

Hamden Police Department General Orders

Policy Number: 015-002

Effective Date: TBD

Section: Records

Rescinds: August 01, 2005

Title: Collection, Retention,
Dissemination of Records

Approved By: Police Commission
Approval Date: TBD

PURPOSE

To provide members of the department with guidelines for the collection, retention, and dissemination of records as well as for the filing of case incident reports.

POLICY

The proper documentation of incidents reported to or investigated by the department is of the utmost importance. Successful prosecution of cases relies on complete and accurate reporting as well as record retention. To this end the department relies on a computerized records management system as the mainstay for report writing, retention and preservation of police reports.

It is the policy of the Hamden Police Department to comply with all State of Connecticut laws and regulations governing the collection, retention, and dissemination of all records. This includes, but is not limited to, police reports, statements, photographs, photo boards, photo arrays, radio logs and transmissions, audio recordings pertaining to a case, telephone recordings where applicable, transcripts, body worn camera and in-car camera footage, booking and incidental recordings, case files, etc. In all such cases, the State of Connecticut's retention schedule shall be consulted, and retention measures followed. Destruction of records where applicable, shall be carried out consistent with State of Connecticut laws, regulations and procedures.

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Procedures

A. Incident Reporting

1. In most cases, reports will be completed by an officer after they respond to the incident and / or as they are investigating.
2. In cases where no report is required, typically referred to as "00", it is the responsibility of the supervisor to authorize no report required.
 - a. Upon approval of a "00" (no report required) by a supervisor, dispatch will note a "00" requirement in the CAD system. Under no circumstances should a dispatcher "00" a complaint without the approval of a supervisor.
3. For incidents that require reports, the officer will complete the report before the completion of his/her tour of duty.
 - a. It will be the responsibility of the officers' supervisor to see that reports are submitted, as well as submitted in a timely fashion.
 - b. Under some circumstances, a supervisor may excuse the officer from completing their report until their next shift. Such circumstances are rare and should not extend over an officer's days off. An example may be a late complaint requiring no further investigation.

B. Review and approval of reports.

1. Officers will submit reports for their supervisor's review.
2. The supervisor will review the report and if acceptable, sign off for approval where applicable. If the report needs correction, additions and / or further investigation, the supervisor will return the report to the officer and note corrections required in the report management system.
3. Once a supervisor approves a report, a higher-ranking supervisor should sign off as a reviewer. This may be necessary for the Records Division to make a determination regarding record dissemination.

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C. Traffic Accident Reports.

1. Traffic accident reports shall be completed in a timely fashion. After completion they will be forwarded to the Traffic Division Supervisor for approval and / or correction recommendations.
2. Records Division personnel may have to compile accident reports for transfer to the State of Connecticut. This may be accomplished through electronic means.

D. Records Division

1. When requests for records are made to the Hamden Police Department, the Records Division will review the request and if applicable, either process the request or forward the request to the appropriate entity.
2. On occasion, records requests may be made through other divisions within the police department and / or the Town Attorney's office.
3. Whenever the Hamden Police Department contemplates the release of records, all State of Connecticut laws shall be followed regarding the dissemination of police department records and information.
4. Records Division personnel will collect records, left by officers for storage, from the main desk area every business day morning and as needed.

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E. Privacy and Security Precautions

1. Records, whether hard copy or computerized, will be securely stored within the Hamden Police Department with access limited to authorized personnel determined by the Chief of Police or his designee. Physical security measures shall be taken regarding access to all records such as limited electronic entry and / or limited keyed entry. Records shall be housed in such a secured area.
2. Only Records Division personnel and personnel so designated by the Chief of Police are authorized to disseminate records in the regular course of business and shall follow all applicable laws.
3. The movement of records throughout the police department will be executed with care regarding the privacy of the information and the legality of such. For example, after arrest packets are compiled containing required information, officers shall forward said packets to the Records Division by utilizing the appropriate mail slot in the main desk area. Officers wishing to forward any records to the Records Division shall make sure said records have a case number attached and make use of the records division mail slot in the main desk area.
4. Juvenile arrest records housed by the police department shall have physical segregation from adult arrest records through separation and / or physical marking clearly denoting such.
5. Juvenile fingerprints, photographs and identifying information are confidential and shall be treated as such. Juvenile records shall be collected, disseminated and retained according to law. The State of CT records retention schedule shall be consulted regarding the retention of all records. State of CT law shall also be followed regarding the destruction of any records as applicable. (See HPD policies 012-003 Juvenile Detention Procedures and 012-001 Handling of Juvenile Matters for further information regarding Juveniles).
6. Regarding computerized records, software and / or software applications shall have the ability to limit access to data. Access shall be determined by the Chief of Police or his designee.
7. Only personnel designated by the Chief of Police or his designee are authorized to release police records or police information to the public.

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F. Retention and Destruction of Records

1. Connecticut state laws and regulations shall govern the retention and destruction of records.
2. When making a determination for record retention and / or destruction, The State of Connecticut Municipal Records Retention/Disposition Schedule shall first be consulted. At a minimum, State of Connecticut law shall also dictate the retention, destruction and / or dissemination of records under the control of the Hamden Police Department.
 - i. Dissemination includes but is not limited to the release of records to the public, other law enforcement agencies whether municipal, state or federal, businesses as well as Freedom of Information Act requests. The Hamden Town Attorney should also be consulted when applicable.
 - ii. Retention for recordings of radio and telephone communications shall be at least 30 days and subsequently determined based on content, the need for retention, case relation and the State of Connecticut Municipal Records Retention/Disposition Schedule.
 - iii. Recorded radio and telephone communications can be an indispensable source for criminal investigations, internal investigations, training and audits of the agencies service. Any such recordings shall be stored in a secure environment with limited access as designated by the Chief of Police and / or his designee. Employees with access to the secure environment housing such recordings shall exercise care in keeping access secure.
 - iv. Efforts shall be made to keep any copies and / or reproductions of said recordings in a limited access storage environment. Retention and destruction of reproductions shall be processed in the same manner as the originals.
 - v. Said recordings of radio and telephone communication shall only take place with a bona fide necessity, whether that is for an investigation, audit of service, training need or other necessary reason. Such recordings shall not be accessed simply out of curiosity. A procedure for accessing such recordings will be manufacturer specific however shall be used only by those employees who have been authorized for access by the Chief of Police or his designee.
3. The Chief of Police shall mandate a procedure for the destruction of records which at a minimum shall include all relevant State of Connecticut laws.

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G. Records Pertaining to Wants, Warrants, Protective and Restraining Orders

1. A wanted person / warrant file, a protective and restraining order file shall be maintained in the Communications Division. Said files may be physical files and / or electronic files.
2. In any case, said files will be available to all dispatchers and sworn officers 24 hours a day such that field personnel can confirm the existence of wants, warrants, protective and restraining orders on a 24 hour basis.
3. After wants, warrants, protective and restraining orders are received from the court, the Communications Division will receive the appropriate documents so that notifications can be made in applicable regional, state and federal information systems by dispatchers entering said information.
4. Dispatchers shall enter warrants immediately upon receipt into the applicable information systems, including but not necessarily limited to the Hamden Police Department's computer system as well as the State of Connecticut and federal systems as applicable. When warrants are served on wanted parties, dispatchers shall update the warrant file both physically and electronically where applicable in accordance with State of Connecticut guidelines. The same holds true for updating protective and restraining orders.

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H. State of Connecticut and Regional Records Systems

1. When the Hamden Police Department participates in State of Connecticut and / or regional records systems, the department shall comply with Connecticut General Statutes regarding criminal history records information and with Title 28 of the US Code.
2. The department shall have control officers that coordinate with the IT department, the State and / or regional agencies managing the systems and any other person and / or agency necessary to maintain compliance. As a security measure, control officers are authorized to perform unannounced audits of inquiries and make written reports on the results of said audits. The audits shall not target any specific person but shall be randomly selected. It is recommended that the Communications Supervisor, Training Officer and IT Supervisor be assigned as control officers.
3. Platforms provided with access to COLLECT services and facilities shall be under the direct control of the criminal justice agency served by those platforms.
4. Each user of the COLLECT system shall be certified as COLLECT operators for inquiry only unless otherwise approved by the State of Connecticut. All sworn Hamden Police Officers and dispatchers shall maintain COLLECT certification.
5. Supervisors are authorized to take immediate corrective action deemed justifiable and necessary should a breach be discovered.
6. The IT department shall coordinate with the State of Connecticut to insure that necessary technology safeguards are utilized for security.
7. The Hamden Police training officer shall maintain a list of COLLECT certified personnel and their expiration dates, insure COLLECT certifications are current and coordinate with the State of Connecticut on administering COLLECT tests for certification and re-certification as applicable.

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I. Recording Arrest Information

1. Refer to Section A of this policy regarding procedures for the completion of incident reports. Furthermore, arrest reports shall contain information necessary for the prosecution of the offender. This shall include at a minimum, but not be limited to:
 - a. The facts and circumstances that establish probable cause supporting the criteria of all charges
 - b. Investigative efforts
 - c. Was the arrestee released or was the arrest custodial and all details regarding such outcomes, such as type of bond and bond amount.
 - d. Statements made
 - e. Evidence collected and details surrounding it
 - f. If fingerprints were taken, they shall be submitted using electronic means for wants, warrants and identification purposes and a response obtained
 - g. Fingerprint cards shall be printed as applicable and included with the arrest packet (when the offender is a juvenile, fingerprints may not necessarily be submitted depending on charges and / or if arrested as an adult)
 - h. Photographs shall also be taken and stored in the HPD computer record management system for all custodial arrests
 - i. The Hamden PD Intake and Lockup form shall be completed for all custodial arrests.
 - j. Whether there was any use of force and exactly what transpired shall be articulated
 - k. If the arrestee has any injuries and they occurred while in Hamden PD custody, how injuries occurred
 - l. Any other facts and circumstances the officer believes to be pertinent to the case