

## Motor Vehicle Crashes

### 506.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for responding to vehicle crashes.

### 506.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office not to respond to vehicle crashes. The Office will assist with traffic control, assisting EMS, and also the North Carolina State Highway Patrol whenever assistance is requested and feasible.

### 506.3 RESPONSE

Deputies shall respond in a non-emergency manner to vehicle crashes. Upon arriving at the scene, the responding deputy should assess the need for additional resources and summon assistance as appropriate.

A supervisor's response to the scene may vary depending on the location and the incident:

(a) A supervisor should respond when there is:

1. A county vehicle involved operated by a subordinate or other deputy.

#### 506.3.1 DEPUTY RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon arriving at the scene, the responding Deputy should consider and appropriately address:

- (a) Traffic direction and control.
- (b) Proper placement of emergency vehicles, cones, roadway flares or other devices if available to provide protection for Deputies, the public and the scene.
- (c) The potential for involvement of hazardous materials.
- (d) The need for additional support as necessary (e.g., traffic control, emergency medical services, fire department, HAZMAT, tow vehicles).
- (e) Clearance and cleanup of the roadway, when exigent circumstances are presented.

When a traffic accident occurs on a state maintained roadway, Deputies responding to the accident will be in a supportive role to the NCSHP. The NCSHP will be primarily responsible for the investigation and generally oversee the cleanup of the accident. Deputies will not remove or tow any vehicle from the scene of an accident occurring on a state maintained roadway.

### 506.4 NOTIFICATION

If a crash, involves a life-threatening injury or fatality of a Deputy of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, the responding deputy shall notify a supervisor. The Shift Supervisor will ensure notification is made to the Sheriff and the office command staff and in accordance with the Major Incident Notification Policy.

# Montgomery County Sheriff's Office

## Policy Manual

### *Motor Vehicle Crashes*

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#### 506.4.1 NOTIFICATION OF FAMILY

In the event of a life-threatening injury or fatality, the North Carolina State Highway Patrol should ensure notification of the victim's immediate family. The Responding Deputy may assist whenever needed. Notification should be made as soon as practicable following positive identification of the victim.

The identity of any person seriously injured or deceased in a crash should not be released to the public until notification is made to the victim's immediate family.

#### **506.5 MINIMUM REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

An incident report shall be taken (on private property) when:

- (a) A fatality, any serious injury, or hit and run is involved.
- (b) A member of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office is involved, in a county owned vehicle.
- (c) There is property damage:
  - 1. The property owner requests an incident report to be made for insurance purposes
- (d) The crash results in any damage to any county-owned or leased vehicle.
- (e) Directed by a supervisor.

#### 506.5.1 PRIVATE PROPERTY

Generally, reports should be taken when a crash occurs on private property when there is a serious injury or fatality, or a hit-and-run violation. Deputies should provide assistance to citizens on private property as a public service, and encourage the exchanging of information to settle the matter in a civil manner. Deputies shall not assist in the removal of the vehicles. This remains the sole responsibility of the vehicle and/or the property owner where the accident occurred.

#### 506.5.2 COUNTY VEHICLE INVOLVED

An incident report shall be taken when a county vehicle operated by a member is involved in any motor vehicle accident. The supervisor of the member involved will be responsible for the completion of this report, to include all pertinent information of all involved persons and photographs of the accident.

A general information report will be taken when the incident occurs on public or private property, whether it does or does not involve another vehicle, and whether or not it is a reportable crash pursuant to state law.

If the motor vehicle accident is on a state maintained roadway, and involves another vehicle or has caused property damage of another the NCSHP will be required to conduct an investigation and file a report on a DMV349 form. A copy of this report shall be attached to the County of Montgomery accident form as well as the sheriff's office incident report.

# Montgomery County Sheriff's Office

## Policy Manual

### *Motor Vehicle Crashes*

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Whenever there is damage to a county vehicle, a County of Montgomery accident report shall be completed in addition to the above stated general incident report, and forwarded to the Field Services Director for review. Reports will be copied and forwarded to the County Manager's Office.

#### **506.5.3 INJURED ANIMALS**

Deputies should refer to the Animal Control Policy when a crash involves the disposition of an injured animal.

#### **506.6 ENFORCEMENT ACTION**

Vehicle crashes occurring on the highways of the State of North Carolina are investigated by the North Carolina State Highway Patrol. Charges related to these investigations will normally be handled by that Agency. The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office may assist whenever requested with these investigations.

#### **506.7 REPORTS**

Deputies shall utilize the standard incident/investigation report forms for the reporting of vehicle accidents responsible by this office. All such reports shall be closed/cleared unless further criminal charges may apply to a continuing investigation. In the case of a further investigation, the shift supervisor shall make such determination as to whether the responding deputy shall follow up with the case, or if it needs to be forwarded to the Criminal Investigative Division for review.

##### **506.7.1 REPORT MODIFICATION**

A change or modification of a written report that alters a material fact in the report may be made only by the deputy who prepared the report, and only prior to its approval and distribution. Once a report has been approved and distributed, corrections shall only be made by way of a written supplemental report. A written supplemental report may be made by any authorized deputy.