

Butte County DA's Office Bureau of Investigation

Report Writing

Report Preparation

344.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Report preparation is a major part of each investigator's job. The purpose of reports is to document sufficient information to refresh the investigator's memory and to provide sufficient information for follow-up investigation and successful prosecution. Report writing is the subject of substantial formalized training and on-the-job training.

344.1.1 REPORT PREPARATION

Employees should ensure that reports are sufficiently detailed and accurate for their purpose prior to submission. Generally, reports requiring prompt follow-up action on active leads, or arrest reports where the suspect remains in custody should not be held and be completed by the end of shift or within a reasonable amount of time that does not interfere with the investigation or criminal proceedings.

All reports shall accurately reflect the identity of the persons involved, all pertinent information seen, heard or assimilated by any other sense, and any actions taken. Employees shall not suppress, conceal or distort the facts of any reported incident, nor shall any employee make a false report orally or in writing. Generally, the reporting employee's opinions should not be included in reports unless specifically identified as such.

344.2 REQUIRED REPORTING

Written reports are required in all of the following situations on the appropriate department approved form unless otherwise approved by a supervisor.

344.2.1 CRIMINAL ACTIVITY REPORTING

When an employee responds to a call for service, or as a result of self-initiated activity becomes aware of any activity where a crime has occurred, the employee is required to document the activity. The fact that a victim is not desirous of prosecution is not an exception to documenting a report. The following are examples of required documentation:

- (a) In every instance where a felony has occurred, the documentation shall take the form of a written crime report
- (b) In every instance where a misdemeanor crime has occurred and the victim desires a report, the documentation shall take the form of a written crime report. If the victim does not desire a report, the incident will be recorded in DAMION as an "incident report"
- (c) In every case where any force is used against any person by bureau personnel
- (d) All incidents involving domestic violence
- (e) All arrests

344.2.2 NON-CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

The following incidents shall be documented using the appropriate approved report:

- (a) Any use of force against any person by a member of this department (see the Use of Force Policy)
- (b) Any firearm discharge (see the Firearms and Qualification Policy)
- (c) Anytime a person is reported missing, regardless of jurisdiction (see the Missing Persons Reporting Policy)

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- (d) Any found property or found evidence
- (e) Any traffic collisions not requiring report to Highway Patrol
- (f) Suspicious incidents that may indicate a potential for crimes against children or that a child's safety is in jeopardy
- (g) All protective custody detentions
- (h) Suspicious incidents that may place the public or others at risk
- (i) Whenever the employee believes the circumstances should be documented or at the direction of a supervisor

344.2.3 INJURY OR DAMAGE BY BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY PERSONNEL

Reports shall be taken if an injury occurs that is a result of an act of a Butte County District Attorney employee. Additionally, reports shall be taken involving damage to Butte County District Attorney property or Butte County District Attorney equipment.

344.2.6 MANDATORY REPORTING OF JUVENILE GUNSHOT INJURIES

A report shall be taken when any incident in which a child 18 years or younger suffered an unintentional or self-inflicted gunshot wound. While not normally the responsibility of investigators, if it is deemed necessary staff shall notify the California State Department of Health, pursuant PC 12088.5 which states:

Each lead law enforcement agency investigating an incident shall report to the State Department of Health Services any information obtained that reasonably supports the conclusion that:

- (a) A child 18 years of age or younger suffered an unintentional or self-inflicted gunshot wound inflicted by a firearm that was sold or transferred in this state, or manufactured in this state.
- (b) Whether as a result of that incident the child died, suffered serious injury, or was treated for an injury by a medical professional

344.3 GENERAL POLICY OF EXPEDITIOUS REPORTING

In general, all investigators and supervisors shall act with promptness and efficiency in the preparation and processing of all reports. An incomplete report, unorganized reports or reports delayed without supervisory approval are not acceptable. Reports shall be processed according to established priorities or according to special priority necessary under exceptional circumstances.

344.4 REPORT CORRECTIONS

Supervisors, whenever possible, shall review reports for content and accuracy. If a correction is necessary, the reviewing supervisor should discuss the corrections with the writer stating the reasons for rejection. The original report should be returned to the reporting employee for correction as soon as practical. It shall be the responsibility of the originating investigator to ensure that any report returned for correction is processed in a timely manner.