

Major Incident Notification

323.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to members of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission Police Department in determining when, how and to whom notification of major incidents should be made.

323.2 POLICY

The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission Police Department recognizes that certain incidents should be brought to the attention of supervisors or other specified personnel of this department to facilitate the coordination of activities and ensure that inquiries from the media and the public may be properly addressed.

323.3 CRITERIA FOR NOTIFICATION

Most situations where the media show a strong interest are also of interest to the Chief of Police, the affected Commander and the Commission. The following list of incident types is provided as a guide for notification and is not intended to be all inclusive:

- Officer-involved shooting, whether on- or off-duty (see the Officer-Involved Shootings and Deaths Policy for special notification)
- Homicides, suspicious deaths or deaths related to law enforcement activity
- Crimes of unusual violence or circumstances that may include hostages, barricaded persons, home invasions, armed robbery or sexual assaults
- At risk missing children or endangered missing adults
- In-custody deaths
- Aircraft, train, boat or other transportation accidents with major damage and/or injury or death
- Traffic accidents with fatalities or severe injuries
- Death of a prominent Sanitary District official
- Significant injury or death to a member of the Department, whether on- or off-duty
- Arrest of a member of the Department or prominent Sanitary District official
- Equipment failures, utility failures and incidents that may affect staffing or pose a threat to basic police services
- Any other incident, which has or is likely to attract significant media attention

323.4 PATROL COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Patrol Commander is responsible for making the appropriate notifications. The Patrol Commander shall make reasonable attempts to obtain as much information on the incident as possible before notification, and shall attempt to make the notifications as soon as practicable.

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Notification should be made by using the call notification protocol posted in Security Operations Center.

323.4.1 COMMAND STAFF NOTIFICATION

In the event an incident occurs as identified in the Criteria for Notification section above, the Chief of Police shall be notified along with the affected Commander and the Investigative Commander if that section is affected.

323.4.2 INVESTIGATOR NOTIFICATION

If the incident requires that an investigator respond from home, the designated on-call Investigator will be immediately notified. The on call investigator shall brief the Investigative Unit Supervisor on the incident..

323.4.3 PATROL SECTION NOTIFICATION

In the event of a major injury or traffic fatality, the Patrol Section supervisor shall be notified, who will then contact the appropriate investigator. The Patrol Section supervisor will notify the Patrol Commander.

323.4.4 COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICE

After members of the command staff have been notified, the Communications and Community Relations Office shall be called if it appears the media may have a significant interest in the incident.