

Henderson Police Department

2020



Department

Accident and Injury

Analysis

Accident and Injury Analysis for (2020)

This analysis was conducted for the purpose of reviewing the Henderson Police Department's Vehicle Accidents and Personal Injuries for calendar year (2020). The Henderson Police Department takes its obligations seriously to provide the most effective and efficient police service while ensuring employee safety. Law Enforcement is a particularly dangerous occupation and while many of our activities are fraught with risks, employees must take every action possible to remain safe and prevent accidents and injuries when possible. This analysis is conducted each year to comply with Texas Law Enforcement Best Practice 4.10 and to attempt to identify methods for reducing the number of vehicle accidents and personnel injuries.

This analysis consists of two parts. First is the analysis of all Vehicle Accidents by members of this department, both sworn and non-sworn. The second part is an analysis of all non-vehicle personal injuries occurring during the year. The non-vehicle personal injuries can be any type of injury from straining a back due to heavy lifting to an injury occurring during a scuffle with a prisoner.

Accident and Injury Reporting Requirements

Texas Law Enforcement Best Practice 4.10, and Henderson Police Department General Order Policy 2.6 requires each vehicle accident and personal injury be reported and investigated.



"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."
Matthew 5:9

HENDERSON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Policy 2.6 Accident and Injury Prevention

Effective Date: 02.19.2015

Replaces:

Approved: _____

Chief Chad Taylor

Reference: 4.10

I. POLICY

Motor vehicle crashes involving agency vehicles present serious risks to agency personnel and the public as well as considerable financial loss due to injury, loss of manpower, vehicle damage, and possible tort liability. Personnel injuries also result in lost time, financial loss and the pain and suffering of our personnel. It is the department's responsibility to minimize these incidents through training, policy development, and review of incidents for compliance with policy. The department will utilize a review process for evaluating crashes and injuries in order to determine cause and to institute corrective and preventive actions where needed. The reviews and hearings concerning these crashes and injuries shall be conducted according to policy and procedures established herein.

II. PURPOSE

This policy provides the authority, and operating procedures for review of agency motor vehicle crashes and personnel injuries.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Motor Vehicle Accident: For purposes of this policy, a motor vehicle crash is any collision of a vehicle—with another vehicle, stationary object, or person—owned by or

assigned to this agency that results in property damage (regardless of amount) or personal injury.

- B. Personal Injury: For purposes of this policy, a personal injury is any injury to a member of this department resulting in immediate or subsequent treatment by a physician, lost work time, or requiring reporting under workers compensation rules.
- C. Non-preventable Crash or Injury: A crash or personal injury shall be classified as non-preventable when it is concluded that the member/operator exercised reasonable caution to prevent the crash or injury from occurring and observed applicable agency policy, procedures, and training.
- D. Preventable Crash or Injury: A crash or injury shall be deemed preventable when the member/operator failed to observe agency policy, procedures, or training, and/or failed to exercise due caution or appropriate defensive driving or trained defensive tactics.

IV. PROCEDURES:

- A. Training
 - 1. The department will provide on-going training to all employees on accident and injury prevention. The Annual Analysis of Accidents and Injuries described in Section E of this order shall be reviewed to identify the training needs of the department.
- B. Reporting and Investigating Motor Vehicle Crashes and Injuries.
 - 1. Unless incapacitated, employees are responsible for immediately notifying communications or their supervisor of any motor vehicle crashes and any personal injury sustained while on-duty. Communications shall notify the on-duty patrol supervisor and watch commander.
 - 2. Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that crash investigations are conducted by persons with appropriate traffic investigation training. The

supervisor will also conduct an investigation and complete any necessary worker's compensation forms needed for treatment or immediate reporting of an injury.

3. Where feasible, the supervisor, any accident investigators, and the involved officer(s) shall file reports on departmentally approved forms within 24 hours of a crash or injury occurrence.
4. The supervisor shall prepare a memorandum to the Chief that shall include the following information:
 - a. Details of the accident or injury and contributory factors to the crash or injury.
 - b. Statements of witnesses.
 - c. Name and insurance information on involved drivers and others involved in a crash, and the nature/seriousness of injuries and/or property damage.
 - d. A statement as to whether the supervisor believed the member's injury or crash was "preventable" or "non-preventable"—as defined by this policy—with documentation supporting those conclusions.
 - e. Any recommendations that would help prevent similar crashes in the future.
5. The Chief will review the supervisory investigation and make a determination of whether the accident or injury was Preventable or Non-Preventable.

6. Remedial Action

In addition to any other disciplinary measures taken by the department for a violation of policy, members of the department may be required to comply with the following:

- a. Members of the department that have a preventable vehicle crash may be required to undergo additional training, take a defensive driving course, or other corrective measures.

- b. More than four vehicle crashes in any 5-year period may result in termination for failure to perform basic job functions in a safe manner.
 - c. Members of the department that have repeated preventable injuries may be terminated due to inability to perform basic job functions in a safe manner.
- C. Annually the Patrol Commander shall conduct an analysis of all accidents and injuries and make any recommendations for training, equipment or policy changes needed to reduce employee motor vehicle accidents or personal injuries. The report with its recommendations will be forwarded to the Chief of Police for review and any action necessary.

Any time an employee is involved in a vehicle accident, department policy requires a Supervisor be immediately notified by the Dispatch center. The supervisor is required to go to the scene and conduct an investigation into the cause of the accident. If there is significant damage to either the police vehicle or a citizen's vehicle, the Supervisor may request the investigation be completed by a traffic accident specialist or even by another law enforcement agency.

The accident is reviewed to ensure the officer's actions were appropriate and within the guidelines of Department Policy. If the officer violated department policy or state law without justification, a departmental investigation is required and the officer may receive additional training or in some cases discipline up to and including termination from employment. This annual analysis is not intended to determine if an officer acted inappropriately, but to identify department wide trends that may suggest changes in policy, training, equipment or supervision.

Any personal injury occurring on the job that requires any form of treatment including first aid, must be reported immediately. Supervisors must complete the First Report of Injury and forward it to the Human Resources Department. Part of this reporting is attempting to determine the cause of the injury and methods for prevention. A copy of this form is maintained by the department and reviewed as part of this report to determine the causes of injuries within the department.

Vehicle Accident Comparison 2019 - 2020

There were a total of 4 Reported Vehicle Accidents for 2019. There were a total of 7 Reported Vehicle Accidents for 2020.

The Accident Causes are listed below by type.

	2019	2020	Difference
Fail to Maintain Control		1 (Avoidable)	+1
Improper Backing			
Ran Red Light/Stop Sign			
Speeding			
Driver inattention	3 (Avoidable)	2 (Avoidable)	-1
Other	1 (Unavoidable)	4 (Unavoidable)	+3
Total	4	7	

Personal Injury Analysis 2019/2020

There were a total of 6 personal injuries reported for 2019. There were a total of 5 personal injuries reported for 2020.

The injury causes are listed below by type.

	2019	2020	Difference
Injured by animal			
Training Injury	2 (Avoidable)	1 (Avoidable)	-1
Fight with suspect	2 (Unavoidable)	3 (Unavoidable)	+1
Fleet accident			
Knocking on door			
Personal Injury	2 (Avoidable)	1 (Avoidable)	-1
Total	6	5	

Individual Officer Analysis

While each employee's actions were reviewed immediately following the incident by the department, patterns of behavior can also indicate the need for additional training or supervision. Employees that were involved in multiple incidents this past year were reviewed in detail to determine if any additional training might be required.

Damage and Injury 2019

In 2019, there were 4 accidents and 6 personal injuries which had some damage or lost work time associated with the incident. These accidents and injuries are summarized below:

None of the on-duty vehicle accidents in 2019 resulted in a loss of work days. One of the on-duty vehicle accidents in 2019 totaled one of the PD's patrol units, while the others were minor

in nature. On Duty personal injuries in 2019 resulted in either EMS Inspection, or a subsequent ER visit that may have involved X-Rays/MRI. Most of the injuries required no days off, though one required the employee to go home early. 1 On Duty injury in 2019 was a self-stick due to an Animal Control Officer being careless with a Tranquilizer needle. Another On Duty injury in 2019 was due to an officer being careless with a drug field test kit vial resulting in a cut thumb. 2 more On Duty injuries in 2019 occurred when 2 officers wrestled a resisting suspect and fell to the ground, resulting in minor scrapes and abrasions. Yet 2 more On Duty injuries occurred during Defensive Tactics Training and were avoidable. One of those injuries was minor but the other required X-Rays and an MRI and may require Orthoscopic Surgery.

Damage and Injury 2020

In 2020, there were 7 Accidents and 5 Personal Injuries which had some damage or lost work time associated with the incident. These Accidents and Injuries are summarized below:

None of the 7 on-duty vehicle accidents in 2020 resulted in a loss of work days. 1 of the on-duty vehicle accidents in 2020 totaled one of the PD's patrol units, while the others were minor to mid-level damage in nature. On Duty personal injuries in 2020, of which there were 5, resulted in either EMS Inspection, or a subsequent ER visit that may have involved X-Rays/MRI. 4 of the 5 required no days off, but one required multiple follow up doctor visits and the employee was off work for approximately 2 months while healing. 3 of the personal injuries were incurred by officers while physically engaging with resistant arrestees, while another was careless when picking up a sharp object on a call and another was careless about their surroundings and twisted their ankle when they stepped wrong.

Policy Violations

The department policy on routine and emergency driving, including pursuits is reviewed periodically with employees to ensure they know their responsibilities. If an employee is found in violation of a department policy or law, the Chief may decide on an appropriate response, which may include additional training or even disciplinary actions if necessary.

In 2019, there was 2 policy violations identified in regards to vehicle operation or safety violations that were dealt with by issuing Written Warnings to the employee.

Three of the accidents in 2019 were minor and due to driver inattention and 1 accident was unavoidable due to citizen inattention.

In 2020, there were 3 policy violations identified in regards to vehicle operation or safety violations that were dealt with by issuing Written Warnings to the employee.

One of the accidents in 2020 resulted in the City's Patrol Unit being totaled due to driver inattention and was avoidable. Two more of the accidents in 2020 resulted in minor damage to the City's Patrol Units due to driver inattention and were avoidable. Four more of the accidents in 2020 were caused by inattentive citizens who struck and damaged the City's Patrol Units and were unavoidable for our personnel.

Summary and Recommendations

For 2019, with the exception of one, all on duty traffic accidents were due to driver inattention and were preventable. One of the traffic accidents in 2019 was due to citizen inattention. 2 of the personal injuries in 2019 were avoidable and due to employee carelessness (needle stick and cut thumb from poor handling of sharps in the field). This highlighted a need for employees to be more mindful and trained better for handling sharp or breakable equipment. 2 more of the 2019 injuries were minor and unavoidable and occurred during an arrest with a resisting suspect. 2 more of the 2019 injuries occurred during Defensive Tactics Training and highlighted the need to implement a higher level of Instructor/Student caution during classes involving physical contact. While 5 of the injuries in 2019 were minor, 1 was possibly significant.

For the seven 2020 vehicle accidents, 4 of the on-duty traffic accidents were due to citizen carelessness and inattention and were unavoidable for our employees. 3 of the on-duty traffic accidents were due to employee inattention or carelessness and were avoidable. This highlighted the fact that employees needed to be just as wary, if not more so, of other drivers on the road as they were for their own driving performance and safety. For the five 2020 on-

duty injuries, 3 of the injuries were incurred while wrestling with resistant arrestees and were unavoidable while the other 2 injuries resulted from employee carelessness/inattention during training or day to day operations and were avoidable. This highlighted a need for employees not only to pay closer attention to their hand-to-hand Defensive Tactics training when dealing with a resistant person, but also to be more mindful of basic safety protocols for themselves while in training or going about their day-to-day operations.

Data from this Annual Accident and Injury Analysis Report is reviewed and incorporated into subsequent Department training such as Daily Roll Call Briefing Trainings and annual Defensive Tactics training. The Department also has mandatory PMAM Policy review throughout the year that is tracked electronically and this ensures employees stay familiar with Dept Policy and Procedures and safety mandates. Officers are also encouraged to regularly review their SOP (Standard Operating Procedures manual) in order to remain familiar with basic operations protocols and safety procedures. All of this should keep officers and employees mindful of their responsibilities to exercise due diligence for the safety of the public, themselves and their co-workers when operating police vehicles, during training or in the performance of their duties.

Command Review:

Any Actions to be Taken:

The PD will continue to incorporate Roll Call Briefing Trainings that encourage better employee and driver safety, along with continuing to encourage employees to maintain a working knowledge of the PD Policies and SOP (Standard Operating Procedures) because these already establish safe protocols and procedures to follow in most circumstances encountered.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. [illegible]", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Chief of Police

8-4-21

Date