



OSHKOSH POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Chief of Police: David W. Erickson (Signature on File)	Date Signed: 07-24-02

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Review By: Lt. Scott Greuel / Various Media Sources

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Appendix A Media Information

105.01 PURPOSE AND GENERAL POLICY

The Oshkosh Police Department is committed to informing the community and the news media of agency activities, including, but not limited to:

- 1) Police reports,
- 2) Arrest reports,
- 3) Crime trends,
- 4) Crime Prevention programs,
- 5) State statutes and local ordinances, and
- 6) Internal agency administration and operational functions.

The Oshkosh Police Department hopes to obtain the support, trust, cooperation and respect of the community in which it serves through the exchange of information. Although every effort will be made to foster an open environment, occasionally information must be withheld from the news media in order to safeguard the constitutional rights of the accused, to avoid interfering with an on-going investigation or because it is legally protected.

105.02 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The designated Public Information Officer (PIO) is the Sergeant of Crime Prevention, or in his/her absence, is any other officer designated by the Chief of Police with a rank of sergeant or above. The PIO will coordinate the dissemination of information to the community, media and other criminal justice agencies. The PIO will assist the news media in gathering information about situations and cases involving the activities of the Oshkosh Police Department.

105.03 RESPONSIBILITIES

The Public Information Officer will be responsible for the following activities:

- A. Assisting news personnel in their reporting of routine news stories and at the scenes of major incidents.
- B. Responding to information requests from the media in a timely and efficient manner.
- C. Preparing and distributing agency news releases
- D. Arranging for, and assisting at news conferences.
- E. Coordinating and authorizing the release of information about victims, witnesses and suspects.

- F. Assisting in crisis situations within the Oshkosh Police Department.
- G. Coordinating and authorizing the release of information concerning confidential agency investigations and operations.
- H. Developing procedures for releasing information when other public service agencies are involved in a mutual effort.

105.04 NEWS RELEASE PROCEDURES

The Public Information Officer, or designee, may provide the media with an activity printout on a daily basis that is available at the front desk. The PIO shall provide the media with information from reports determined to be relevant by the media, with the exception of those listed as being protected in section 105.01.

News releases shall be prepared and provided to the complaint desk to ensure the quick and accurate release of information regarding major incidents, when appropriate. The PIO shall also call, fax or email news releases to the various media outlets listed in Appendix A105. Every effort will be made by Oshkosh Police Department personnel to ensure that all media representatives have equal access to information that can be released.

105.05 NEWS RELEASE AUTHORIZATION

In the absence of the PIO, or designee, or if information is requested that the PIO may not have access or authorization to release; information shall be released in the following manner:

- A. Major crime scene information or information pertaining to incidents under investigation should be obtained from the Chief of Police or an officer designated by the Chief.
- B. At times when the PIO or designee is unavailable, information should be obtained from the Shift Commander.
- C. The PIO, a designee or the on-duty Shift Commander will be available for on-call questions by the media relevant to specific situations

- D. On certain occasions, the media may request to speak with or interview Oshkosh Police Department representatives who may possess specific information pertaining to a newsworthy topic. These interviews are permissible, however must first be approved by the officer's supervisor and must be conducted in conformance to the guidelines outlined in this policy.
- E. Any information requests pertaining to departmental policy or internal investigations shall be directed to the Chief of Police.
- F. Information released to the news media must be reported to the PIO as soon as possible. The Appendix A105 form can be used for this purpose.
- G. Copies of police reports and documents will be made available to community and media representatives in accordance with Records Department procedures (Policy 106) and applicable federal and state statutes governing the release of information to the public.

105.06 MEDIA ACCESS RESTRICTIONS TO MAJOR INCIDENTS

The news media, including photographers, will not be allowed access to any area, including fires, natural disasters, other catastrophic events or crime scenes, where such access would adversely effect police operations. Nor will the media be permitted access to an area where their presence would jeopardize the life of, or present a substantial possibility of injury or death to a member of the Oshkosh Police Department or the community.

Every effort will be made to allow access to the scene of an incident by the media when and where it is appropriate, as determined by an officer in charge of the incident. In lieu of access to the scene, a single designated area will be established where the PIO, or designee, can provide information to media representatives. Whenever the news media is denied access to an incident, they will be given an explanation for that denial.

105.07 MEDIA PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Oshkosh Police Department will involve the news media in the development of changes in policies and procedures relating to the public information function. The department shall actively seek input in reference to these policies through meetings, committees or other correspondence, and will incorporate such recommendations into policy whenever appropriate.

105.08 GUIDELINES GOVERNING THE RELEASE OF INFORMATION

In the event of an ongoing investigation, any information that may jeopardize the investigation can be withheld from the media. The Oshkosh Police Department will generally release the following information:

- A. The basic facts surrounding the crime or incident.
- B. Whether or not an arrest has been effected, and if so, the criminal charges and defendant information.
- C. The time and location of the arrest.
- D. The name of the victim(s) and witnesses may be released providing that the release of that information will not endanger their safety, hamper the investigation or violate the law.
- E. The name of a deceased victim can be released only after the next of kin have been notified.
- F. Type of property loss, injuries sustained or damages.
- G. The knowledge of suspects.
- H. Information concerning unidentified suspects, such as physical description or vehicle description, providing the release of that information will not hamper the investigation.
- I. Identification of fugitive suspects for whom a warrant has been issued.
- J. Length of the investigation and the name of the officer or investigator overseeing the investigation.
- K. Conviction records, providing the accuracy of those records can be verified.

The following information will NOT be released to the media:

- A. Observations regarding the arrested person's character or speculations of guilt or innocence.
- B. Statements concerning the credibility of witness testimony.

- C. Statements concerning evidence, regardless of whether such evidence may tend to implicate or exonerate a suspect.
- D. Any comments regarding confessions, alibis or any other statements that may tend to implicate or exonerate a suspect.
- E. Specific information that is known only to the victim, police and suspect.
- F. Any "Off the Record" remarks.
- G. Any comment as to the use of specific police equipment, procedures or investigative techniques.
- H. Suspect names.
- I. Copies of other agency reports.
- J. The identity of juveniles when restricted by State statute.
- K. Precise information about weapons involved or other physical evidence if that information is relevant to the investigation.
- L. Misleading information or conjecture about suspects.
- M. The refusal of the accused to make a statement or to submit to an exam or test.
- N. The description or results of laboratory examinations or physical evidence.
- O. Revelation that the accused directed investigators to the location of evidence.
- P. If information leading to an arrest was obtained through an informant.
- Q. Any information regarding confidential informants.
- R. Any information regarding John Doe hearings.

105.09 REPORTING INFORMATION TO THE P.I.O.

Every effort shall be made by Shift Commanders, Bureau Commanders and the Chief of Police to notify the PIO of newsworthy events occurring within the agency or in the community in a timely manner. The PIO should not have to rely upon the media to be informed of newsworthy events that have occurred or are occurring.

105.10 INFORMATION RELEASE REGARDING THE ACTIVITIES OF OTHER AGENCIES

Whenever an agency other than the Oshkosh Police Department is involved in an activity or investigation in the City of Oshkosh, that outside agency will be responsible for releasing information pertaining to its activity to the media.

In a situation where multiple agencies are involved in an investigation, all agencies will be consulted to plan for the release of information to the media.

MEDIA INFORMATION

DATE _____ COMPLAINT # _____

ADDRESS _____

TYPE OF INCIDENT _____

<u>NEWSPAPER</u>	<u>PHONE #</u>	<u>FAX #</u>
OSHKOSH NORTHWESTERN	426-6687	235-1527
APPLETON POST CRESCENT	729-6622 993-1000 Ext. 200 Night Hours	733-1945
BUYER'S GUIDE	235-1790	235-1833
ADVANCED TITAN	424-3048	424-0866
ASSOCIATED PRESS	1-800-242-9022	414-225-3599
<u>TELEVISION</u>	<u>PHONE #</u>	<u>FAX #</u>
WBAY (Channel 2)	432-3331 438-3374	432-1190 G.B. 731-2730 Fox Valley
OSHKOSH / APPLETON	731-2828 233-6300	
WFRV (Channel 5)	437-5411 733-5555	437-5769 G.B. 734-5855 Fox Valley
WLUK (Fox 11)	490-1407 1-800-242-8067 734-8050 734-8734	494-9109 G.B. 734-8166 Fox Valley
NBC 26	830-2633 1-800-800-6619	490-2500 G.B. 830-2628 Fox Valley
CITY CABLE (Channel 10)	236-5260 Ext. 3	236-5262 City Hall
<u>RADIO</u>	<u>PHONE #</u>	<u>FAX #</u>

WOSH / WVBO	236-1055	236-1040
WHBY – APPLETON	733-6639	749-1150
WPKR	236-4242	236-4240
WNAM / WWWX – Fox	426-3239 727-1837 Neenah	722-0211
KFIZ	921-1071	921-0757
WAPL	235-7625	733-3291
FDL	926-9797	923-1042
WROE	435-3771	444-1155
WIXX	“	“
WGEE	“	“
WLTM	“	“
WNFL	“	“
WNCY	“	“
WOZZ	“	“