



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

NUMBER P-2020-045	EFFECTIVE DATE February 20, 2020	RESCINDS P-2010-045 Issued 10-13-10
SUBJECT Motor Vehicle Theft Report Procedure		ISSUING AUTHORITY Chief Kenneth R. Ball II

I. POLICY

It is important to investigate all factors to determine whether a motor vehicle theft has occurred and accurately document any obtained information to assist the Auto Theft Unit detectives with the resolution of the case.

II. PROCEDURE

A. WHAT TO REPORT

1. Any titled, on or off road, vehicle or watercraft.
2. Any vehicle with a Certificate of Registration or Statement of Origin as required by the State of Ohio or other state of registration, including mopeds.
3. More than one vehicle can be listed on an Incident Report, as long as they were taken during the same incident.
4. A stolen or missing license plate will be documented on an Incident Report and a Stolen Plate Report.

B. OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Officers will investigate the following:
 - a. Is the complainant the owner or person entitled to custody and control of the vehicle?
 - b. Does the owner have reason to believe a friend or member of the family may have the vehicle or otherwise loaned it to anyone?
 - c. Are all keys accounted for?
 - d. Was the vehicle towed or repossessed?
 - e. Is the owner certain of the location where the vehicle was last parked?

2. Complete the Incident Report

a. General information for all reports.

- 1) All property of value shall be noted in the stolen property section. Obtain serial numbers for firearms and any electronic devices (cellphones, laptops, iPads) that are reported stolen.
- 2) A contact telephone number must be obtained and the owner should be informed that they are to contact Safety Communications with any change of address.
- 3) If the vehicle is to be held for processing, set the hold status in the supplemental section under caution information. Additionally, note this in the investigative notes section including why and for whom it is to be held.
- 4) All reports will be called into Safety Communications by telephone as soon as the report is completed.
 - a) Notify the call taker of any firearms or dangerous ordinances and note this in the remarks section.
 - b) Notify the call taker if a vehicle is to be held for processing and note the call taker's name/tech number in the narrative section.
- 5) Canvass the area for witnesses and surveillance cameras. Note persons spoken with and their addresses in the investigative notes section. Collect video of the incident if available or have CSU respond to do so. If unable to collect a video, note this in the investigative notes as to why.

b. A report will be classified as official when all of the following apply:

- 1) The titled owner or person entitled to custody and control of the vehicle is making the report.
- 2) Complete information, including license number and vehicle identification number, have been verified by inspection of title, registration, manufacturer's State of Origin; or verified by a check of LEADS/NCIC files, Bureau of Motor Vehicles, or Title Bureau records.
- 3) It has been determined that the vehicle has not been loaned or given to anyone.

c. A report will be classified as unofficial when any of the following apply:

- 1) The license number or vehicle identification number has not been verified. The reporting party shall also be informed that if they do not call Safety

- Communications or the Auto Theft Unit to give a proper serial number or license number within forty-eight hours, the report will be cleared.
- 2) The person making the report is not the owner or person entitled to custody and control of the vehicle or does not have verifiable information.
 - 3) The reason why the report is unofficial will be stated in the remarks section.
 - 4) Officers will call Safety Communications by telephone as soon as the report is completed, emphasizing the report is unofficial.
- d. A conversion is a type of unofficial report where it has been determined that the auto was loaned and not returned. This type of report will be made official only after a warrant has been signed. The offense will be labeled as an Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle on the Incident Report. This type of report also applies to rental agencies (e.g. U-Haul, AVIS, Enterprise) whose business involves renting vehicles or heavy equipment and the renter fails to return the vehicle/equipment by the contractual date/time.
- 1) In most cases, the reporting party should be advised that no immediate police action will be taken in regard to the vehicle until such time as a warrant has been signed.
 - 2) If substantial evidence exists, the officer should allow the victim to sign an Unauthorized Use of Motor Vehicle Complaint and then have vehicle entered as official.
- e. An Incident Report should not be titled as an auto theft when the following apply:
- 1) The vehicle is being driven by a co-owner or spouse unless a court order exists stating the person has sole possession. In such cases, a conversion report will be completed and the Auto Theft Unit will investigate.
 - 2) Attempted motor vehicle thefts will not be reported on an Incident Report unless the vehicle has been moved. If the vehicle was damaged in the attempt (i.e. column peeled, window broken), document the incident as a Criminal Damaging, not as an Attempted Theft. If the vehicle is moved in any way then it should be documented as a Theft.
 - 3) Large farm or construction equipment with serial numbers will be treated the same as stolen vehicles.

- f. Foreign stolen, locally recovered vehicles.
 - 1) Complete the Incident Report with Foreign Stolen, Locally Recovered as the offense and mark the foreign stolen, locally recovered box. The report should include:
 - a) Name and address of the owner.
 - b) Date the theft occurred.
 - c) Entering agency.
 - d) All other available information, including license plate number, serial number, condition of vehicle, and arrests.
 - 2) "Location Occurred" is where the auto is recovered, not the city from where the auto was stolen.
- g. Recovery of stolen vehicles.
 - 1) Provide LEADS with all recovery information.
 - 2) Complete a Towed Auto Report indicating all details such as the condition of the vehicle inside and out. Also, any evidence or potential evidence that was recovered and its location.
 - a) Officers are to visually verify the vehicle identification number on the dashboard and the federal sticker on the doorjamb. If the vehicle identification number is unreadable, or the federal sticker is missing on the doorjamb, then place a hold on the vehicle for the Auto Theft Unit.
 - b) Do not use the vehicle identification number based solely on the license plate.
 - 3) If arson or attempted arson is involved, complete an Incident Report and place a hold on the vehicle for the Akron Fire Department Fire Investigation Bureau.
 - 4) If a vehicle is stolen with license plates but recovered without one or both of the plates, this fact shall be noted in the recovery section of the Incident Report.
 - 5) When only one of the plates has been recovered, the owner must be notified not to use this single plate on their vehicle as it will still be listed as stolen.

C. SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS' RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Check to determine if the vehicle was towed or repossessed.

2. Stolen vehicle information will be entered into LEADS/NCIC as soon as practical.
3. The stolen vehicle information will be added to the Akron Police Intranet Home Page Auto Theft Section.
4. Dispatchers will broadcast official stolen vehicles as soon as practical.
5. Unofficial reports will not be broadcast locally or be entered in the LEADS/NCIC, except when requested by an officer in unusual circumstances. When an unofficial stolen auto is broadcast, that fact will be emphasized.
6. Dispatchers will broadcast cancelled stolen vehicles as soon as possible, and have it removed from LEADS/NCIC. If one or both plates are not recovered, then the dispatcher will announce that these plates are still active.

By Order Of,

Kenneth R. Ball II
Chief of Police

Date _____