

Memorandum

TO: ALL DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL **FROM:** Paul Joseph
Acting Chief of Police

SUBJECT: DUTY MANUAL REVISION: C 1903 **DATE:** April 9, 2024
SOURCES FOR INFORMATION

APPROVED

Memo# 2024-008

BACKGROUND

A review of the Duty Manual discovered changes were necessary to ensure proper media response by Department members while interacting with the media during major field events.

Department members are reminded and encouraged to contact members of the Media Relations Unit for assistance (possibly to include response to the scene) whenever they are contacted by members of the media regarding an incident. In some cases, the Area Commander, or their designee, will provide on-scene media members with a basic interview about the known details of the incident. Duty Manual section C 1904 sets forth the following guidelines for dealing with the press at the scenes of major accidents, crimes, or police activities:

The following information should be released:

What: Do give a brief, accurate account of what is happening or has happened.

Where: Do provide this information (excluding the exact address).

When: Do provide this information, but only if you know it is accurate.

The following information should not be released:

Why: Do not provide this information.

Who: Do not provide the names of suspects who have not been arrested, except as permitted by law with the approval of the Chief of Police or Assistant Chief of Police. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] in accordance with Duty Manual section C 2205 - Police Records Exempt From Disclosure Under Subdivision (F) of Government Code Section 6254.

Additionally, California Government Code 7923.605 (a) allows for the withholding of any information that would endanger either of the following:

1. The safety of a witness or other person involved in the investigation.
2. The successful completion of the investigation or a related investigation.

ANALYSIS

The Duty Manual has been revised to reflect changes described below. Additions are shown in *italics and underlined*. Deletions are shown in ~~strike-through~~ form.

C 1903 SOURCES FOR INFORMATION:

Revised 04-09-24

The Department recognizes the mutual need for immediately releasable information in all cases of crimes or incidents of material importance or concern to the news media, notably those involving arrest and incarceration.

The Media Relations Unit was established in the Office of the Chief of Police to act as liaison between the Department and the media. Media requests should be coordinated through the Public Information Officer (PIO). Pursuant to Duty Manual section C 2202 -- DESIGNATED DEPARTMENT PUBLIC RECORDS ACT COORDINATOR - ADVICE FROM CITY ATTORNEY, the PIO shall coordinate requests for records with the Commander of the Research and Development Unit, Office of the Chief. During non-operational hours of the PIO office [REDACTED] the following protocol will be adhered to by Department members in reference to inquiries about "in-progress" events from the media:

~~Instruct members of the media to contact the BFO O.D.'s office at [REDACTED]. If the O.D.'s office cannot provide the member of the media with the requested information, they referred to the on duty area Commander of the Division where the incident is occurring. The area Commander will then contact the media representative in a "reasonable amount of time" to assist them in determining the significance, or lack thereof, of the incident in question. Media Relations Unit at [REDACTED].~~ When the area Commander deems necessary, or receives several inquiries into the same incident, they will prepare a preliminary press release in compliance with Govt. Code 6254(f). As appropriate, the responsible investigative unit or the Media Relations Unit will prepare an updated release. notify the on-call PIO in order to post a social media update to the ongoing event. When deemed appropriate by the Media Relations Unit Commander, the responsible investigative unit, in coordination with the Media Relations Unit, will prepare a press release for public disclosure. It is also expected that the area Commander, or their designee, will provide "on-scene" media members with a basic interview (verbal or video) about the known details of the incident within the provisions of Duty Manual section C 1904 - INFORMATION RELEASE CRITERIA. This does not preclude on-scene Department members from requesting assistance, to include response to the scene, from Media Relations Unit members.

The assigned investigative unit, after consultation and agreement by the Chief of Police, has final authority in determining what information is released in reference to a specific "on-going" investigation. Media requests regarding on-going investigations shall be referred to the Deputy Chief of the Bureau of Investigations or the on-duty Commander of the appropriate investigative unit. On Saturdays and Sundays and other than business hours, refer requests for information to the on-duty Commander of the Bureau of Field Operations. The Department's PIO is on call through Communications seven days a week and is available to Department members for

ALL DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: DUTY MANUAL REVISION: C 1903 SOURCES FOR INFORMATION

April 9, 2024

Page 3

coordination of media releases or response to major incidents such as officer-involved shootings and homicides.

RELEASE OF OTHER TYPES OF INFORMATION: All other types of information to be released to the public will be coordinated through the Media Relations Unit and the Commander of the Research and Development Unit, during normal business hours, prior to being referred to the appropriate unit for response. Examples of these types of information are as follows:

- Department policy
- Statistical, budgetary and departmental planning, recruitment, training and personnel
- Major crimes and narcotics
- Gambling, prostitution and pornography.

FIELD OPERATIONS: Information regarding major accidents, crimes or activities in progress should be obtained from the area Commander of the division of occurrence or his designee. Officers who are contacted by the media at the scene of an "in-progress" event should ~~provide them with the basic details of the event. If unsure as to what information to release, officers will refer media to a supervisor or area commander.~~ direct them to a supervisor or area commander. Generally, the press should be provided with what has occurred or is occurring. Field command officers are responsible for ensuring that a BFO Info Report ~~press release~~ is completed on major field events such as fatal traffic accidents or hostage/barricade situations for the Media Relations Unit to create a press release when appropriate.

ORDER

Effective immediately, all Department personnel shall adhere to the above Duty Manual section.



Paul Joseph
Acting Chief of Police

PJ:PH:JP:JG