



**CITY OF AKRON, OHIO**  
**POLICE DIVISION**  
**KENNETH R. BALL II, CHIEF OF POLICE**

<b>NUMBER</b> P-2021-071	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b> January 11, 2021	<b>RESCINDS</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b> Arson Investigations		<b>ISSUING AUTHORITY</b> Chief Kenneth R. Ball II

## **I. POLICY**

The purpose of this policy is to formally establish a working relationship between the Akron Police Department and the Akron Fire Investigation Unit. This Procedure serves as an Arson supplement to the Preliminary Investigation Procedure.

## **II. DEFINITIONS**


- A. Arson: The criminal act of deliberately setting fire to persons or property.
- B. Significant Burn Injury: Any thermal or chemical burn that requires medical treatment beyond minor bandaging (e.g. second or third degree burns to the hands, arms, legs, back, torso, etc.).
- C. Life Threatening Burn Injury: Any thermal or chemical burn severe enough to create an immediate life risk (e.g. burns to the head, neck, face, airway, torso, etc.).
- D. Arson Evidence: Any evidence related to the intentionally set fires (e.g. flammable liquids and containers, incendiary devices, victim clothing, burnt items, suspects clothing, etc.).

## **III. PROCEDURE**

- A. Arson or Attempted Arson to Persons - Fires involving death or significant injuries will be a cooperative investigation between the Police Major Crimes Unit, the Juvenile Bureau and the Fire Investigation Unit. This includes fires set in an attempt to cover up crimes committed against persons. The Major Crimes Unit assigned detective(s) will be the lead investigator(s) while the Fire Investigations Unit will serve as the origin and cause experts and support throughout the investigation.
  - 1. Patrol officers who discovers a working fire or who are dispatched to a working fire will ensure that AFD is notified through dispatch.

2. Responding officers will follow the Preliminary Investigation Procedure and look for witnesses and evidence and serve as support for Akron Fire.
  3. Officers who have cause to believe a fire is an arson with a death or serious injury to a person will notify the Major Crimes Unit through the Detective Bureau Desk and the Fire Investigation Unit through dispatch.
  4. Officers will continue to follow the Preliminary Investigation Procedure until relieved by the Lead Major Crimes detective on scene.
- B. Arson or Attempted Arson to structure or vehicle – Fires involving only structures or vehicles will be investigated by the Fire Investigations Unit.
1. Patrol officers who discover a structure fire or vehicle fire will ensure that AFD is notified through dispatch.
  2. Responding officers will follow the Preliminary Investigation Procedure and look for witnesses and evidence and serve as support for Akron Fire,
  3. Should any responding officer find evidence that supports the fire was caused by arson, they will notify the Fire Department Incident Commander. The Fire Incident Commander will notify the Fire Investigations Unit.
  4. If the Fire Investigation Unit is not available, responding officers will complete an Incident Report and forward all information to the Fire Investigations Unit through email. ([arson@akronohio.gov](mailto:arson@akronohio.gov))
  5. Akron Police Property Crimes Unit will assist the Akron Fire Investigations Unit whenever requested. The detective assigned to the district in which the arson occurs will be the liaison.
- C. Complete burn of a motor vehicle – Extinguished fires not previously reported.
1. Patrol officers who are dispatched to or discover a completed burn of a motor vehicle will confirm through dispatch that other units (police or fire) have not been previously dispatched.
  2. If no one else was previously on scene, the responding officer will complete an Incident Report with Arson as the offense and forward all information to the Fire Investigation Unit through email. ([arson@akronohio.gov](mailto:arson@akronohio.gov))

By Order Of,



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Kenneth R. Ball II  
Chief of Police

Date January 11, 2021