



**Las Cruces Police Department
GENERAL ORDERS
FIELD OPERATIONS VOLUME 2
GO-276 FATAL OR SERIOUS INJURY CRASHES
Revised 5/13/2005**

276 FATAL OR SERIOUS INJURY CRASHES

POLICY

In addition to the procedures in G.O. 274, the following procedures are mandatory in investigating and processing all fatal and serious injury crashes. If the crash involves multiple fatalities, the relevant procedures shall be repeated for each.

276.01 GREAT BODILY HARM

Means an injury to the person which creates a high probability of death; or which causes serious disfigurement; or which results in permanent or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any member or organ of the body.

276.02 HOMICIDE BY VEHICLE

66-8-101 NMSA 1978, Is the killing of a human being in the unlawful operation of a motor vehicle.

Any person who commits homicide by vehicle while under the influence of intoxicating liquor, or while under the influence of any drug, or while driving recklessly is guilty of Homicide by Vehicle.

276.03 INJURY TO PREGNANT WOMAN BY VEHICLE

66-8-101.1 NMSA 1978, Is injury to a pregnant woman by a person other than the woman in the unlawful operation of a motor vehicle causing her to suffer a miscarriage or stillbirth as a result of that injury.

276.04 ASSAULT BY MOTOR VEHICLE

Assaults with a motor vehicle are usually classified as Aggravated Assaults. Such incidents are not considered motor vehicle crashes. The Criminal Investigation Section will be called to investigate these incidents.



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276.05 NOTIFICATIONS

In all fatal crashes, great bodily harm crashes, injury traffic crashes involving a City of Las Cruces employee in a City owned vehicle, all crashes in which there is a likelihood of felony charges, and all crashes resulting from a police pursuit, the on duty supervisor shall notify the on duty Traffic Unit Sergeant and/or the on call Crash Response Team Sergeant.

276.06 AUTHORITY

In all serious traffic crashes and when appropriate, the Traffic Unit supervisor at the scene should assume command of the investigation after being briefed by the on-scene Incident Commander.

276.07 PRESERVATION OF EVIDENCE

Special care should be taken in preserving all physical evidence at the scene until collected, measured, photographed.

276.08 INITIAL ACTIONS

The first officer to arrive shall be responsible for preserving the scene until released by the Incident Commander. In addition, the first officer on scene shall make the scene safe, assist the injured, notify a supervisor, secure witnesses, preserve the scene and evaluate the need for additional resources. When at the scene of a serious crash, officers should ensure scene integrity by waiting for investigative personnel to provide direction before marking the scene, moving any evidence or releasing any witnesses.

In cases where injured persons or evidence must be moved prior to the arrival of investigators, the first responding officer should make appropriate markings.

First arriving officers should generally avoid administering Standardized Field Sobriety Tests or making an arrest prior to the arrival of investigators. A Traffic Unit supervisor should be consulted before any arrests pertaining to the crash are made.



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276.09 MEDICAL INVESTIGATOR

State statute dictates that the body of the deceased shall not be moved or searched until a representative of the Office of the Medical Investigator has arrived at the scene.

The estimated time of death, time of declaration of death and time of removal of the body shall be noted in the police report. Information will include who removed the body and where it was taken.

276.10 INTERVIEWS

At the discretion of the investigating officer(s), all uninjured occupants and witnesses involved may be transported to the Police Department for interviews.