

Memorandum

Date: December 8, 2016
To: All Personnel
From: Undersheriff Melekian
Subject: On-line Reporting
Sheriff's Bulletin: 17-1



The Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office is in the process of adding an On-line reporting system (CopLogic). The Online reporting system will allow residents to author police reports of minor crimes over the Internet. These reports will be reviewed by field supervisors for approval and once approved automatically assigned a case number and send the needed information to the reporting party.

The overall Lexipol Policy Manual, including the on-line reporting policy, is in the process of being approved and will reflect the content of this directive once the overall 2016 manual updates are finalized and published. In the mean-time a draft of this policy is included within this bulletin for reference.

Online Reporting

345.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

It is the policy of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office to provide online reporting services to the communities we serve. This policy establishes guidelines and procedures to determine when the online reporting system will be used and to outline the procedures for review of online reports.

345.2. POLICY

The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office should always respond to in-progress incidents, all crimes with evidence or information which may lead to the identity and apprehension of a suspect, or those situations where the incident just occurred and there is a likelihood the suspect may still be in the area. The use of CopLogic would not be appropriate under these circumstances.

Deputies who are contacted by a member of the public who wish to file a report in person should refrain from referring them to the online reporting system. It shall be supervisor's responsibility to determine if the online report needs further investigation. If further investigation is required, the supervisor should either assign the investigation to a deputy or forward the report to detectives for follow up. It is permissible for a department employee to

use CopLogic to assist the reporting party in completing a report if the incident falls under the articulated guidelines.

The following crimes and reports may be referred to the online reporting system:

- (a) All petty thefts, including from unlocked cars, without suspect information when the property value is under \$950, excluding firearms and materials threatening to public safety, i.e., explosives or highly toxic substances. Grand Thefts may also be filled if the victim is seeking documentation only and does not want prosecution. Thefts over \$950 should be reviewed by a supervisor to determine if further investigation is required.*
- (b) Vandalism without suspect information, which is not associated with a hate crime or school.*
- (c) Annoying telephone calls / scams.*
- (d) Lost property reports.*
- (e) Trespassing with no further leads.*
- (f) Identity theft / Fraud*
- (g) Civil complaints when it is apparent no crime occurred.*
- (h) Animal complaints.*
- (i) Vacation check request.*
- (j) Vandalism / Graffiti*
- (k) Supplements to previously reported reports.*

Nothing in this policy negates the ability of the shift supervisor to determine a deputy should respond in person instead.

345.3 DISPATCH/CIVILIAN PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES

When Dispatch or civilian personnel receive a call from a person who wishes to report an incident, that employee will determine if the call falls within the scope of an online report and that the reporting party is willing to utilize CopLogic. If so, the employee shall:

- (a) Determine if the reporting party has internet access.*
- (b) Verify the report qualifies for online reporting by meeting the following criteria:*
 - Reporting party is 18 years or older.*
 - Crime or incident occurred in SBSO jurisdiction.*
 - An email address is required.*
 - Incident is not in progress.*
 - No known suspect information or evidence that can lead to identifying a suspect.*
 - No crimes involving threats of weapons/guns/knives.*
 - No burglary related crimes, including theft from a locked vehicle.*

- (c) *Inform the caller a qualified online report allows them to file the report immediately and print a copy of the report free of charge.*
- (d) *Advise the caller of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office website address sbsheriff.org, which will guide them through the steps of filing a report.*

If the employee determines the call is not suitable for online reporting based on the listed criteria; they will prioritize the call and dispatch a deputy to take a report. The dispatcher or employee will make a notation in the CAD detail such as "no internet access"

345.4 REVIEWS OF REPORTS SUBMITTED ONLINE

- (a) *The area supervisor or his/her designee will review the reports, based on the supervisor's area of responsibility, in the online reporting system queue on a daily basis. Once approved, reviewed reports will be processed according to established procedures.*
- (b) *If the online report is misclassified, such as vandalism instead of theft from auto, the reviewer will classify the report according to the elements of the offense described by the citizen author.*
- (c) *The reviewer will refrain from making grammatical corrections to online reports unless they are minor in nature.*
- (d) *If there is a question as to the content, the reviewer should attempt to contact the reporting party by telephone prior to rejecting the report and make the correction to the online report.*
- (e) *If the reviewer rejects a report, the reason for rejection will be appropriately and professionally noted in the rejection box, which is sent via email to the citizen and a duplicate to a department storage mailbox.*
- (f) *The reviewer shall reject a report when, in the reasonable judgement of the employee, circumstances indicate an investigation is warranted. In this circumstance, the reviewer will state in the rejection box that the report does not qualify for online reporting, and further investigation is required.*
- (g) *The Records supervisor or designee will conduct periodic audits to ensure reports are entered into the Records Management System (RMS) in a timely manner.*



BERNARD MELEKIAN
Undersheriff