



### Tips for Reporting Crimes, Suspicious Activities, Incident and Case Numbers

For reporting purposes, crimes and suspicious activities are considered as either emergencies or non-emergencies. Emergencies situations are those that demand immediate attention, should be reported by calling 911. Non-emergencies and suspicious activities should be reported to the SDPD by calling (619) 531-2000 or (858)484-3154.

Persons witnessing and are calling to report crimes are routinely asked to provide their names, addresses, and phone numbers. Witnesses desiring to remain anonymous should request not to be contacted. Please note, reports of crimes are treated as confidential and the identity of the caller is protected, however if cases go to trial, the report could be released and under the rules of discovery, you could be subpoenaed to testify in court.

The following information should be used as a guideline for reporting both emergency and non-emergency crimes: type of crime; exact address (with cross street); time; any weapons; number of persons injured and type of injury; vehicle information (activity, direction of travel, plate number, color, make, model, any unusual characteristics); and suspect's information (activity, direction last seen traveling, race, gender, age, height, hair color, facial hair, clothing, other characteristics like tattoos. There is never enough information.

Emergencies include crimes that are in progress or about to happen, and those that have resulted in serious personal injury, property damage, or property loss; situations in which the suspect may still be at the scene and some suspicious activities. Here are a few examples of crime emergencies that should be reported by calling 911: fights or sexual assaults; homicides; burglaries; robberies; flashlight beams in closed business or home when residents are away; domestic violence; child and elder abuse; sound of gunshots; screaming; breaking glass; explosions; some alarms; hit and runs with possible injuries; vehicles containing weapons; dumping of fuel or hazardous wastes; road hazards; graffiti or vandalism in progress; runaway juvenile or missing person who needs special care; fire; driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs; entering a neighbors home when the neighbor is away; forcing entry into a home, business, or vehicle; exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms that pose a threat to him/her or others; removing property from business, home, vehicle, if business and resident are closed or away; carrying or wearing bloody clothing; struggling with a resisting child; and attempting to or actually using a vehicle to pick up a person by force, especially a child or female.

Non-Emergencies and suspicious activities include crimes and suspicious activities that fall into this category: those that don't involve serious personal injury, property damage, and or property loss; ones which there is no possibility that the suspect is still at the scene or is likely to return; and those where an immediate response is not needed. Here are a few examples that may not be an emergency: burglaries in which the suspect is gone from the scene; stolen checks or credit cards; impersonation and stolen identification; auto theft; hit and run with no injuries; minors violating curfew; loud parties; road hazards that don't require immediate attention; past instances of graffiti or vandalism; past instances of child or elder abuse; disturbing the peace; loitering, panhandling, harassing others; soliciting without a license; going door to door (unless you believe they are casing the residence); loitering near a business; loitering near schools or parks; looking into vehicles; carrying property; having been drinking, but capable of caring for his own safety or the safety of others; exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms, but not a danger to themselves or others; vehicles seen moving slowly; vehicles parked for more than 72 hours, abandoned, or parked illegally on city streets; and vehicles being repaired on city streets.

Additionally, when you do report an emergency or non-emergency, please obtain an incident number from the dispatcher. An incident number is the method used to designate and monitor incidents that have been reported. An incident number consists of eleven digits. The first two digits indicates the year, the second two digits indicates the month, and the last

seven number are directly related to and assigned to your incident, based on a chronologically of the calls (starting with the earliest and following the order in which they occurred). When calling about a status of an incident, by having the incident number for an incident, you greatly increased the speed to which officers can look up the details of incident.

Lastly, if you are a victim of a crime, I want to discuss crime case numbers; often referred to as "Case Numbers." If you are a victim of a crime and a law enforcement officer did take a crime report, they will provide you with an incident number, a "Case Number" and a Marsy Card (the California Victims' Bill of Right Act of 2008). Case numbers, similar to incidents numbers, are assigned chronologically. Crime Reports are submitted under the case number and Detectives use case numbers when working these reports. Please ensure you keep both numbers, they are important when it is time to conduct follow up investigations.

The purpose of this message was to simplify the process and to simplify the stigma that is associated with reporting crimes, incident numbers and case numbers. If you have any questions, concerning this message, please fill free to contact me and we can further discuss you question or questions.

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