



HOWARD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
GENERAL ORDER OPS-12
MOBILE DATA TERMINALS
EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 12, 2010

This General Order contains the following numbered sections:

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I. POLICY

The Howard County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) shall utilize Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) to assist officers in the performance of their duties. MDTs shall be utilized in a manner that provides maximum officer safety and safekeeping of the MDT.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Office of the Chief Deputy is responsible for the operation of the MDT Program, to include training, maintenance and repair of all equipment, as well as communication and interaction between federal, state, and local agencies that support the MDT Program.
- B. The Chief Deputy shall appoint a coordinator for the MDT Program. The MDT Program Coordinator will report to the Chief Deputy.
- C. The MDT Program Coordinator will be responsible for the daily administration of the MDT Program. Additionally, the MDT Program Coordinator will conduct random administrative security checks of the MDT system to ensure that all necessary security procedures are being followed.
- D. MDT users are responsible for maintaining all certifications which allow access to METERS/NCIC and other databases retrievable by an MDT.¹
- E. The Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) will notify the MDT Coordinator and the member's supervisor of any member's lapse in METERS/NCIC certification.
- F. MDT users shall attend all scheduled MDT training when notified. Should a conflict exist between scheduled training and another assignment, the MDT user shall inform his supervisor of the conflict. The supervisor shall ensure the MDT Coordinator is contacted and that the conflict is resolved.

III. MOBILE DATA TERMINAL ASSIGNMENT²

- A. MDTs will be issued to members of the HCSO based on Section / Unit assignment. Members of the Domestic Violence Unit and Warrant / Fugitive Unit will be assigned MDTs before members of other units / sections.

¹ CALEA 81.2.9

² CALEA 17.5.2

- B. MDTs are identified with a unique Fixed Asset Inventory Control System (FAICS) number. These numbers are issued by the Howard County Government and are used to track the placement of the terminal.

IV. MOBILE DATA TERMINAL OPERATION³

- A. MDT usage is restricted to those members who have been trained by either the MDT Program Coordinator or the Howard County Police Department Computer Operations Section.
- B. MDT Passwords
 - 1. Member's passwords to access the MDT system and METERS/NCIC shall not be shared or made known to any other individual.
 - 2. Members who have reason to believe that their password has been compromised shall immediately notify the MDT Program Coordinator and change their password utilizing the procedures outlined during MDT training.⁴
 - 3. Attempts by any member to utilize an MDT or gain access to METERS/NCIC with another member's password are prohibited.
 - 4. MDT passwords will be audited annually for security purposes.⁵
- C. All members utilizing an MDT to access METERS/NCIC shall have a current certification to access both the METERS and NCIC databases.⁶ Members who do not have current METERS/NCIC certification will not attempt to use the METERS/NCIC functions.
- D. Users shall only utilize the MDT for official business purposes, consistent with HCSO training, the regulations established by METERS/NCIC, as well as any County and HCSO guidelines relating to the use of County communications equipment.
- E. The temporary or permanent installation or usage of software, hardware, peripheral devices, screen savers, or the attachment of any object in or on an MDT or one of its component parts is prohibited without the prior approval of the MDT Program Coordinator.⁷
- F. The safe operation of a law enforcement vehicle shall always be the driver's primary responsibility. **The use of the MDT shall always be secondary to the safe operation of the vehicle.** Drivers shall carefully consider the need to safely stop the vehicle before using the MDT if such use would divert the deputy's attention from the safe operation of the vehicle.⁸
 - 1. While in motion, MDT use is only authorized when it will not impair the driver's ability to operate the vehicle and it shall generally be limited to:
 - a. Acknowledging an emergency alert.
 - b. Making a call disposition.
 - c. Running a time sensitive inquiry.
 - d. Limited keystrokes, acknowledging a message, when a delay would be unreasonable.
 - 2. Collisions involving the use of the MDT in violation of this policy will be handled through the HCSO disciplinary process.

³ CALEA 41.3.7

⁴ CALEA 82.1.6 c

⁵ CALEA 82.1.6 d

⁶ CALEA 81.2.9

⁷ CALEA 41.3.7 b

⁸ CALEA 11.4.4 & 41.3.7 a

- G. Members will only utilize approved automatic car wash facilities to wash MDT equipped vehicles. The brushes at some car wash facilities will damage the roof-mounted antenna. Members will not unscrew the roof or glass mounted antenna, as it will damage the internal contacts of the antenna.

V. SECURITY PROCEDURES⁹

- A. The MDT may remain in a line car when a deputy's shift is completed if the car is parked and locked at a law enforcement facility.¹⁰ The MDT must be locked in the docking station and the key removed from the lock.
- B. At the end of each shift, deputies assigned take-home cars must remove the MDT from their car and secure it in their residences until their next tour of duty.
- C. The MDT must be locked in the vehicle mount or the trunk of the patrol car when a deputy will be away from the car for more than one (1) hour, unless the member is on a call for service at a law enforcement facility or court.
- D. When an MDT vehicle is delivered for maintenance, the MDT must be removed from the car prior to leaving the car at the service facility. Deputies assigned to line cars shall leave the MDT at the Circuit Court.
- E. Deputies with take-home cars who have been placed on light duty status must turn in their MDTs to the MDT Program Coordinator for updates and safekeeping until they are released to full duty.
- F. If a vehicle is taken out of service due to an accident or prolonged maintenance, the MDT must be turned into the MDT Program Coordinator for repairs, updates, and safekeeping until the vehicle is returned to service. The MDT Program Coordinator should be notified of any Departmental collisions involving an MDT equipped vehicle.
- G. For deputy safety, the MDT should always be secured in the vehicle mount, if so equipped, and in line with the center console so as not to interfere with the operation of the passenger side air bag.

VI. CARE & MAINTENANCE¹¹

- A. MDT users shall report by the end of their shift, via County e-mail, all MDT related issues or problems to the Coordinator for review and/or resolution.
- B. Damage to an MDT, or any component part of an MDT, to include the processor, keyboard, monitor, modem, antennae, cables, light, or mount shall be reported in accordance with HCSO damage reporting procedures.
 - 1. Members shall send an Office e-mail addressed to the Help Desk for Howard County.
 - 2. Additionally, a copy of the damage report shall be forwarded to the MDT Program Coordinator within 24 hours of the incident.
- C. If critical computer problems arise during non-business hours, the following steps apply:
 - 1. Contact the non-business hours extension for ISSO at x3542.
 - 2. If the extension is answered, the critical concern shall be explained and an attempt shall be made to correct the problem. If possible, the member shall follow-up the phone call with an e-mail or TRACKIT ticket.

⁹ CALEA 82.1.6 d
¹⁰ CALEA 41.1.3 d
¹¹ CALEA 17.5.3

3. If the extension is NOT answered, the member should leave his name, a phone number where he can be reached, and specific details as to what the problem is, where the problem is located, and if the problem is isolated to this one location.
 4. In the event the extension is NOT answered, the member shall allow fifteen (15) minutes to pass, after which the ISSO extension will be paged. The member shall wait up to an additional thirty (30) minutes for a response.
 5. If ISSO does not respond to either the page or the e-mail/TRACKIT ticket, contact the Chief Deputy at 410-818-0419.
- D. If the problem is NOT an immediate concern and a resolution can wait, the following steps apply:
1. The member shall send an e-mail to "HELP HELP" and provide specific details about what the problem is, where the problem is located, and if the problem is isolated to this one location.
 2. Personnel from ISSO shall assume responsibility for initiating a resolution to the problem once they receive the e-mail.
- E. Critical Problem Priority Levels
1. Critical Priority – I/Leads (JMS) system not functioning.
 2. High Priority
 - a. METERS / NCIC / CJIS systems not functioning.
 - b. Informer (MDT METERS) system not functioning.
 - c. I/page system not functioning.
 3. Medium Priority
 - a. Audio Log system not functioning.
 - b. AFSP system not functioning.
 - c. Leadslink system not functioning.
 - d. Firelink system not functioning.
 4. Low Priority
 - a. I/Backup system not functioning.
 - b. NetViewer system not functioning.
 - c. Pictometry system not functioning.

VII. CANCELLATION

This General Order cancels and replaces General Order OPS-12, Mobile Data Computer Procedures, dated February 1, 2009.

Authority:

James F. Fitzgerald,
Sheriff