



Alexandria Police Department

Directive 4.1B



SAFETY COMMITTEE

Effective Date: 07-09-2019

Cancel: 01-29-2015

Updated Date:

Section(s):

SME Review Date:

Updated Date:

Section(s):

2022

Updated Date:

Section(s):

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4.1B.01 PURPOSE/POLICY

The purpose of this directive is to establish policy for the administration of the Safety Committee. The Safety Committee is to develop and recommend measures for assuring personnel safety, health, and wellness, and to monitor and/or anticipate hazardous and unsafe situations. It is not a disciplinary committee and its function is not disciplinary in nature.

It is the policy of this Department to promote safe practices and conditions for its employees through accident analysis, training, and participation in citywide safety and wellness efforts. This directive establishes responsibilities for these functions.

4.1B.02 DEFINITION

Accident - An event, occurrence, or happening, which is unexpected or unintended, that has an element of chance or probability and which usually produces a measurable injury, death, or property damage loss.

Near Miss Event – A near miss event is defined as an unintentional, unsafe event that almost resulted in an injury or fatality, if not for a fortunate break in the chain of events.

Near Miss Reporting System – The national Law Enforcement Officer Near Miss Reporting System (www.LEOnearmiss.org) is a voluntary, confidential, non-punitive and secure reporting system, managed by the Police Foundation, with the goal of improving law enforcement officer safety. Law enforcement personnel are encouraged to share their near-miss stories and lessons learned to shield other law enforcement personnel from accidents, injuries and fatalities, as well as to prevent other community crises from occurring. By collecting and analyzing information on near miss events, improvements can be made in supervision, operations, policy, equipment, and training.

Reporter – Any agency member who submits a near miss report.

Reviewer – An individual, possessing at least 10 years of law enforcement experience, designated by the Law Enforcement Officer Near Miss staff at the Police Foundation to review a submitted near miss report for the purposes of removing identifying agency information, editing the report, and identifying options for improving officer safety.

4.1B.03 RULES/RESPONSIBILITIES**A. The Safety Committee**

1. The Chief of Police will appoint employees to serve on the Safety committee, one of whom will be a sworn supervisor/commander. This appointee will chair the committee. Other members will consist of one representative from each bureau, Field Operations/Patrol, Administrative Services, and Investigations; and an employee from Fleet Management. The City's Risk Manager or his/her designee is to be considered a member of the Safety Committee.
2. **The Safety committee shall hold quarterly meetings, or additional meetings as required.** All incidents and near misses reported will be heard and recommendations will be made. Each member of the committee will attend all meetings unless excused by the chairperson.

3. The committee will review the circumstances surrounding all Department vehicle accidents, injuries and property damage incidents from a safety perspective, and submit a quarterly report of findings to the Chief of Police.
4. The committee will make recommendations for safe operational procedures, and health and wellness, and assist with policy development. In those cases where the committee determines that training or other action is needed, the committee will forward all the necessary information to the appropriate committee or designee.
5. If requested from the Chief of Police or Captain, the committee may study hazardous conditions or unsafe practices brought to its attention. These issues may result from an accident, injury, [near miss](#), or other hazardous condition.
6. [When an employee has sustained a preventable vehicle accident or injury he/she shall be scheduled to attend a Safety Committee meeting to explain the circumstances of incident, provide preventive measures, and lessons learned.](#)
7. [The Chief of Police and Department commanders are responsible for ensuring the Department maintains an anonymous near miss reporting process and a non-punitive approach to correcting good faith errors. Supervisors are also responsible for utilizing near miss incident data and lessons learned received from the Department's Near Miss Coordinator for roll call training and other training opportunities.](#)
8. [All Department personnel are highly encouraged to submit timely near miss reports and maintain a working knowledge of the Law Enforcement Officer Near Miss Reporting System.](#)

B. Safety Committee Chairperson

1. Will meet with the Chief of Police or designee to assist in selecting new members.
2. Will be responsible for quarterly and annual reports submitted to the Chief of Police.
3. Will maintain a records system summarizing accidents by injury, type, and costs, and prepare safety reports for the Chief of Police.
4. Will conduct an annual analysis of police vehicle pursuits after reviewing the submitted Vehicle Pursuit Reports (APD-478) required by Police Directive 10.11B – Emergency Vehicle Pursuits. **[41.2.2.j]**

5. The Chairman of the Safety Committee will act as the Near Miss Coordinator and is responsible for overseeing the Department's program and serving as the point of contact for the National Near Miss program administrator at the Police Foundation. The Department program coordinator is also responsible for coordinating the Near Miss program training for all Department members, continually promoting the program and encouraging report submissions, and receiving and distributing near miss analytical data from the national Near Miss Administrator to all Departmental personnel.

4.1B.04 LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER NEAR MISS PROGRAM

A. Background

1. Near miss reporting is proven to reduce fatalities, injuries, and equipment loss in a number of industries (e.g., fire service, aviation, medicine, and energy). Managing error using non-punitive strategies such as near miss reporting has proven to be an effective tool in keeping the workforce and the community safe.

Near miss reporting started in the airline industry in 1976, after the crash of TWA flight 514 at Dulles International Airport. Due to near miss observations and other technological improvements, the rate of fatal accidents has dropped about 65 percent, to one fatal accident in about 4.5 million departures, from one in nearly 2 million in 1997.

In 2014, the Law Enforcement Officer Near Miss Reporting System was established, with funding support from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office). The Police Foundation, a national, independent non-profit organization, operates the system. Since its launch, the LEO Near Miss system has received endorsements and partnerships with the National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial Fund (NLEOMF), the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST), the Officer Down Memorial Page (ODMP) and the Below 100 organization.

Law enforcement members are highly encouraged to submit a report when involved in or having witnessed or become aware of a near miss event. Near miss reports take minutes to submit, can be submitted anonymously and are not forwarded to regulatory or investigative agencies but are used to provide analysis, policy and training recommendations to the law enforcement community. Given the concept's proven reliability and the dedication this Department has to the health and welfare of its personnel, the Alexandria Police Department is issuing this policy endorsing the use of near miss reporting.

B. Applicability

This policy applies to all personnel of the Alexandria Police Department.

C. Policy

1. Personnel who personally experience, witness, or are aware of a near miss event are encouraged to submit a near miss report.
2. Personnel submitting near miss reports must use the Law Enforcement Officer Near Miss Reporting System (www.LEOnearmiss.org) or the Law Enforcement Officer Near Miss mobile application as the method for recording their near miss event.
3. Multiple reports of the same incident are encouraged. The variety of perspectives provides additional value to the analysis of the incident.
4. Ensuring anonymity and confidentiality is paramount. No personnel submitting a near miss report will be forced to identify themselves. Department management will not seek out the identity of personnel who submit near miss reports, and near miss reports will not be used as the basis for initiating and administering disciplinary action against Department personnel.

D. Procedure

1. Personnel who experience, witness, or are informed of a near miss incident should submit the report to www.LEOnearmiss.org or the LEO Near Miss mobile application to support the program's efforts to improve officer safety.
2. The involved/informed personnel should complete all sections of the www.LEOnearmiss.org report. Reporters are highly encouraged to complete the full near miss report form to ensure all information related to the near miss is captured.
3. Reporters may also download and send a copy of their report, once reviewed and published, to the agency Near Miss Coordinator. This will enable the Department to rapidly respond to the incident and implement corrective actions needed to prevent the near miss from becoming a serious injury or fatality within the Department; however, this is optional in order to preserve anonymity in near miss reporting. In situations where immediate corrective actions are necessary to maintain the safety of personnel, or if the incident is under investigation by the Department or could become the subject of an investigation, reporters are *strongly* encouraged to notify Department supervisors *prior* to submitting a near miss report.

4.1B.05 RELATED INFORMATION

Police Directive 4.1A (ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES).
Police Directive 10.11B (EMERGENCY VEHICLE PURSUITS)

BY AUTHORITY OF:

Michael L. Brown
Chief of Police