned over to law enforcement.
9. Officers will provide assistance with traffic control and evacuations at the scene of a critical incident.
10. Officers will not use flares:
  - a. at the scene of any crash involving the leakage of any flammable material;
  - b. where any involved vehicles contain hazardous materials; or
  - c. at a scene where a helicopter is expected to land.
11. While directing traffic or while at the scene of the crash, officers will use appropriate devices to include reflective vests, emergency lighting, flares and cones to protect themselves, the scene, the public and to alert oncoming traffic.
12. Once the crash scene is cleared, the investigating officer will arrange for the prompt removal of all warning devices and debris.
13. Officers should be alert to disturbances occurring between the occupants of the vehicles.

#### **IV. CANCELLATIONS**

This General Order cancels and replaces the following policies: General Order 63.1, entitled Motor Vehicle Collision Reporting and Investigation, dated December 27, 2001.