



MOTOR VEHICLE COLLISION REPORTING AND INVESTIGATIONS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the investigation and documentation of motor vehicle collisions.

II. POLICY

The policy of the Ridgely Police Department is to investigate all motor vehicle collisions occurring on the roadways in the town limits of Ridgely except in certain limited circumstances which are indicated in this General Order. The department will collect the necessary information to complete the appropriate crash report; and will also evaluate the data to determine the cause of the motor vehicle collision, determine motor vehicle operator violations, and the location of any potential hazardous roadway characteristics or conditions.

III. MOTOR VEHICLE COLLISION REPORTS

1. The Ridgely Police Department defines a motor vehicle collision as "any time one or more motorized vehicles unintentionally comes into contact with another vehicle, person, animal, or object, causing property damage or injury".
2. Officers responding to or locating a motor vehicle collision within the Ridgely town limits will advise the 911 Center of the seriousness of the collision, request appropriate assistance, and determine if a collision report (ACRES) is required. A formal investigation and an ACRES crash report will be completed on the following types of vehicle collisions:
 - a. Collisions involving human injury.
 - b. Collisions involving disabling motor vehicle damage.
 - c. Collisions involving a hit and run motorist (See below criteria).
 - d. Collisions where one or more operator/pedestrian/bicyclist is intoxicated or impaired by drugs or alcohol.
 - e. Collisions involving damage to any traffic control devices, warning signs, utility company property, etc., or to any Ridgely town property (including vehicles).
 - f. Hit and run collisions involving personal injury.

- g. Hit and run collisions involving property damage only, which are reported immediately, and have a witness to describe the striking vehicle and direction of travel.
- h. Hit and run collisions where there are no witnesses, but there is physical evidence at the scene, other than vehicle damage, that reveals that the collision occurred at a particular location (e.g., broken taillight lens on the ground, skid marks leading into the vehicle, etc.).
- i. Collisions where a driver is issued any type of traffic citation.

3. ACRES reports & formal collision investigations are not required on:

- a. Collisions not specified in 5-6, III, 2 and in which the facts are not disputed, do not require a formal investigation or ACRES report. Officers will make sure the operators exchange their driver's license, vehicle registration, and vehicle insurance information. This would include providing the appropriate driver/vehicle information to the owner of damaged private property (fence, mail box, etc.).
- b. Property damage collisions which occurred on private property.
- c. "Late reported" property damage collision.
- d. Hit and run collisions if there are no witnesses or physical evidence at the scene. The complainant will be provided a case number for insurance purposes.

IV. TRAFFIC LAW ENFORCEMENT

Whenever an Officer assigned to investigate a motor vehicle collision has probable cause to believe the collision was caused by a violation of Maryland Vehicle Law, the Officer will take appropriate enforcement action by issuing a citation, warning or SERO.

V. FATAL OR SERIOUS INJURY COLLISION INVESTIGATIONS

A Ridgely Police Department member assigned to respond to/investigate any motor vehicle collisions which results in death or serious bodily injury where death is expected will immediately notify the Maryland State Police and request that they take over the investigation. The Ridgely Chief of Police (or his designee) will be consulted as soon as practical in these cases.

VI. DOCUMENTATION OF COLLISIONS

All collisions will be documented in CrimeStar as a Call for Service. Collisions meeting the criteria listed in III, 3, a-d will include operator name(s), vehicle registration(s), and a brief synopsis of the collision.