



**Metropolitan Police Department**  
**City of St. Louis**  
Public Information Division

# Media Handbook

Police Headquarters  
1915 Olive St.  
St. Louis, MO 63103

## Our Core Values

Service  
Integrity  
Leadership  
Fair Treatment to All

## Our Mission Statement

The mission of the Metropolitan Police Department, City of St. Louis, is to protect, serve and assist citizens when conditions arise that may affect the well-being of the individual or the community. Cooperating with others in the community, officers will work to prevent and detect crime, protect life and property, and achieve a peaceful society, free from the fear of crime and disorder. Members of the department will strive continually for excellence and maintain the peace through service, integrity, leadership and fair treatment to all.

## Our Statement on the Value of Human Life

The primary responsibility of this department and each of its members is to protect the lives of the citizens we are sworn to serve. It is also the duty of each member of the department to honor the established principles of democracy upon which this country was founded. Among these is the most profound reverence for human life, the value of which far exceeds that of any property. In view of this, it is essential that every action of this department and of each of its members be consistent with that responsibility.

For these reasons, it is appropriate that this Statement on the Value of Human Life embodies the spirit of the department and sets forth the principles and policies which guide the conduct of every department employee.

In recognition, therefore, of the commitment of this department to the preservation of human life, and because of the public trust which empowers sworn police officers to lawfully exercise force, even deadly force when required, in carrying out that commitment, it is hereby declared to be the policy of this department that (1) the use of deadly force will never be condoned as a routine response; and (2) police officers will exercise the highest degree of care in the applications of such force.



## Our Commitment to Working with the Media

The Metropolitan Police Department, City of St. Louis recognizes the importance of establishing positive professional relationships with media outlets. While the department continues to use other forms of communication to reach the public, the department recognizes the broad and expansive reach of traditional television stations, radio stations and newspapers. The department is committed to making every reasonable effort possible to work with the media to inform the public about criminal incidents as well as the department's mission and accomplishments.

It is the philosophy of the Public Information Division to respond to media inquiries as accurately, completely and quickly as possible. The release of information from the department will be in the spirit of informing the public and in accordance with the laws of the state of Missouri and the policies of the department.

This guide will help you determine:

- How to reach us
- How to get information about a criminal incident
- What information is not available
- How to obtain supporting background information such as crime statistics
- How to request interviews with the Police Commissioner or other department employees

For general information about the content of this handbook or any other questions related to the department's news releases, policies, procedures, history, crime statistics, etc., please contact the Public Information Division at (314) 444-5603 or [media@slmpd.org](mailto:media@slmpd.org).

The purpose of this media handbook is to assist reporters in locating resources within the department, to explain department media policies and procedures and to provide answers to frequently asked media questions. This handbook will serve as a resource for members of the media in order to provide you and your viewers/readers/listeners a better understanding of our operations. While we hope you will use this handbook as a reference, it is important to note it is not intended to cover every possible situation pertaining to the Metropolitan Police Department's policy on the release of information.

Finally, many of you voluntarily choose to adhere to the Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists. For those who are interested, it is included here for your convenience.



# Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics

Source: Society of Professional Journalists

## Seek Truth and Report It

Journalists should be honest, fair and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information. Journalists should:

- Test the accuracy of information from all sources and exercise care to avoid inadvertent error. Deliberate distortion is never permissible.
- Diligently seek out subjects of news stories to give them the opportunity to respond to allegations of wrongdoing.
- Identify sources whenever feasible. The public is entitled to as much information as possible on sources' reliability.
- Always question sources' motives before promising anonymity. Clarify conditions attached to any promise made in exchange for information. Keep promises.
- Make certain that headlines, news teases and promotional material, photos, video, audio, graphics, sound bites and quotations do not misrepresent. They should not oversimplify or highlight incidents out of context.
- Never distort the content of news photos or video. Image enhancement for technical clarity is always permissible. Label montages and photo illustrations.
- Avoid misleading re-enactments or staged news events. If re-enactment is necessary to tell a story, label it.
- Avoid undercover or other surreptitious methods of gathering information except when traditional open methods will not yield information vital to the public. Use of such methods should be explained as part of the story
- Never plagiarize.
- Tell the story of the diversity and magnitude of the human experience boldly, even when it is unpopular to do so.
- Examine their own cultural values and avoid imposing those values on others.
- Avoid stereotyping by race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, geography, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance or social status.
- Support the open exchange of views, even views they find repugnant.
- Give voice to the voiceless; official and unofficial sources of information can be equally valid.
- Distinguish between advocacy and news reporting. Analysis and commentary should be labeled and not misrepresent fact or context.
- Distinguish news from advertising and shun hybrids that blur the lines between the two.
- Recognize a special obligation to ensure that the public's business is conducted in the open and that government records are open to inspection.



## **Minimize Harm**

Ethical journalists treat sources, subjects and colleagues as human beings deserving of respect. Journalists should:

- Show compassion for those who may be affected adversely by news coverage. Use special sensitivity when dealing with children and inexperienced sources or subjects.
- Be sensitive when seeking or using interviews or photographs of those affected by tragedy or grief.
- Recognize that gathering and reporting information may cause harm or discomfort.
- Pursuit of the news is not a license for arrogance.
- Recognize that private people have a greater right to control information about themselves than do public officials and others who seek power, influence or attention.
- Only an overriding public need can justify intrusion into anyone's privacy.
- Show good taste. Avoid pandering to lurid curiosity.
- Be cautious about identifying juvenile suspects or victims of sex crimes.
- Be judicious about naming criminal suspects before the formal filing of charges.
- Balance a criminal suspect's fair trial rights with the public's right to be informed.

## **Act Independently**

Journalists should be free of obligation to any interest other than the public's right to know. Journalists should:

- Avoid conflicts of interest, real or perceived.
- Remain free of associations and activities that may compromise integrity or damage credibility.
- Refuse gifts, favors, fees, free travel and special treatment, and shun secondary employment, political involvement, public office and service in community organizations if they compromise journalistic integrity.
- Disclose unavoidable conflicts.
- Be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable.
- Deny favored treatment to advertisers and special interests and resist their pressure to influence news coverage.
- Be wary of sources offering information for favors or money; avoid bidding for news.

## **Be Accountable**

Journalists are accountable to their readers, listeners, viewers and each other. Journalists should:

- Clarify and explain news coverage and invite dialogue with the public over journalistic conduct.
  - Encourage the public to voice grievances against the news media.
  - Admit mistakes and correct them promptly.
  - Expose unethical practices of journalists and the news media.
- Abide by the same high standards to which they hold others.



# Metropolitan Police Department, City of St. Louis Media Handbook

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# About the Public Information Division

While you may know the Public Information Division is the department's primary point of contact for media, you may not know the division has a multitude of other non-media related responsibilities.

The Public Information Division produces the department's Annual Report to the Community and many employee communications, is responsible for all website content, plans all aspects of promotion and awards ceremonies, responds to inquiries from the public, manages the department's social media platforms, produces recruitment advertisement and promotions and assists with community outreach related activities and events. We have a variety of other duties at the instruction of the Police Commissioner.

It is our hope that the Public Information Division will one day expand in size and manpower as media demands have grown exponentially with the advent of the 24-hour news cycle. However, in the current economic environment, the department must continue to divide the responsibilities of the Public Information Division to include non-media related functions.

To this end, we have developed certain policies for obtaining information that we hope will provide you the information you need as quickly as possible, while also ensuring the Public Information staff can continue to meet our other demands.

## How to Reach the Public Information Division

**Phone: 314-444-5603**

**Email: [media@slmpd.org](mailto:media@slmpd.org)**

The Public Information Division is staffed Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The best way to retrieve information about a criminal incident, Department policy/procedure or other general information, is to send an email. E-mails are answered from 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily. You are also welcome to call us during normal business hours at (314) 444-5603, but please be advised that we may ask you to also send your request in email form to ensure that we have a complete understanding of your needs.

The best way to obtain information about homicides, fatal accidents and assaults from the previous business day is to login to the secured Media Login page and access the "Current Incident Report" link which will provide incident summaries. This page is updated Monday – Friday.



# Obtaining Information: Afterhours, Weekends and Holidays

## Real Time Crime Center (RTCC): 314-444-5622

After 5:00 p.m. on weekdays or on weekends and holidays, media outlets should use their username and password to login to the secured Media Login page and access the “Current Incident Report” link which will provide information relative to assaults, homicides, and fatal vehicle accidents. For information on any other incidents, for example; person struck, minor accidents, shots fired, etc., media outlets should contact Real Time Crime Center (RTCC) at (314) 444-5622, who will provide brief information.

Media outlets can also access “911 Calls for Service” page, which updates every 10 minutes.

In the event of a major incident such as an officer-involved shooting or injured officer, the Public Information staff will provide location of incident, injury details and location for interview via email.

E-mail requests sent after 5:00 p.m. or on weekends will be responded to the following business day.

The identification of deceased victims from homicides or fatal accidents that occur over the weekend will be released by Public Information the following Monday, if available. RTCC will **not** be responsible for releasing names of victims.

In case of an EMERGENCY, media outlets can contact the RTCC at (314) 444-5622 and request them to page the on-call Public Information staff member.

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**Please note:** The moments after an officer-involved shooting or an on-duty officer injury are extremely hectic for the Real Time Crime Center. In addition to receiving calls from 911 dispatchers who are relaying information, the RTCC is also fielding calls from the Police Commissioner and Deputy Chiefs to relay information to them. Please be patient after serious incidents and only call RTCC for basic details, as Public Information will most likely be emailing or calling the media to provide further instruction on press briefings, etc.





## Information Released to Media

The Public Information Division will release the date, time and location (to the hundred block) of the incident. We will release the race, age and gender of all known victims and of all known suspects. We will also release a brief summary of the incident. If victims are injured, we will release information about the victim's injuries and his/her condition at the time he/she is taken to the hospital. If the suspects are not known but witnesses provided a description, we will release that description if witnesses provided consistent descriptions. If a victim is deceased and his/her next of kin has been notified, we will release the name and age of the victim. If the Circuit Attorney's Office issue warrants against a suspect, the suspect's name, age, gender, last known address and the charges he/she faces will also be released.

Our office will not, in most cases, release information about motive, so as not to jeopardize the prosecution of the case in any way. Our office will also not release information about how to get in touch with victims or the family members of victims unless specifically asked to do so by the victims. We will not release the identity of juvenile suspects (those younger than 17) unless they have been certified in a court of law to stand trial as an adult. Our office will also generally not release the names of victims who survive criminal incidents. It is important to note, that under the Missouri Sunshine Law, the names of certain victims may be made available to you through a police report. See the Sunshine Law Request section of this guide for more information.

### Vehicle Accidents with Fatalities or Life-Threatening Injuries

The department's Accident Reconstruction Team responds to fatal vehicle accidents and to vehicle accidents where injuries are believed to be life-threatening. Investigators work to determine the factors that contributed to the accident. While we understand your desire to immediately report the cause of a vehicle accident, it is important to understand how the Accident Reconstruction process works and why it is often impossible to provide immediate answers as to the specific factors that led to a vehicle accident.

Investigators with the Accident Reconstruction Team attempt to determine a number of factors including speed and if brakes were applied. They will analyze road and weather conditions and will use a variety of other investigative efforts to conclude how an accident occurred. Investigators use their findings and incorporate witness statements in order to "re-create" an accident. This process alone can take approximately 4 to 6 weeks but the investigation is not complete until toxicology results are received.

In accidents where there is a fatality, the Medical Examiner will determine during an autopsy if the deceased had alcohol or drugs in his/her/their system(s). In accidents where there is a fatality and the involved driver(s) survive(s), blood will also be drawn to determine if the



person(s) was/were under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In either case, it can take as long as 16 weeks to receive the results.

While we understand there may be an immediate desire to report if a person was or was not intoxicated or under the influence of an illicit drug at the time of the accident, in many instances, the department will be unable to immediately determine such information. In most cases, we will always await the results of the toxicology tests before releasing information about the involvement of alcohol or drugs.

The receipt of the toxicology results is usually the final stage of the Accident Reconstruction Investigation, which generally means the entire case from start to finish can take approximately 12 to 16 weeks. Upon completion of the investigation, if it is determined that there is probable cause to make an arrest, the case is presented to the Circuit Attorney's Office and a prosecutor makes a determination as to whether warrants will be issued. If so, the name of the suspect(s) will be available for release by our office.

### **Vehicle Accidents with Minor/No Injuries**

Our office rarely releases incident summaries if the accident resulted in minor or no injuries and/or no serious damage to public property. This is simply due to the volume of vehicle accidents that occur on any given day. As always, media interested in a summary of a particular incident may send a request for information to [media@slmpd.org](mailto:media@slmpd.org). Include as much information about the incident as possible including, if available: date, time, location and number/type of vehicles involved. You may also request a copy of the police report under the Missouri Sunshine Law. Be advised that officers have up to 72-hours to complete the police report. To request a copy of a police report, please see the "Sunshine Law Requests" section of this guide.

### **Homicide Call-Outs**

Homicide Detectives are "called out" to investigate when:

- A person is killed by another person.
- Remains of a body are located and manner/cause of death is unknown. The Medical Examiner's Office will conduct autopsy to determine if the death is a homicide.
- A person sustains injuries so severe that investigators have reason to believe the victim may die. In some instances, once a victim is taken to a hospital the doctors indicate that while a victim's injuries are severe it appears the victim will survive. In those situations, Homicide Detectives turn the investigation back over to district detectives and Homicide does not handle the case. However, if the victim later dies as a result of his/her injuries, the Homicide Section will handle the investigation.
- Anytime a child dies. After an initial assessment, if foul play is not suspected, the Homicide Section will not handle the case.



## Child Abuse Call-Outs

The Child Abuse Unit is responsible for cases involving children who are victims of sexual and physical assault. Child Abuse Detectives and Homicide Detectives are both called out anytime a child dies. If the preliminary investigation indicates that the death was accidental (for example co-sleeping) the investigation is handled solely by Child Abuse. However, if the preliminary investigation indicates the death may be the result of an intentional act, the investigation is conducted jointly by Child Abuse Detectives and Homicide. It is important to note that it will generally take several hours for investigators to make preliminary determinations as to what might have occurred prior to a child's death. The Child Abuse Unit is always called out on the death of a child even when the preliminary investigation indicates the cause could be illness or SIDS-related.

## Officer-Involved Shootings

The Force Investigative Unit (FIU) was established in September 2014 as the entity responsible for the criminal investigation of all officer-involved shootings. The FIU investigates all officer-involved shootings occurring within the City of St. Louis involving commissioned officers of the Metropolitan Police Department, as well as commissioned officers of any other jurisdiction.

In the event an officer uses deadly force against a suspect, it is standard procedure for the officer to be placed on administrative leave until such time the officer sees the department psychologist.

A deceased suspect's name will be released by Public Information once next of kin is notified. An injured suspect's name will be released only when and if warrants are issued against him/her by the Circuit Attorney's Office.

Media interested in obtaining interviews immediately following an officer-involved shooting where the officer is injured, should respond to the hospital where the officer is taken. Public Information will provide the hospital and limited details via email. Briefings and interviews are usually provided at the hospital.

Media interested in obtaining interviews following an officer-involved shooting where a suspect is injured should always respond to the scene of the incident, unless otherwise told by Public Information.



## Missing Persons

There is no mandatory waiting period to report a person missing. When the missing person is an adult, it is important to note that it is not a crime for an adult to voluntarily choose to leave home, not report to work, etc. Families of missing persons will often contact media outlets asking to broadcast a photo or information. Please contact Public Information with the person's name, and complaint number if provided, and we will provide a summary. If investigators have reason to believe a crime has been committed, the Public Information staff, at the direction of investigators, may contact media directly. By legal definition, a juvenile is a person under the age of 17. If a child is reported missing the case is assigned to detectives who work specifically with juveniles and juvenile issues.

### S.A.R.A.A. & A.M.B.E.R. Alerts

In some instances when a child is missing, the department will issue a local S.A.R.A.A. Alert (St. Louis Area Regional Amber Alert) or a national A.M.B.E.R. Alert (America's Missing Broadcast Emergency Response Alert). It should be noted that there are specific criteria that **must** be met before a law enforcement agency can initiate such alerts.

**To issue a S.A.R.A.A. Alert, all four of the below criteria must be met:**

- The child must be 16-years of age or younger *and*
- Police believe the child has been kidnapped by a non-parent or eliminated any other logical reason for the child's disappearance *and*
- Police believe the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death *and*
- There is enough descriptive information about the child, and/or the alleged kidnapped, and/or the suspect's vehicle to believe an immediate broadcast alert could aid in recovering the child.

**To issue an A.M.B.E.R. Alert, the Department of Justice recommends the below criteria be met:**

- There is reasonable belief by law enforcement that an abduction has occurred.
- The law enforcement agency believes that the child is in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death.
- There is enough descriptive information about the victim and the abduction for law enforcement to issue an AMBER Alert to assist in the recovery of the child.
- The child is 17-years of age or younger.
- The child's name and other critical data elements, including the Child Abduction flag, have been entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) system.



It is important to recognize that in both instances, there must be a reasonable belief that the child has been kidnapped/abducted.

Children who have run away from home do **not** meet the criteria to issue a S.A.R.A.A. or A.B.M.E.R. alert, however they are also investigated by our Juvenile Division detectives. In the event the family of a missing child contacts your media outlet and you wish to verify information, you are always welcome to contact the Public Information office to obtain information regarding the circumstances of the case.

KMOX-AM is the primary emergency alert system station for the St. Louis metropolitan area. In the event a S.A.R.A.A. or A.M.B.E.R. alert is issued, the department will, as quickly as possible, release all pertinent information to KMOX who will then contact other area media. If an alert is canceled, the department will, as quickly as possible, contact KMOX to relay such information and KMOX will in-turn, contact other area media.

### Department Personnel Photos

The department releases official personnel photos in instances where the employee dies in the line of duty or is injured in the line of duty beyond the point of ever returning to work. It should be noted that the release of such photos must always be approved by the Police Commissioner and the affected employee or his/her next of kin. If you are interested in requesting an employee's official department photo, contact our office. Photos of the Police Commissioner, Deputy Chiefs and District Captains can be found online at [www.slmpd.org](http://www.slmpd.org).



# What Happens After an Arrest

There is often confusion regarding what happens when a suspect is taken into custody. Many people use terminology such as “police charged the man with assault” or “police plan to file assault charges.” This terminology is incorrect. Police make arrests based on probable cause but police cannot “file charges.” Only prosecutors can issue warrants, commonly referred to as “charges.”

Once a suspect is arrested, if he/she is taken into custody at the scene, he/she will generally be transported to the nearest area patrol station. The suspect will be held in “the holdover” until such time that the suspect can be transported to the Justice Center. The holdover is not designed to hold suspects for an extended period of time and suspects are taken to the Justice Center as soon as possible. In some cases (for example suspects with certain medical/physical conditions), the suspect will be taken directly from the location of arrest to the Justice Center and will not go to an area patrol station. Following an arrest, warrants are sought with the Circuit Attorney’s Office if the crime is a state level offense or with the City Counselor’s Office if the crime is a city ordinance violation.

## City Ordinance Violations

If a suspect is arrested for a city ordinance violation (such as peace disturbance, trespassing, urinating in public, etc.), one of two things may happen. Either:

- The suspect receives a summons at the scene. The summons will include the date that the suspect is required to appear in city court. The suspect is not physically taken into custody. On or prior to the court date, attorneys in the City Counselor’s Office will make a determination as to whether they will proceed with the prosecution or not.

**OR**

- The suspect is taken into custody where he/she is booked at the Justice Center. The suspect must be released within 24 hours. The suspect is given the date of his/her first court appearance. The City Counselor’s Office will make a determination as to whether they will proceed with prosecution either on or prior to the date of the suspect’s first court appearance.



## State-Level Offenses

If a suspect is arrested for a state level offense (such as robbery, rape, murder, high-dollar amount thefts, etc.) the victim(s)/witnesses meet with investigators from the Police Department. The investigating officer makes a “warrant application” with an Assistant Circuit Attorney (ACA). The ACA then makes a decision on the warrant application with one of three outcomes: Issued, Refused or Taken Under Advisement.

- If warrants are **Issued**, the suspect is being charged with a crime. The suspect will then appear before a judge who determines bail and sets a date for the next court appearance.
- If warrants are **Refused**, the Circuit Attorney’s Office is declining to prosecute the case at that time. It is important to note that even if a case is refused, the Circuit Attorney’s Office can always later “issue” the case if they so choose, as long as the statute of limitations for the crime has not expired.
- If warrants are **Taken Under Advisement** (TUA) investigators are often asked to compile additional information before a decision is made. Sometimes TUA cases are issued later, sometimes they are not. It depends on what the additional investigation reveals.

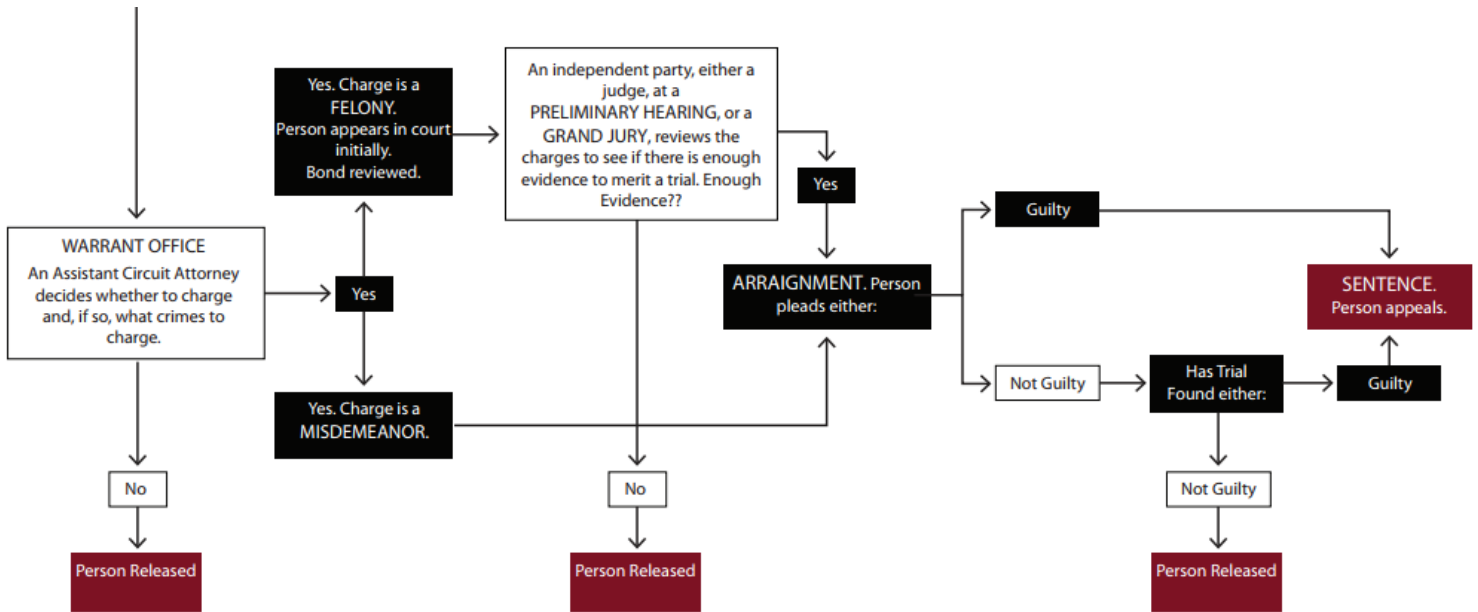
When a suspect is arrested by police, he/she can only be held for 24 hours unless prosecutors issue warrants (“issue charges.”) If prosecutors do not issue warrants within 24 hours of an arrest, the suspect must be released. If an arrest is made early in the morning, investigators will generally apply for warrants by late afternoon. If an arrest is made late in the evening, investigators will generally apply for warrants the following morning. Once investigators present the case to the ACA and apply for warrants, the actual presentation/warrant application can often take several hours.

Once a case has been presented to prosecutors, the department has an agreement with the Circuit Attorney’s Office that prosecutors will release all further statements, comments, etc. regarding the case. This agreement is based on Missouri Supreme Court rules regarding pre-trial publicity and the responsibilities of prosecutors. **Therefore, once warrants are issued, the department will not release any further information other than to confirm that a suspect has been charged with a crime and what the crime is. If you have additional questions, you will be referred to the Circuit Attorney’s Office.**



## Anatomy of a State-Level Offense Prosecution

What happens when the police make an arrest?



## The Division of Corrections

The St. Louis City Justice Center and the Medium Security Institution (also known as “the Work House”) fall within the jurisdiction of the City of St. Louis - Division of Corrections. The Division of Corrections reports to the city’s Department of Public Safety. The Metropolitan Police Department does not manage either institution and questions regarding the facilities, conditions, if certain prisoners are in custody at certain locations, escapes, suicides or attempted suicides and jail altercations should be directed to the Department of Public Safety.





# Interview Requests

## Interviews Regarding Criminal Incidents

At the scene of a criminal incident, any police commander may conduct an interview with you. Commanders are those ranked lieutenant, captain, major or lieutenant colonel. You can generally distinguish the commanders as they will be wearing white shirts, while the officers and sergeants will be wearing blue shirts. Please keep in mind that while our commanders have been instructed to provide you with information, their first priority will always be the investigation of the criminal incident. Commanders will generally have very limited information in the moments immediately after an incident occurs but, in time, should be able to speak with you in order to provide the facts of the incident.

We understand reporters may be unable to respond to the scene of a criminal incident. You are always welcome to contact Public Information during business hours and inquire about an incident. We will provide the information we have available and, in some instances, may be able to arrange an interview, but be advised that **the best way to get information is always to speak with the commander at the scene.** The commander at the scene is able to speak directly to the responding officers. Often times, interviews arranged at a later time take place with a different commander, one who did not respond to the scene. You should also be aware that once investigators have consulted with the Circuit Attorney's Office regarding a criminal incident, investigators will be severely limited in what information can be released.

## Interviews with the Police Commissioner or Commanders

Members of the media are always welcome to request interviews with the Police Commissioner, commanders, or other employees by emailing the Public Information office. Any and all interview requests are cleared and arranged by our staff.

## A Note About Reporting at Incident Scenes

Members of the media should never cross the yellow tape at a crime scene. Investigators are aware of your rights on public property but may periodically request that you not shoot or air video of certain witnesses or victims in order to protect those individuals. In hostage/standoff situations, we may also request media outlets not show live video or immediately publish photos of officers making entry into a building or of their strategic positioning around a building. We make these requests for the safety everyone involved.



# Open Records Requests

Requests for police records are governed by Missouri’s Sunshine Law. You may obtain information about the Sunshine Law by contacting the Office of the Attorney General.

Records for law enforcement agencies such as the Metropolitan Police Department are also subject to specific provisions of the Sunshine Law. The law provides, however, that law enforcement records are subject to the same presumption of openness that applies to other public records.

## Submitting a Request for Records Under the Sunshine Law

Members of the media who are interested in obtaining records—including police reports—under Missouri’s Sunshine Law should submit a request to the Public Information Division by email to [media@slmpd.org](mailto:media@slmpd.org) or by mail to:

**Metropolitan Police Department, City of St. Louis**  
**Attention: Public Information**  
**1915 Olive St.**  
**St. Louis, MO 63103**

When submitting a request, please include your name, phone number and street address and include as much information as possible about the documents you are seeking.

The Public Information Division will respond with a letter indicating the request was received and is being acted upon. The Legal Division will act upon the request after receiving notification from the Public Information Division. Further correspondence regarding your request will come from the Legal Division. The Legal Division will locate any responsive, open documents and Public Information will contact you, most likely via e-mail, when your documents are available. **The Public Information Division is not involved in determining if/why a record is open or can be closed.**

There may be a fee associated with the request as outlined in sections 610.026 of the law, “Fees for copying public records, except those records restricted under section 32.091, shall not exceed ten cents per page for a paper copy not larger than nine by fourteen inches, with the hourly fee for duplicating time not to exceed the average hourly rate of pay for clerical staff of the public governmental body. Research time required for fulfilling records requests may be charged at the actual cost of research time.”



# Things to Know

## Police Districts

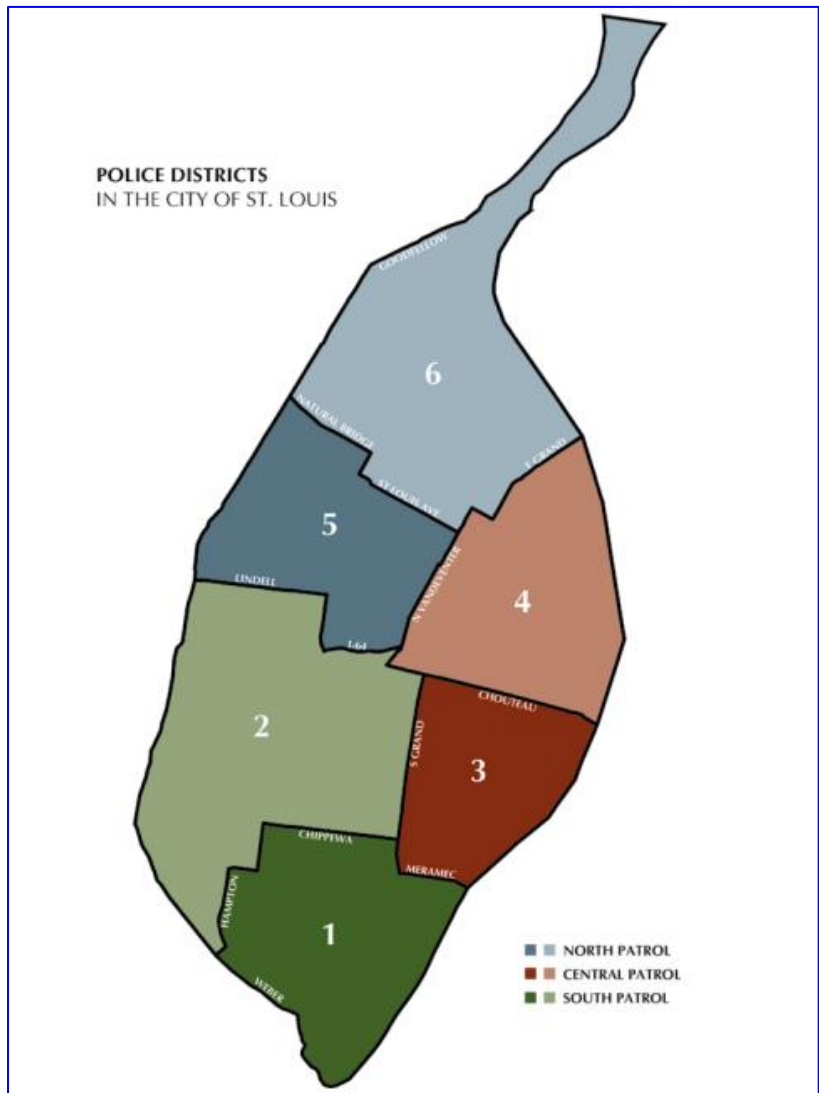
The City of St. Louis is divided geographically into three area patrol stations and six police districts. Each patrol division is commanded by a major and each district is commanded by a captain.

**South Patrol Division**  
3157 Sublette  
First & Second Districts

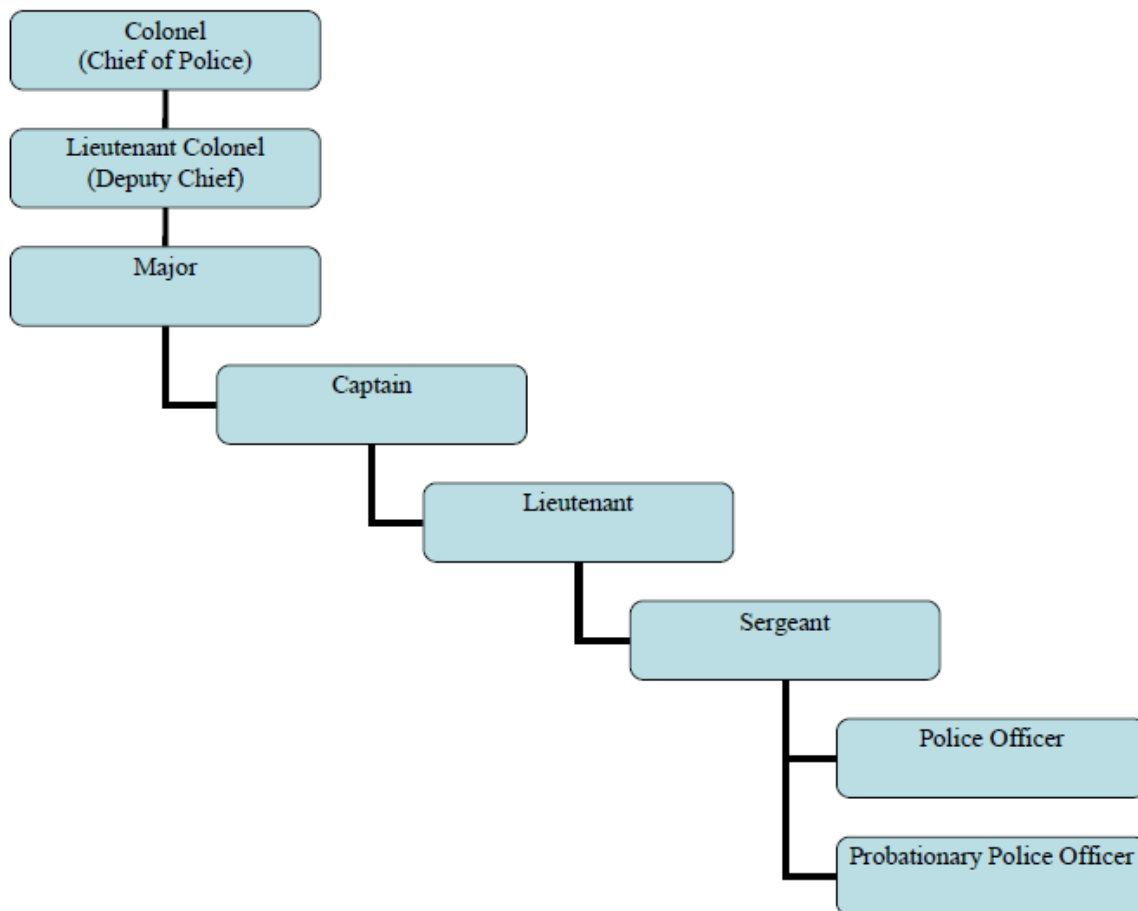
**Central Patrol Division**  
919 North Jefferson  
Third and Fourth Districts

**North Patrol Division**  
4014 Union  
Fifth and Sixth Districts

For a detailed listing of neighborhoods in each of the nine police districts, visit [www.slmpd.org](http://www.slmpd.org) and click on the “Your Neighborhood” tab. You will also find information about each district’s Community Outreach Meetings for citizens.



## Rank Structure of Commissioned Officers



## Authorized Strength

As of this guide's publication, the department is authorized to employ 1295 police officers, funded by the City of St. Louis. The department employs additional officers through grant funds. For more information regarding the department's current actual strength or statistics regarding gender/racial demographics of commissioned employees, contact our office.



## St. Louis Police Academy

The St. Louis Police Academy is a 26-week program in which police recruits train to become commissioned law enforcement officers. Following graduation from the academy, officers receive the title Probationary Police Officer (PPO) for twelve months until being promoted to Police Officer. PPOs have the same arrest rights, powers and authority as any Police Officer, however when it comes to disciplinary procedures, there is a distinct difference. While Police Officers are entitled to due process under Missouri State Statutes, PPOs can be terminated at any time for any reason. For more information about department disciplinary procedures see page 30 of this guide.

## Department Structure

The Metropolitan Police Department is comprised of four bureaus: the Bureau of Neighborhood Policing, the Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Professional Standards and the Bureau of Community Outreach. To view the most recently issued organizational chart, go to [www.slmprd.org](http://www.slmprd.org), “About Us” tab and click on “Organizational Chart.”

## Office of the Police Commissioner

The Police Commissioner reports directly to the Mayor of the City of St. Louis. All other department employees ultimately report—through their chain of command—to the Police Commissioner. Several department offices report directly to the Office of the Police Commissioner. Those units include: Information Technology, Legal, Public Information, Operational Planning, Budget & Finance, Purchasing, Supply/Uniform and Intelligence. Some units report directly to the Assistance Chief. Those units include: Special Projects, Emergency Management, Asset Removal, Planning & Research and CALEA.

## Bureau of Neighborhood Policing

The Bureau of Community Policing is the largest bureau within the department and is comprised of more than 1,000 commissioned officers and civilian employees. The bureau includes the six police districts, Housing Authority, Nuisance/Problem Behavior, Public Transportation and Officer Wellness/CIT Coordinator.



## **Bureau of Investigations**

The Bureau of Investigations is divided into two silos, Specialized Enforcement and Investigative Services. Specialized Enforcement includes Special Operations, Traffic/Mounted Patrol, Narcotics, Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program Grant (MCSAP), Mobile Reserve/Special Weapons & Tactics (SWAT), Park Rangers, Canine and Aviation. Investigative Services includes Homicide, Bomb and Arson, Cyber Crime, Sex Crimes/Child Abuse, Polygraph, Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART) and Overdose Investigations.

## **Bureau of Community Affairs**

The Bureau of Community Affairs includes the Community Engagement/Organizational Development Division, Intervention and Compliance/Gangs and the Juvenile Division.

## **Bureau of Professional Standards**

The Bureau of Professional Standards is broken down in two silos. One includes Internal Affairs, Private Security, Force Investigative Unit (FIU) and the Police Academy. The other, Evidence Management & Auxiliary Services, includes Fleet Services, Facilities Management, Property Custody, Communications and the Communications Service Center, Laboratory, Telephone Reporting and Records. It also includes Warrant/Fugitive, which contains Prisoner Processing, Circuit Attorney Investigator/Court Liaison and City Marshals.

## **Department Disciplinary Procedures**

Police Officers suspected of misconduct are subject to investigation. Complaints are first levied with the Internal Affairs Division (IAD) or an Officer's Supervisor/Commander. When an allegation is made, an investigation is conducted by Internal Affairs. Internal Affairs may order some investigations of lesser offenses to be completed by the accused employee's commander.



At the conclusion of all investigations, the case is assigned one of six dispositions:

- **Sustained:** Investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to support the allegation
- **Not Sustained:** Insufficient evidence available to either prove or disprove the allegation.
- **Unfounded:** The complaint was not based on facts, as shown by the investigation OR the incident complained of did not occur.
- **Exonerated:** The actions complained of did occur but the investigation disclosed that the actions were reasonable.
- **Withdrawn:** Complainant withdrew complaint and the investigation was terminated.
- **Mediation – Resolved:** Complaint was resolved through the mediation process.

Upon the conclusion of the investigation, the report will be forwarded through the chain of command to the Police Commissioner for review. As the report moves through the chain of command, each commander can agree with the disciplinary recommendation or make a recommendation of his/her own, with the Police Commissioner making the final recommendation.

If the allegation is sustained and the recommended discipline is unpaid suspension of 15 days or less, the officer is notified of the findings and subsequent discipline. If the employee disagrees with the findings, he/she can request a “Summary Hearing.” The Summary Hearing Panel is comprised of three department employees—one of the employee’s same rank, one of the rank above the employee and one ranked Captain or above who also serves as the chair of the committee. The Summary Hearing Panel can agree with the recommendation, recommend lesser discipline, or recommend greater discipline of up to 15 days of unpaid suspension.

In instances where the allegation is sustained and the recommended discipline is unpaid suspension of 16 days or more, the officer is notified of the findings and subsequent discipline. If the employee disagrees with the findings, he/she can request a “Civil Service Hearing” in accordance with the City of St. Louis Department of Personnel Administrative Regulations.



In the hearing, the employee and the department will have legal representation. A hearing officer hired by the City of St. Louis will supervise the hearing. At the conclusion of the presentation of evidence and testimony, the hearing officer will present “findings of fact and conclusions of law” to the Civil Service Commission. Based on the hearing officer’s findings of fact and conclusions of law, the Civil Service Commission will make a decision to either uphold or overturn the punishment recommended by the Police Commissioner.

It is important to note that Probationary Police Officers are the only commissioned employees who can be terminated without cause.

### **Department Disciplinary Procedures for Civilian Employees**

While some instances of wrong-doing by civilian employees may be investigated by IAD, an IAD investigation may not necessarily be required.

Employees suspected of misconduct are subject to investigation. Complaints are first levied with the Internal Affairs Division (IAD) or an employee’s Supervisor/Commander. When an allegation is made, an investigation is conducted by Internal Affairs. Internal Affairs may order some investigations of lesser offenses to be completed by the accused employee’s commander.

At the conclusion of all investigations, the case is assigned one of six dispositions:

- **Sustained:** Investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to support the allegation
- **Not Sustained:** Insufficient evidence available to either prove or disprove the allegation.
- **Unfounded:** The complaint was not based on facts, as shown by the investigation OR the incident complained of did not occur.
- **Exonerated:** The actions complained of did occur but the investigation disclosed that the actions were reasonable.
- **Withdrawn:** Complainant withdrew complaint and the investigation was terminated.
- **Mediation – Resolved:** Complaint was resolved through the mediation process.

Upon the conclusion of the investigation, the report will be forwarded through the chain of command to the Police Commissioner for review. As the report moves through the chain of command, each commander can agree with the disciplinary recommendation or make a recommendation of his/her own, with the Police Commissioner making the final recommendation.





In all instances of civilian disciplinary action, the employee is notified of the findings and subsequent discipline. If the employee disagrees with the findings, he/she can request a “Civil Service Hearing” in accordance with the City of St. Louis Department of Personnel Administrative Regulations.

In the hearing, the employee and the department will have legal representation. A hearing officer hired by the City of St. Louis will supervise the hearing. At the conclusion of the presentation of evidence and testimony, the hearing officer will present “findings of fact and conclusions of law” to the Civil Service Commission. Based on the hearing officer’s findings of fact and conclusions of law, the Civil Service Commission will make a decision to either uphold or overturn the punishment recommended by the Police Commissioner.

## Public Information Resources

### The Department Website

As a member of the media, you may find a wealth of helpful information and crime statistics on the [www.slmpr.org](http://www.slmpr.org) website. Among the information on the site:

- [Current and archived news releases.](#)
- [Crime statistics](#) – Crime numbers broken down by neighborhood are generally updated for the previous month by the 8th day of current month (i.e. the February statistics will generally be available by March 8, etc.)
- [Homicide statistics](#) – Updated numbers are generally updated every Tuesday and include year-to-date information, such as incident status (open, closed, etc.), motive, weapon used and victimology. Homicide are also broken down by neighborhood of occurrence on this page.
- [Annual Reports](#) - These reports include more detailed crime statistics, some victim analysis, some arrestee analysis and other information about the department and its employees.
- Crime Mapping, [CrimeReports](#) - This tool will display information about specific crimes in specific neighborhoods and/or within a specific radius.
- Information about various divisions/units of the police department.



## Social Media Resources

### Twitter

The department's official Twitter account can be found at [www.twitter.com/slmpd](http://www.twitter.com/slmpd). The most up-to-date information can often be found on our Twitter.

### Facebook

The department's official Facebook page can be found at [www.facebook.com/SaintLouisMetropolitanPoliceDepartment](http://www.facebook.com/SaintLouisMetropolitanPoliceDepartment).

### YouTube

The department's official YouTube account can be found at [www.youtube.com/user/StLouisMetroPD](http://www.youtube.com/user/StLouisMetroPD).

### Mobile App

The SLMPD mobile app is free to download on the [iOS AppStore](#) and [Google Play Marketplace](#).



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