


POLICY 111.8	ONLINE INCIDENT REPORTING	
	Revised: 06/23, 04/24	RELATED POLICIES:
	CFA STANDARDS:	REVIEWED: AS NEEDED

A. POLICY

It is the policy of the Fort Lauderdale Police Department (FLPD) to utilize computer technology and established protocols to facilitate the deployment of law enforcement resources to calls for service and provide the ability for complainants to electronically file reports on specified unreported past-occurred incidents.

B. DEFINITIONS

Online Incident Reporting System – A platform that provides the ability for complainants to file a report online that meets defined criteria.

Permanent Case Number – An FLPD case number that is issued once an online report has been reviewed and approved.

Temporary Case Number – A temporary case number that is issued once an online report has been submitted.

C. SCOPE

This policy will apply to all employees of the Fort Lauderdale Police Department and other city employees while working under the auspices of the Department.

D. PROCEDURE

1. Criteria For Use

- a. FLPD shall accept identified online reports. The agency shall utilize an automated online system which allows complainants to quickly and easily file minor incident reports over the internet without having to wait for a member (FLPD employee) to respond.
- b. At no time will this system be utilized when a complainant requests the presence of a member, where there is known evidence that could lead to the identity of a suspect, or a crime is in progress. FLPD will respond to in-progress incidents and all crimes with known evidence or information, which may lead to the identity of a suspect and his/her apprehension, or if the incident just occurred and there is a likelihood the suspect may still be in the area.

2. System Access / Accepted Submissions

- a. The online incident reporting system is accessed through the internet and allows a complainant to submit and print a copy of a temporary report. When referring this service to a complainant, ensure they have internet access and direct them to the FLPD website at <https://www.flpd.org>. On the main page of the Department's website is a link labeled "Online Reporting." The link directs the complainant to a menu of available reporting options and instructions on how to file the report.
 - b. Prior to referral to the online system, the member should ensure:
 - (1). The complainant is not reporting an emergency, which would require an immediate response.
 - (2). The incident occurred within the jurisdictional boundaries of Fort Lauderdale.
 - (3). There are no known suspect(s) for the crime that is being reported.
 - (4). There are no firearms or other weapons involved.
 - (5). The complainant is at least 18 years of age.
3. Only the following types of offenses may be referred to the online reporting system:
- a. Criminal mischief/Vandalism (damage shall be less than \$1,000.00).
 - b. Lost property (excluding firearms, lost/stolen government/military IDs and badges).
 - c. Misdemeanor Retail Theft (under \$750.00)
 - d. Mobile/Cellular Telephone Theft
4. Complainant Responsibilities
- a. To file a report online, complainants must provide the same identifying information (name, address, telephone #, date of birth, etc.) as if they were filing a report with a member.
 - b. Complainants must also provide a valid email address in order to allow for follow-up correspondence between them and FLPD.
5. Referring Complainant to Online Reporting
- a. Walk-in/Call-in Complaints

When a member encounters or receives a call from a complainant wishing to report an incident, he/she shall determine if the incident falls within the scope of an online report as defined in Section D. 3. of this policy, the member shall:

 1. Determine if the complainant has internet access.
 2. Explain the online reporting process and the requirements of the party filing the report, and:
 - (a). Advise of the review process, completed by a supervisor,

and the potential for further investigation should suspect(s) or leads be developed.

- (b). Ensure that complainants are aware that there is no cost associated with the process.
- (c). Advise the complainant of FLPD's website address, or direct complainant to the reporting kiosk.

3. If the complainant interjects and wishes to file a report with a member, or if a complainant calls back and states they are having difficulty filing the report online, a report shall be initiated by a member.

b. Responding Department Member's Responsibilities

Department members on routine patrol or investigations who are engaged by a complainant wanting to report an incident may refer the complainant to the online system. At no time shall this system be utilized if the complainant requests a report to be initiated by a member.

6. Review of Online Reports

- a. Reports shall be reviewed by designated FLPD personnel.
- b. The designated Department member(s) shall review the reports in the online reporting system queue within three (3) business days.
 - (1). If the complainant report is misclassified, such as lost property, instead of theft, the reviewer shall modify the report according to the elements of the offense/incident described by the complainant.
 - (2). The reviewer shall reject a report if the incident does not fall within the scope of the online reporting system, (e.g., a vehicle burglary with forced entry). If a reviewer rejects a report, the reason for rejection shall be appropriately and professionally noted in the rejection box, which is sent via email to the complainant.
- c. The reviewer shall issue a follow-up request through the online reporting system to the reporting complainant to obtain additional information needed to approve a report. If the information is not received within 14 days of the request, the reporting system will auto-reject the report and send a notification to the complainant.

7. Investigative Follow-Up of Online Reports

The majority of online incident reports will not require investigative follow-up, as the premise behind the system is that reported incidents are those where there is no suspect information. However, cases requiring investigative follow-up shall be routed consistent with policy. The assigned Department member shall exhaust all investigative leads and complete a supplement report in RMS documenting their actions.

8. Evidence

If it is determined before the online report has been approved that evidence exists (e.g., video, or physical evidence) the reviewer will contact the complainant using the contact information provided through the online reporting system and advise the report will be rejected and that they need to contact the non-emergency line for an officer to be dispatched.

If it is determined after the online report has been approved that evidence exists (e.g., video, or physical evidence) steps shall be taken by the reviewer to ensure the evidence is collected and documented consistent with policy.

9. Records

All department records shall be retained in accordance with the Department of State, Division of Archive and Records Management guidelines, and Policy 111.1