

**CHAPTER 10**  
**CRASH REPORT PROCESSING AND FORMS**  
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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<u>SCOPE</u> .....	10-3
<u>APPROVED TRAFFIC CRASH REPORT FORMS</u> .....	10-3
California Highway Patrol Forms .....	10-3
Allied Agency Modified Forms .....	10-3
<u>USE OF TRAFFIC CRASH REPORT FORMS</u> .....	10-3
CHP 555, Traffic Crash Report.....	10-3
CHP 555D, Truck/Bus Crash Supplemental Report .....	10-3
CHP 555E, School Bus Crash Supplemental Report .....	10-4
CHP 556, Narrative/Supplemental.....	10-4
CHP 555-03, Traffic Crash Report – Property Damage Only .....	10-4
<u>OTHER RELATED FORMS</u> .....	10-4
CHP 418, Crash Report Information.....	10-4
CHP 422, Vehicle Check/Parking Warning/Highway Damage Report.....	10-5
CHP 555, Page 2, Traffic Crash Coding.....	10-5
<u>TRANSMITTAL PROCEDURE</u> .....	10-5
<u>RETENTION OF TRAFFIC CRASH REPORTS</u> .....	10-6
California Highway Patrol .....	10-6
Allied Agencies.....	10-7
Locating Duplicate Copies.....	10-7
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF TRAFFIC CRASH REPORTS</u> .....	10-8
<u>DISTRIBUTION OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT</u> .....	10-8
<u>DRIVER’S LICENSE CORRECTIONS</u> .....	10-9
<u>ORDERING FORMS AND MANUALS</u> .....	10-9
Forms .....	10-9
Manuals.....	10-9

ANNEXES

<u>A</u> – SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY AND EXPRESSWAY LOCATIONS	
CALL BOX MAINTENANCE AGENCIES .....	10-11
<u>B</u> – SPECIAL REPORTING TO THE DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY	
AND HEALTH (CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL ONLY).....	10-13
<u>C</u> – DRIVER’S LICENSE CORRECTIONS .....	10-15

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## CHAPTER 10

### CRASH REPORT PROCESSING AND FORMS

1. SCOPE. This chapter provides instructions for the transmission of completed crash reports for data collection, retention, and distribution to parties of interest. Procedures for driver's license corrections and obtaining forms are included.

2. APPROVED TRAFFIC CRASH REPORT FORMS.

a. California Highway Patrol Forms. Only the CHP 555, Traffic Crash Report; CHP 555D, Truck/Bus Crash Supplemental Report; CHP 555E, School Bus Crash Supplemental Report; CHP 556, Narrative/Supplemental; CHP 555-03, Traffic Crash Report – Property Damage Only; or an approved modification of these forms will be processed by the Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS).

NOTE: California Highway Patrol employees shall not modify the CHP 555 without prior written approval from the Collision Investigation Unit.

b. Allied Agency Modified Forms. Prior to using modified versions of traffic crash report forms, allied agencies must receive CHP approval. Submit proposed modified form versions to:

California Highway Patrol  
Enforcement and Planning Division  
Collision Investigation Unit  
601 North 7th Street  
Sacramento, CA 95811

3. USE OF TRAFFIC CRASH REPORT FORMS.

a. CHP 555, Traffic Crash Report. The CHP 555 is used to document all basic data elements required for reporting a traffic crash.

NOTE: Crashes occurring in the workplace and involving serious injuries may require immediate notification to the Division of Occupational Safety and Health. Refer to Annex B.

b. CHP 555D, Truck/Bus Crash Supplemental Report. The CHP 555D is used to document additional information required when specified types of vehicles are involved in a traffic crash.

- c. CHP 555E, School Bus Crash Supplemental Report. The CHP 555E is used to document additional information required when a school bus is involved in a school bus crash as defined in Chapter 2, Definitions and Classifications of Crashes, of this manual.
- d. CHP 556, Narrative/Supplemental. The CHP 556 is a multipurpose form. With respect to traffic crashes, it is used to:
- (1) Document the narrative portion of the crash investigation. Bond or copy paper may be substituted for the CHP 556 if the heading information is included at the top of the page.
  - (2) Document supplemental changes to a previously submitted traffic crash report, including a preliminary report.
- e. CHP 555-03, Traffic Crash Report – Property Damage Only. The CHP 555-03 may be used when the crash involves one or more parties under either of the following conditions:
- (1) There were no injuries or fatalities.
  - (2) A noninjury hit-and-run crash occurred, and no follow-up information is available.

NOTE: **FOR CHP ONLY**—The CHP 555-03 shall only be used to document Counter Reports except as authorized in Chapter 9, Instructions for Completing the CHP 555-03, Traffic Crash Report – Property Damage Only, of this manual.

#### 4. OTHER RELATED FORMS.

- a. CHP 418, Crash Report Information. The CHP 418 shall normally be used by the CHP to notify parties of interest at a crash scene of the availability of the Traffic Crash Report. The CHP 418 is available for order through the Supply Services Catalog and can be ordered on a CHP 41, Supply Requisition.

NOTE: If a party of interest is removed from the crash scene before the crash investigator can provide the form and the investigation requires the officer to visit the hospital, the CHP 418 shall be left with the individual's personal items. The crash investigator is not required to respond to the hospital solely to provide a CHP 418.

- (1) Officers shall complete the front of the CHP 418 with the following information, as applicable:
  - (a) Crash date.

- (b) Crash time.
- (c) National Crime Information Center (NCIC) number for the Area.
- (d) Officer's ID number.
- (e) Your Vehicle Can Be Located At. Enter the tow company's name and either the address or the phone number if the vehicle was stored or impounded.

(2) Officers may use the CHP 418 to request contact in certain circumstances (e.g., hit-and-run follow-up).

(3) When the CHP 418 is distributed, the crash investigator should advise the individual of the general contents of the form. This includes the provisions for obtaining the crash report, the financial responsibility requirements of Section 16000 of the California Vehicle Code (CVC), and civil liability per Section 17150 CVC.

b. CHP 422, Vehicle Check/Parking Warning/Highway Damage Report. The crash investigator shall prepare and attach a CHP 422 if private or public property other than a vehicle is damaged. (Refer to Chapter 4, Instructions for Completing the CHP 555, Page 2, Traffic Crash Coding, of this manual.)

(1) Write the crash location, crash date, crash time, NCIC number, and officer ID as it will appear on the CHP 555, Page 1. The log or incident number may be included.

c. CHP 555, Page 2, Traffic Crash Coding.

(1) Mark the "CHP 422" box in the "Method of Notification" space in the Property Damage section.

NOTE: A CHP 422 is not required when its use would jeopardize the safety of anyone or if notification is made in person to the owner or person in control of the property.

## 5. TRANSMITTAL PROCEDURE.

a. All crash investigation reports shall be transmitted in a timely manner to the CHP for the collection of traffic safety data used by local, state, and federal entities.

(1) Electronic crash investigation reports and supplemental reports shall be transmitted to the current appropriate crash reporting databases.

(2) If a crash investigation report or a supplemental report cannot be submitted electronically, a paper copy of the report shall be sent so it can be manually processed into the databases.

b. Paper crash investigation reports and supplemental reports shall be sent to CHP Headquarters, Information Management Division (IMD), Support Services Section (SSS), Mail Process File Unit (MPFU):

California Highway Patrol  
Information Management Division  
Support Services Section  
Mail Process File Unit  
P.O. Box 942898  
Sacramento, CA 94298-0001

(1) Illegible paper crash reports will be returned to the submitting agency.

(2) When previously submitted copies of the original report (CHP 555, Page 1) are attached to the supplemental report, the word "COPY" shall be marked in red on the face page of the original report. This prevents duplicate reports from being processed and assists in making the necessary corrections and amendments to driver's license records.

(3) Counter Reports and nonfatal private property reports shall not be sent to the MPFU.

(4) Batching.

(a) Batch the crash investigation reports in the following groups:

- 1 Traffic crash reports with "Yes" marked in the State Highway Related box or similar field.
- 2 Supplemental reports.
- 3 All other crash investigation reports.

## 6. RETENTION OF TRAFFIC CRASH REPORTS.

a. California Highway Patrol. Crash reports processed electronically through the authorized departmental programs are stored digitally by IMD. Reports that are unable to be processed and stored digitally shall be maintained in paper or digital format at the Area level. All crash reports shall adhere to the following retention time frames:

(1) All crash reports shall be retained for a minimum of four years from the date of the crash.

(2) Reports for crashes involving felony charges for serious bodily injury or death shall be retained for seven years from the date of the crash. This includes Sections 23153 CVC, 191.5(a) of the Penal Code (PC), 192(c)(1) PC, 192(c)(2) PC, and 187 PC but excludes Section 20001 CVC.

(3) Reports for crashes involving Section 20001 CVC shall be retained for ten years from the date of the crash. Refer to Section 803 PC.

(4) All crash reports categorized as Threshold Incidents shall be retained for at least ten years from the date of the crash. Refer to Highway Patrol Manual (HPM) 100.86, Risk Management Manual, Chapter 1, Risk Management Response Protocol; Chapter 2, Reports of Incidents – Potential Civil Litigation; and Chapter 9, Early Intervention System.

(5) All reports for crashes categorized as Nonthreshold Potential Civil Liability Incidents shall be retained for a minimum of five years from the date of the crash. Refer to HPM 100.86, Chapters 1, 2, and 9.

(6) All unsolved fatal hit-and-run crash investigations shall be retained indefinitely.

(7) Crash reports sealed by court order shall be retained as ordered.

b. Allied Agencies. Allied agencies should establish a retention schedule suited to their needs.

NOTE: The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) may be named in a civil suit resulting from crashes investigated by the CHP or allied agencies. Special procedures should be instituted to flag state highway-related crash reports. The Caltrans Legal Division should be contacted prior to purging these crash reports.

c. Locating Duplicate Copies. Duplicate copies of some traffic crash reports may be provided if they are missing from local files or have been purged.

(1) California Highway Patrol Headquarters retains copies of fatal crashes for the current year plus three. Requests should be directed to CHP Headquarters, IMD, SSS, MPFU.

(2) The California Department of Transportation retains copies of all state highway-related reports for ten years from the month of the crash. Requests should be directed to the Caltrans Legal Division.

7. DISTRIBUTION OF TRAFFIC CRASH REPORTS.

- a. When requested, a copy of the crash report shall be sent to:
- (1) The coroner when the crash involves a fatality.
  - (2) The district attorney when needed for prosecution.
  - (3) The local city or county traffic engineer or public works agency. Send Counter Reports to these agencies only when public property is damaged. Ensure "Counter Report" is entered in the Special Conditions box.
  - (4) The local Caltrans District Director when damage to Caltrans property is noted. Send Counter Reports to Caltrans only when state property is damaged. Ensure "Counter Report" is entered in the Special Conditions box.
  - (5) The Service Authority for Freeways and Expressways when a call box is damaged. (Refer to Annex A.)
  - (6) A law enforcement or government agency as required by Section 1798.24 of the California Civil Code.
- b. When a courtesy traffic crash report is prepared for another CHP Area or law enforcement agency, send the original report to the appropriate CHP Area or law enforcement agency. Save a copy of the report in case the original is misplaced or lost.
- c. When a traffic crash has indications of insurance fraud and the Special Conditions box is coded 550, forward a copy of the report to:

California Department of Insurance  
Fraud Division—Intake Unit  
2400 Del Paso Road, Suite 250  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
[fraud@insurance.ca.gov](mailto:fraud@insurance.ca.gov)

8. DISTRIBUTION OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT.

- a. Send a copy to every party and agency that received a copy of the original report, such as the coroner, district attorney, or traffic engineer.
- b. A supplemental crash report shall not be forwarded to change the status of a complaint (e.g., arrest after crash, dismissal, conviction). These are judicial matters and handled through the court system.

9. DRIVER'S LICENSE CORRECTIONS. Every California law enforcement agency that has the responsibility for investigating traffic crashes shall correct the driver's license record of an individual when a reporting error has occurred. It is the responsibility of the investigating agency to complete a supplemental report if an error is discovered. Procedures are outlined in Annex C.

10. ORDERING FORMS AND MANUALS.

a. Forms. Allied agencies shall order Traffic Crash Report forms from the Supply Services Unit. An [Allied Agency Forms Request](#) , 076-051, can be found on the CHP's website under the Programs & Services tab.

California Highway Patrol  
Supply Services Unit  
3350 Reed Avenue  
West Sacramento, CA 95605  
(916) 309-6850  
Fax Orders (916) 375-5836

b. Manuals. Highway Patrol Manual 110.5, Crash Investigation Manual, and Highway Patrol Guide 40.60, SWITRS Users' Guide, may be ordered from the Public Records Unit at (916) 843-4030 or online through CHP's [Public Records Center](#) portal.

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**ANNEX A**

**SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY AND EXPRESSWAY LOCATIONS  
CALL BOX MAINTENANCE AGENCIES**

<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>FAX</b>
Capitol Valley Regional SAFE	1415 L Street, Suite 300 Sacramento, CA 95814	(916) 321-9000	(916) 321-9551
Del Norte Local Transportation Commission	900 Northcrest Drive, #16 Crescent City, CA 95531	(707) 465-3878	(707) 465-5518
Glenn County SAFE	777 N. Colusa Street Willows, CA 95988	(530) 934-6530	(530) 934-6533
Humboldt County Association of Governments	611 I Street, Suite B Eureka, CA 95501	(707) 444-8208	(707) 444-8319
Imperial County SAFE	155 South 11th Street El Centro, CA 92243	(442) 265-1818	(442) 265-1858
Kern Motorist Aid Authority	1401 19th Street, Suite 300 Bakersfield, CA 93301	(661) 635-2900	(661) 324-8215
Lake County SAFE	367 North State Street, Suite 206 Ukiah, CA 95482	(707) 463-1806	(707) 463-2212
Los Angeles County SAFE	One Gateway Plaza Mail Stop 99-11-3 Los Angeles, CA 90012	(213) 922-2951	(213) 922-2955
Mendocino County SAFE	367 North State Street, Suite 206 Ukiah, CA 95482	(707) 463-1806	(707) 463-2212
Merced County Association of Governments	369 West 18th Street Merced, CA 95340	(209) 723-3153	(209) 723-0322
Metropolitan Transportation Commission SAFE	375 Beale Street, Suite 800 San Francisco, CA 94105	(415) 778-6700	(415) 536-9800
Orange County Transportation Authority	550 South Main Street Orange, CA 92868	(714) 560-6282	(714) 560-5880
Riverside County Transportation Commission	4080 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor Riverside, CA 92501	(951) 787-7141	(951) 787-7920
San Benito Council of Governments	330 Tres Pinos Road, Suite C-7 Hollister, CA 95023	(831) 637-7665	(831) 636-4160

**ANNEX A**

**SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY AND EXPRESSWAY LOCATIONS  
CALL BOX MAINTENANCE AGENCIES *(continued)***

San Bernardino Associated Governments	1170 West 3rd Street, 2nd Floor San Bernardino, CA 92410	(909) 884-8276	(909) 885-4407
San Luis Obispo Council of Governments	1114 Marsh Street San Luis Obispo, CA 93401	(805) 781-4219	(805) 781-5703
San Diego Association of Governments	1129 La Media Road San Diego, CA 92154	(619) 710-4052	(619) 699-1905
Santa Barbara County Association of Governments	260 North San Antonio Road, Suite B Santa Barbara, CA 93110	(805) 961-8900	(805) 961-8901
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission	1523 Pacific Avenue Santa Cruz, CA 95060	(831) 460-3200	(831) 460-3215
Transportation Agency for Monterey County	55-B Plaza Circle Salinas, CA 93901	(831) 775-0903	(831) 775-0897
Ventura County Transportation Commission	950 County Square Drive Suite 207 Ventura, CA 93003	(805) 642-1591	(805) 642-4860

## ANNEX B

### SPECIAL REPORTING TO THE DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH (CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL ONLY)

1. DEPARTMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH NOTIFICATION.

Section 6409.2 of the California Labor Code requires the nearest office of the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) be notified immediately by telephone when the CHP responds to a crash, other than a crash on a public street or highway, involving serious injury, illness, or death of an employee of any employer in connection with their employment.

a. A serious injury or illness requires hospitalization for a period greater than 24 hours for treatment other than observation, loss of a body member, or any serious degree of permanent disfigurement. This determination should generally be made by an officer at the crash scene.

b. Area commanders shall ensure procedures are in effect to make the required telephone notification. The purpose of immediate notification is to permit investigators from Cal/OSHA to respond to the crash scene. Notification shall include the time, location, type of crash, name of the employer (if known), and the names of the involved parties.

c. Injury or death caused by the commission of a Penal Code violation is not required to be reported to Cal/OSHA except for violations of Section 385 PC, which relates to operating equipment near high voltage conductors.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES. It is not required that the crash scene be preserved until the arrival of personnel from Cal/OSHA. Personnel shall cooperate to the maximum extent possible without unnecessarily delaying documentation of the crash.

3. PARTIES OF INTEREST. The Cal/OSHA is a party of interest as defined in General Order 110.2, Release of Collision Information, for crashes of the type described in this annex.

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## ANNEX C

### DRIVER'S LICENSE CORRECTIONS

1. RESPONSIBILITIES. Every California law enforcement agency that has the responsibility for investigating crashes shall correct the driver's license record of an individual when a reporting error has occurred. Reporting errors include incorrect entries on a record and the omission of an entry on the correct record. Providing the correct information for the addition of an entry is straightforward; however, agencies must ensure that the documentation also includes sufficient information about the original incorrect entry so that it can be removed. It is the responsibility of the investigating agency to complete a supplemental report if an error is discovered.

2. DRIVER'S LICENSE CORRECTION PROCESS. The following is the driver's license correction process:

a. Initiation.

(1) When an individual requests a records correction, determine which law enforcement agency prepared the crash investigation report. Advise the individual to contact that agency to initiate the driver's license correction process.

(2) If the CHP investigated the crash, refer the individual to the Area office where the crash was investigated.

(3) When a records error is discovered while processing crash reports for statistical data, or when a problematic records correction request has been escalated to the SSS, the CHP can initiate a records correction request.

b. Documentation.

(1) If the correction request originates from a member of the public, obtain a completed and signed DMV DL 208, Traffic Accident Record Correction Request.

(a) When an individual needs a records correction regarding a crash that they were not actually involved in, they generally cannot receive a copy of the report and therefore cannot themselves initiate a records correction request with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). It is imperative that the originating agency initiate the correction process.

(2) Make one copy of the entire original crash investigation report. With a red ink pen, marker, or stamp, write "COPY" in the top margin of the first page of

## ANNEX C

### DRIVER'S LICENSE CORRECTIONS (*continued*)

the reproduced traffic crash report. Do not send only the face pages unless directed to do so by SSS.

(3) When necessary, prepare a supplemental report to correct the original traffic crash report and send a copy to all parties. A supplemental report is required except when only a data entry error on the driving record needs to be corrected.

(4) Prepare correspondence on departmental letterhead or a CHP 554, Request To Delete/Modify Collision On A Driver's License Record, to the DMV, Mandatory Actions Unit, explaining the reason for the driver's license record correction. Provide both the original incorrect information and the correct information. This is critical to ensure that incorrect entries are removed from a driver's license record. For the CHP 554, the correct use of the DMV-specific coding is critical.

c. Transmit the Request.

(1) CHP only: Send an e-mail to the appropriate e-mail address at the SSS and carbon copy the Collision Investigation Unit (CIU) at [CIU@chp.ca.gov](mailto:CIU@chp.ca.gov). The e-mail must include the report number and the general nature of the request. The e-mail may contain the appropriate documentation as attachments if the e-mail is encrypted. Otherwise, send the paper documentation to SSS.

(2) Other agencies: Send the DL 208 (if applicable), the copy of the original crash investigation report, a copy of the supplemental report (if applicable), and the correspondence to the DMV at the following address:

Department of Motor Vehicles  
Mandatory Actions Unit  
P.O. Box 942890 M/S J-233  
Sacramento, CA 94290-0001  
(916) 657-6525

3. MOST COMMON ERRORS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION. The following situations are the most common errors encountered by the CHP that prompt the driver's license record correction process. The text in parentheses indicates the type of documentation required to correct the error.

## ANNEX C

### DRIVER LICENSE CORRECTIONS (*continued*)

- a. Individual Incorrectly Listed as Party Most at Fault in DMV Records. An individual discovers their driver's license record is incorrect. The crash investigation report lists another party at fault, but fault for the crash appears on the wrong driver's license record. A review of the traffic crash report substantiates the individual's claim. (A supplemental report is required.)
- b. Not Involved in the Traffic Crash. An individual discovers a crash they were not involved in on their driver's license record. An investigation of the matter substantiates the individual's claim. This error is usually caused by a data entry error or by erroneous triangulation at the DMV. (A supplemental report is not required.)
- c. Double-Entry on Driver's License Record. An individual discovers their driver's license record lists two traffic crashes for the same incident. A review of the traffic crash report and the individual's driver's license record supports the conclusion that only one entry on their driver's license record is appropriate. This error is rare. The time listed on the crash investigation report is a critical factor and is used to code the event. The NCIC number precedes the time in a numerical string. This code can be used to differentiate between different events. Crash investigators must ensure that they do not use the same time for two reports on the same day. Also, the perception of an error may occur because a DUI crash results in two different entries on the record. (A supplemental report is not required.)
- d. On-Duty Emergency Vehicle Notation Missing. A peace officer or firefighter driving an on-duty emergency vehicle was involved in a traffic crash, but they do not have "on-duty emergency vehicle" noted on their driver's license record. Correct notation on the driver's license record requires "on-duty emergency vehicle" to be noted with the driver's name and the use of vehicle type codes 48 or 49 on the CHP 555, Page 1. Incorrect notation can also occur if an insurance company submits a Report of Traffic Accident Occurring in California (SR-1) form to the DMV before the DMV receives electronic data from the CHP. If the crash investigation report was properly completed, a supplemental report is not required. If the crash investigation report was not properly completed, a supplemental report is required to correct the information.
- e. Incorrect At-Fault Entry in the Crash Investigation Report. An individual discovers they were listed as the party most at fault in the crash on the CHP 555, Page 2. However, the narrative identifies a different party as most at fault for the crash. A review of the traffic crash report substantiates the individual's claim. This error typically happens when an "X" is entered on the CHP 555, Page 2, instead of entering a number for a single party most at fault. Entering an "X" will cause *all* parties to be listed as most at fault. (A supplemental report is required.)

## **ANNEX C**

### **DRIVER'S LICENSE CORRECTIONS *(continued)***

NOTE: A court decision finding an involved party "not guilty" for the charged violation is not sole justification for changing a traffic crash report or the involved party's driver's license record.