



NORTH MIAMI POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES



TRAFFIC HOMICIDE 300.22

EFFECTIVE DATE: 06-14-23

APPROVED: 
Chief of Police

SUPERSEDES: 05-14-20

CFA: 18.03M, 27.16M

I. PURPOSE

To define guidelines for the response to traffic crashes where a serious injury occurred, which is likely and/or expected to result in a fatality.

II. POLICY

The North Miami Police Department will thoroughly investigate all fatal and near-fatal traffic crashes occurring in the City of North Miami.

III. SCOPE

This policy applies to all members of the Department.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Language clarification:

- Should: Indicates a general or expected action, absent a rational basis for failing to conform.
- Shall or Will: Indicates a mandatory action.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES/PROCEDURES

The Uniform Patrol primary unit will complete the initial traffic crash report. If the vehicular crash resulted in a fatality or serious injury, which is likely and/or expected to result in a fatality, the officer will secure the scene and the Traffic Safety Unit supervisor will be notified by the on-duty Shift Commander. The Traffic Safety Unit Supervisor will make the determination to call out a Traffic Homicide Investigation Team.

VI. ON SCENE INVESTIGATION

If it is determined that an Investigation Team is needed, the following will apply: **CFA 18.03A**

- A. Upon arrival at the scene, the Lead Traffic Homicide Investigator will note the time, location and manner in which the call was received, as well as arrival time at the scene. The Lead Traffic Homicide Investigator will make sure the scene is secure. The Lead Traffic Homicide Investigator is the person in charge of the scene.
- B. Uniform Patrol Section personnel will be utilized in a support capacity.
- C. If the Lead Traffic Homicide Investigator needs additional personnel, the Traffic Safety Unit supervisor will be notified.
- D. Notification on all traffic homicides will be made to the Chief of Police, or their designee, via the chain of command.
- E. The Lead Traffic Homicide Investigator will notify the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner's Office of every traffic fatality scene. The "on-call" Medical Examiner will be requested to respond to on-scene traffic deaths under the following circumstances:
 - 1. Hit and Run pedestrian fatalities;
 - 2. Multiple fatalities; and
 - 3. Any case where law enforcement requests the assistance of the Medical Examiner.
- F. The Lead Traffic Homicide Investigator is responsible for conducting a complete and thorough Traffic Homicide Investigation, including:

1. Obtaining/recording formal statements from witnesses. Statements should be taken following the structured formats provided for these investigations.
2. Note the time and location the Investigator views the victim. Note the clothing, apparent injuries and a list of valuables.
3. Examine the roadway characteristics that may have contributed to the crash, to include recording the effect of the crash on the roadway and any visual obstructions that contributed to the crash.
4. Photograph the roadway and vehicles. Photographs should include all sides of the crashed vehicles and other observable evidence pertinent to the crash scene.
5. Ensure detailed measurements of the crash scene are taken and recorded.

G. The Lead Traffic Homicide Investigator will be responsible for the collection of evidence relative to the investigation, on-scene and off-scene. Evidence will be impounded in accordance with the North Miami Police Department Property and Evidence SOP, 300.10.

H. Upon approval from the Traffic Safety Unit Supervisor, the Lead Traffic Homicide Investigator may request the assistance of experts or technicians (such as Crime Scene, etc.), or other assistance through existing mutual aid agreements.

I. If the victim is to be transported to the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner's Office, the Medical Examiner's Report Form will accompany the deceased.

J. Impound victim's property as per NMPD Property/Evidence SOP.

K. The Lead Traffic Homicide Investigator, or his/her designee, will be responsible for notifying the next of kin in person (when possible) in a respectful and courteous manner. When feasible, and upon request, assist the next of kin notified with any attempts to contact a friend, family member or cleric of choice to provide comfort and support to the next of kin.

L. When required by law, a search warrant will be obtained for any vehicle, Cellular telephone, or blood/DNA evidence that will assist in the investigation.

- M. The Public Information Officer may make a press release on the standard form with approval from the Chief of Police, or his/her designee.
- N. The Lead Traffic Homicide Investigator assigned to the case will make arrangements with the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner's Office to attend the autopsy of the victim, unless the Traffic Safety Unit Supervisor deems it unnecessary.

VII. REPORTS

All initial reports will be completed and submitted within 48 hours to the Traffic Safety Unit Supervisor for approval, unless otherwise authorized by a supervisor.