	<b>NEW PALTZ POLICE DEPARTMENT</b> <b>Policy and Procedures</b>	
	<i>Subject</i> <b>8.7 Records Management System</b>	
	<b>ISSUED: June 1, 2011</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE: June 1, 2011</b>
	<b>REVISED: January 1, 2020</b>	<b>RESCINDED:</b>
<i>N.Y.S. Accreditation Ref: A8.7</i>	<i>Page 1 of 3</i>	<i>Authority: Chief Robert J. Lucchesi</i>

### Records Management System


**Purpose:**

An accurate flow of information is essential to the Department's operations. This agency must have a records management system that ensures that incident reports and all activities are filed in an efficient and functional manner. The system assures daily records of agency activities are properly filed, retrieved, secured and reviewed to prepare statistical and data summaries.

For this reason, all members must accurately complete all required reports and forms. They are necessary for establishing a case against offenders, for informing the Department of existing crime problems, for preparing budget requests and for protecting the investigating officer and the Department against unwarranted accusations of improper police action. Because much of the information coming to the attention of the Department is of a confidential nature, officers will not divulge the content of reports or records or other Department information except as authorized.


**Policy:**

- A. It is the policy of the New Paltz Police Department to maintain daily, monthly, and annual activity records. These records will be prepared the New World System Law Enforcement Records Management System (LERMS).
- B. These records will provide statistical information regarding the daily, monthly, and annual activity of the department.
- C. Statistical information is provided through the LERMS system. This system provides for daily statistical information regarding, types of incidents, number of incidents, arrests, traffic summonses, and all other activities of the department
- D. Daily, members will enter in statistical information in LERMS via New World System Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Mobile modules. Data entry of all calls received and traffic ticket information. Additionally, with the implementation of the TRACS automated ticket writing program, members will enter in statistical information through data entry when utilizing this system.
- E. Monthly, reports will be generated to provide statistical information regarding the activities of the department as well as each individual officer. A yearly report will be generated as well.
- F. Annually, the Chief of Police will prepare a cumulative annual report detailing the activity of the department.

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<i>N.Y.S. Accreditation Ref: A8.7</i>	<i>Page 2 of 3</i>	<i>Authority: Chief Robert J. Lucchesi</i>

## 1. COMPLETION AND FILING OF REPORTS

- a. Officers will complete all required reports, forms and computer entries in a truthful, accurate, legible manner and will submit them through proper channels and in accordance with department procedures immediately upon completion.
- b. All officers will submit reports prior to the end of their assigned shifts unless special permission is granted by the on-duty supervisor.
- c. All Part-Time officers will complete and file all reports, forms and computer entries taken during their shift, by the end of the shift. If the task will incur overtime, then the Sergeant or officer in charge will be responsible for the overtime allotment stating the reason on the daily roll call sheet. When possible, the Part-Time officer will come in another day soon to complete paperwork to avoid overtime issues.
- d. Reports submitted late due to laziness or inattention to duty will be grounds for disciplinary action.
- e. All reports and forms used by the Department will be reviewed from time to time and amended, eliminated, or added to as necessary.
- f. The New Paltz Police Department will document, record and maintain specific information of individuals arrested by this agency. Information to be included from arrestees will include, but not be limited to;
  - i. Name
  - ii. Date of birth
  - iii. Address (both primary and secondary if applicable)
  - iv. Age
  - v. Race
  - vi. Height
  - vii. Weight
  - viii. Eye color
  - ix. Hair color
  - x. Social security number
  - xi. Facial hair
  - xii. Complexion

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<i>N.Y.S. Accreditation Ref: A8.7</i>	<i>Page 3 of 4</i>	<i>Authority: Chief Robert J. Lucchesi</i>

- xiii. Scars, marks, tattoos
- xiv. Clothing when arrested (if applicable)


This information will be entered into the department's LERMS system and maintained in accordance with records retention procedures.

## 2. FALSIFICATION AND DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS


- a. No officer will falsify, destroy, alter or remove any report or record of this Department.
- b. Anyone having knowledge of such behaviour will report it to their supervisor.

## 3. RELEASE/RETRIEVAL OF DEPARTMENT INFORMATION AND/OR CRIMINAL HISTORY INFORMATION AND SECURITY OF REPORTS

- a. In the spirit of impartiality and loyalty, members of this Department will not discuss any Department business, operations or operatives in public or within earshot of the public or with persons who do not have a legal privilege for information regarding particular police matters. The only exception to this order will be when members of this Department are acting under subpoena, court order or with authorization from the Chief or Lieutenant.
- b. It is the policy of this Department to keep all information contained in the Department's criminal history records files confidential and secure except in cases where the law requires disclosure or in cases where the law allows disclosure, and such disclosure serves a legitimate law enforcement or public interest purpose.
- c. The only authorized personnel allowed access to police records for any purpose in the files is the Chief of Police and other members of the Police Department. The Chief may permit authorized civilians to go into the applicable files. Records shall include accident reports, case files, and any other forms or records maintained in the file system.
- d. It will be the responsibility of the Records Personnel to see to it that said records and files are kept neat, clean, and up to date. If a discrepancy is found, it is to be corrected immediately and the matter referred to the person responsible as soon as possible. In no event are the files to be left in disorder. All police department records will be secured in a locked office in lockable file cabinets. All electronic records will be kept on Department computers that are password protected. These computers will allow members to access their necessary computer records and no more. Personnel will be given access to their needed areas on a need-to-know basis only. These records will be backed up on a computer server hard drive that is kept locked in the Department's computer server room accessible only to authorized personnel.

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<i>N.Y.S. Accreditation Ref: A8.7</i>	<i>Page 4 of 5</i>	<i>Authority: Chief Robert J. Lucchesi</i>

- e. All department members will comply with all Department policies, procedures and regulations regarding privacy and security of criminal records or official reports. No department member will release or disseminate any criminal history record information *or official report for any reason* except in a manner prescribed by the Chief or his designee.
- f. Often record checks are requested by telephone of this Department. To avoid mistakes and to eliminate the possibility of degrading an innocent person which may result in a lawsuit and to further prevent the dissemination of any information to unauthorized persons, the following procedures will be adhered to: No requests will be entertained via the telephone unless the caller is known by you to be an agent or representative of any authorized criminal justice agency that has been assigned an NCIC numerical identifier.
- g. No official request for police records will be entertained to persons personally appearing in Police Headquarters unless they are known by you or can show the proper credentials proving to be an agent or representative of any authorized criminal justice agency that has been assigned an NCIC numerical identifier or by subpoena. These requests must be for valid reasons and/or investigations.
- h. Police records will not be released to civilians who are “third party” individuals in a matter. Individuals who are directly involved in a matter may request the applicable paperwork on their case through the Office of the Town Clerk of New Paltz and completing a Freedom of Information Law “FOIL” request.
- i. In any case the only information that can legally be released will be information that is currently not under investigation at the time. Matters currently under active investigations cannot be released due to security and safety concerns. Public Officer’s Law Section 87.2 (i) specifically provides that an agency may deny access to records or portions thereof that disclosure would interfere with law enforcement investigations or judicial proceedings.
- j. No department member will communicate, relay, or release any official Department information to any person which would in any way hamper or compromise the Department's operations or investigations.
- k. Department members will regard all information concerning the official business operations and policies of the Department as confidential and will not release such information unless its release is specifically permitted.
- l. Certain groups, agencies or entities may obtain record checks issued by the Police Clerk which will provide arrest data on a subject, but only if the arrest was made by the New Paltz Police Department, if the disposition is known and the requestor provides a signed release by the subject being investigated. These agencies include; Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Department of Social Services, Police Agencies and Private Citizens.
- m. New Paltz Police Department personnel shall not obtain a criminal record check on another with intent to use the data for off duty or private employment purposes.

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#### **4. SUPERVISORY REVIEW OF INCIDENT REPORTS FOR COMPLETENESS AND ACCURACY.**

- a. All Departmental Division supervisors shall be responsible for the proper maintenance of all Departmental Records that are required to be kept by Department regulations. The Chief or Lieutenant shall have the right to inspect all Departmental Records upon request. Said inspection may occur without notice.
- b. Shift sergeants will be the first line reviewer of incidents reports. They will review the report to determine that a thorough investigation was conducted, was accurate and that established departmental procedures were followed.