

## **SANTA CLARA POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 82.4**

### **REPORT WRITING POLICY**

**ISSUED APRIL 2006**

#### **82.4.1 Purpose**

In order to insure that complete, well-organized and thorough police reports are written in significant and/or major crimes involving multiple reporting officers, a policy is established which requires that a primary officer be identified and clear responsibilities set forth for all involved officers/supervisors.

#### **82.4.2 Major/Significant Crimes**

In any criminal investigation involving two or more officers, a primary officer needs to be identified who takes charge and is responsible for coordinating the investigation / arrests / reports. In major or significant crimes, however, the need for responsibility and coordination of investigation and reporting becomes much more serious.

In significant/major crimes involving person crimes and/or felonies involving more than three officers, a Field Operations Sergeant will assume the responsibility of coordinating the investigation. This supervisor will ensure that all necessary reports are completed and that all appropriate information is included in the reports. When possible during a major investigation, Sergeants will stay with an investigation until all reports are submitted even if it requires staying after the end of the regular shift.

#### **82.4.3 Report Format**

Reports are to be organized and formatted according to the adopted County Reporting Format. If we (SCPD) have an established report investigation card (such as for 459, 211, 10851, etc.), the format on the card will be used. All FTO's have copies of the County Protocol, and it is posted in the report writing room.

All Incident Reports will be a detailed complete investigation in and of itself. It will contain the details of the crime sufficiently to establish the elements of the offense.

#### **82.4.4 Report Review**

All handwritten, typed or computer generated reports will be reviewed by a Field Operations Sergeant or Lieutenant before they are forwarded to the Records Unit and Investigations Division. The reviewer will preferably be the supervisor for the author of that report, and the review should be done before both the supervisor and reporting officer leave at the end of shift.

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Shift supervisors shall make every effort to review all reports in ARS listed as 'OA' status prior to the completion of his or her shift.

Taped reports for in-custody investigations will be typed immediately in the Records Unit and reviewed by the officer's supervisor or an available supervisor. If the report needs to be corrected or rewritten, the officer may be required to respond back to the station as needed to make the corrections (even on days off).

#### **82.4.5 Report Review Forms**

One of the uses of Report Review forms (SCPD 051) is to track the progress and location of reports not yet submitted. The form will be completed by supervisors/investigators for all reports that need subsequent correction, rewriting or for incomplete reports. Reports done particularly well or done poorly may also be documented on the Report Review form, and likewise be placed into the officer's personnel file for possible use in the next evaluation. Placing documents in an officer's personnel file must be done in compliance with [Peace Officers Bill of Rights](#) requirements.