

Records Section

802.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes the guidelines for the operational functions of the Havre de Grace Police Department Records Section. The policy addresses department file access and internal requests for case reports.

802.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Havre de Grace Police Department to maintain department records securely, professionally and efficiently.

802.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

802.3.1 RECORDS MANAGER

The Chief of Police shall appoint and delegate certain responsibilities to a Records Manager. The Records Manager shall be directly responsible to the Administrative Services Division Commander or the authorized designee.

The responsibilities of the Records Manager include but are not limited to:

- (a) Overseeing the efficient and effective operation of the Records Section.
- (b) Scheduling and maintaining Records Section time records.
- (c) Supervising, training, and evaluating Records Section staff.
- (d) Maintaining and updating a Records Section procedure manual.
- (e) Ensuring compliance with established policies and procedures.
- (f) Supervising the access, use, and release of protected information (see the Protected Information Policy).
- (g) Establishing security and access protocols for case reports designated as sensitive, where additional restrictions to access have been implemented. Sensitive reports may include but are not limited to:
 1. Homicides
 2. Cases involving department members or public officials
 3. Any case where restricted access is prudent
- (h) Ensuring compliance with state requirements regarding the annual reporting of officer-involved deaths and deaths in the line of duty (Md. Code PS § 3-507).
- (i) Complying with reporting requirements related to sexual assault evidence collection kits in accordance with COMAR 02.08.04.01.

802.3.2 RECORDS SECTION

The responsibilities of the Records Section include but are not limited to:

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- (a) Maintaining a records management system for case reports.
 - 1. The records management system should include a process for numbering, identifying, tracking, and retrieving case reports.
- (b) Entering case report information into the records management system.
 - 1. Modification of case reports shall only be made when authorized by a supervisor.
- (c) Providing members of the Department with access to case reports when needed for investigation or court proceedings.
- (d) Maintaining compliance with federal, state, and local regulations regarding reporting requirements of crime statistics.
- (e) Maintaining compliance with federal, state, and local regulations regarding criminal history reports and auditing.
- (f) Identifying missing case reports and notifying the responsible member's supervisor.
- (g) Complying with the annual reporting requirements established by the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (MPTSC) regarding (Md. Code PS § 3-518; Md. Code PS § 3-207):
 - 1. The number of serious officer-involved incidents.
 - 2. The number of officers disciplined.
 - 3. The type of discipline administered to each officer.

802.4 FILE ACCESS AND SECURITY

The security of files in the Records Section must be a high priority and shall be maintained as mandated by state or federal law. All case reports including, but not limited to, initial, supplemental, follow-up, evidence and any other reports related to a police department case, including field interview (FI) cards, criminal history records and publicly accessible logs, shall be maintained in a secure area within the Records Section, and accessible only by authorized members of the department. Access to case reports or files when Records Section staff is not available may be obtained through Command Staff.

The Records Section will also maintain a secure file for case reports deemed by the Chief of Police as sensitive or otherwise requiring extraordinary access restrictions.

802.4.1 ORIGINAL CASE REPORTS

Generally, reports will be submitted electronically through the records management system (RMS). Original case reports shall not be removed from the Records Section. Should an original case report be needed for any reason, the requesting department member shall first obtain authorization from the Records Manager. All original case reports removed from the Records Section shall be recorded on a designated report check-out log, which shall be the only authorized manner by which an original case report may be removed from the Records Section.

All original case reports to be removed from the Records Section shall be photocopied and the photocopy retained in the file location of the original case report until the original is returned to

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the Records Section. The photocopied report shall be shredded upon return of the original report to the file.

802.5 CONFIDENTIALITY

Records Section staff has access to information that may be confidential or sensitive in nature. Records Section staff shall not access, view or distribute, or allow anyone else to access, view or distribute any record, file or report, whether in hard copy or electronic file format, or any other confidential, protected or sensitive information except in accordance with the Records Maintenance and Release and Protected Information policies and the Records Section procedure manual.