



Reno Police Department

MEDIA GUIDE

October 2012

The purpose of this guide is to direct reporters to the resources available through the Reno Police Department. Like the media, the Reno Police Department operates 24/7, 52 weeks a year. And like the news media, we serve the citizens of this community, in part, through collecting and sharing important information. It is the philosophy of the Reno Police Department to respond to media inquiries as quickly, completely and accurately as possible. This booklet is a reference guide only and is not intended to cover every possible situation.

This guide will help you know:

- Who to call for information
- When information is available
- When information may *not* be available
- How to obtain supporting or background information, like crime stats or trends
- What experts are available from the RPD on a variety of law enforcement, public safety and other topics



Who to call?

Weekdays, major crimes or critical incidents your media contact is:

Detective Lieutenant 775-334-2444

** There may be a delay in response due to the Detective Lt. being out in the field or away from his/her desk.*

Nights, weekend or holidays, your best media contact for BREAKING NEWS within the City of Reno is :

Watch Commander's Media Phone 445-9209

**You may also text the media phone – please identify which news agency you are from followed by your name so the Watch Commander is clear to whom they are responding.*

*****A note about what the Watch Commander can give you:**

The Watch Commander is able to provide **basic** info on BREAKING crimes, or crimes that occur on his/her shift. If you call a Watch Commander *immediately* after a report goes out over the radio, he/she will likely have no more info than you do. It may be at least 30 minutes after the call that details are available for release. If the Watch Commander does not answer the phone, please leave a message stating who you are, affiliation, number to call back and what you are interested in receiving information regarding. You will receive a call back when they are able.

Watch Commanders are in the patrol division and NOT briefed on cases that involve detectives or ongoing investigations (different divisions – different jobs). If you'd like a weekend or evening follow up on an ongoing investigation, **please plan ahead** and get the info from the Detective Lieutenant during weekday business hours.



Great Places to Get Information:

Traffic Division	(775) 334-2141	
RPD Records	(775) 334-2155	for public records requests/police reports
City of Reno PIO	(775) 354-8780	
Washoe County Booking	(775) 328-3030	8a-5p / (775) 328-3369 after hours - for mug shots
Detectives	(775) 334-2115	
Reg. Street Enforcement Team (SET)	(775) 334-3065	
Reg. Gang Unit	(775)334-3852	
R.P.D. Main Station	(775) 334-2175	
R.P.D. South Substation	(775) 689-2960	

<http://www.reno.gov> - The Police website contains information related to: Online reporting, Recruiting, Community Outreach, Media updates, Info on Divisions/Units, RPD Highlights/History, Crimes/Criminals, FAQ – includes links to other resources, Crime Statistics

<https://www.facebook.com/RenoPoliceDepartment> - Crime updates / tips / statistics and general info



Crimes and Arrests:

What information is available? :

- Type or nature of an event or crime which occurred or is occurring in the jurisdiction of the Reno Police Department
- Location, date, time, damages, general description of incident*
- Name, sex, age of person arrested
- Time, place* of arrest
- Place of suspects detention
- Names of deceased victims, following notification of next of kin
- Auto accident stats and information about accidents in the City of Reno are available from the Traffic Division 334-2141

* If the location of arrest/crime may identify victims, this information may not be immediately available.

What information MAY be available? :

- Specific cause of death, if officially determined by the coroner
- Very general description of injuries sustained as viewed by the officers (as opposed to specific medical conditions)
- Mug Shots may be released through RPD when available. Your best source for mug shots is the Washoe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO). Washoe County Booking (775) 328-3030, 8a-5p / (775) 328-3369 after hours.



What information is NOT available? :

- Identity or address of victims
- Information regarding crimes involving children or sexual crimes which would tend to identify the victim or reporting party
- Information regarding crimes or incidents outside the jurisdiction of the Reno Police Department
- Identity or address of witnesses
- Identity of juvenile suspects
- Medical Conditions unless permission is specifically given by the victim or the victim's family (HIPAA)
- Results of any investigative procedure, such as polygraph tests, ballistics tests, etc.
- Information which, if prematurely released, may interfere with an investigation or apprehension of a suspect, such as the nature of leads, specifics of an "MO", details of the crime known only to the perpetrator or police, information that may cause the suspect to flee or avoid arrest
- Evidence that may adversely affect a court proceeding
- Status of persons turned over to CPS (Child Protective Services)* or NMHI(Nevada Mental Health Institute) *

*Mental health holds and child custody situations - Police officers routinely deal with people who have diagnosed or suspected mental illness. This is a medical condition protected under the medical records provision of the public records act. Child protection matters are also protected by law. Children taken into protective custody for whatever reason are provided protection of their identities and status under state and federal statutes.





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will there be a special perimeter set up for Media at crime scenes?

Generally – no. If an area is safe for the media it must also be safe for the public. However, in some cases, media may be allowed in a restricted area for better access. The Department asks media cooperation in working with officers at a crime scene before the perimeter is set.

Can I get updates on major cases on the weekend? What about crime stats?

Please plan ahead if you want to do a weekend update on a major, ongoing case. The weekend Watch commander handles issues of the day and generally isn't able to speak to major cases involving detectives. The Detective Lieutenant may also not be available for a weekend update if nothing is new on a major case.

The personnel in the Crime Analysis Unit also work weekdays. If you need crime statistics for a weekend story, please plan ahead and get the info during the week.

Why can't the Department release medical conditions?

HIPAA, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 provide people with privacy regarding their medical conditions.

Except for general descriptions of injuries sustained at a crime or accident scene, as pertinent to the crime or accident that occurred, the Reno Police Department is unable to provide media with specific medical conditions or exact types of injuries. Victims or family approval is necessary for the public release of this information, which is often unattainable during the time police are involved in the incident.

In exceptional cases, victims or their families may chose to work through the department's Victim Service Unit to release medical information. Most of the time, however, specific medical conditions and injuries will not be available through the Reno Police Department.



More FAQ's

Why do I have to go to the County jail for mug shots?

Washoe County Sheriff's Office is the legal custodian of these records. Occasionally, a mug shot will be released by the Reno Police Department as a courtesy. Generally, mug shots come from the jail.

What about the identity of victims of traffic accidents?

If the accident is fatal, the name of the deceased victim will be released as soon as family is notified. The name generally comes from the Washoe County Coroner's Office. Names of victims who are injured cannot be released unless victims give consent.

What if I want an interview with the victim of a crime?

The police department is prohibited from releasing names of crime victims and witnesses. In some cases, the Detective Lieutenant can work with Victim Services if the crime victims agree to a media interview. Requests like, "I need to find a fraud victim" is not something the police department can responsibly accommodate.

The department's professional and ethical responsibility is in preserving a victim's dignity, privacy, and resolving whatever crime has been committed against them.

Can the Reno Police Department help me with a story by providing background statistics beyond what I find on the website?

Yes. The Reno Police Department has a very active Crime Analysis Unit. The only limitations are time and reporting methods. The Reno Police Department can only provide information the department actually collects, and due to work load, it may take several days to track down very specific information.



More FAQ's

What's the difference between an officer and a deputy?

If your story references an employee of a Police Department, that employee is referred to as an “officer”, or by their rank in the department, as in Sgt., Lt., Cmdr., Deputy Chief, etc. If your story references an employee of a Sheriff's Department, that employee is called a “deputy”, or called by their rank.

Can the RPD help me with questions about cases in other cities?

Generally, no. The RPD cannot provide information when another police agency is the primary responder or investigator. We can provide information on how we assisted other departments, but will have to refer you to the primary agency for incident details.

How do I find out information about a case that's gone to court?

You will have to check with the appropriate court or with the prosecutor for information that includes hearing dates, camera requests, etc. The Reno Police Department deals with the investigative phase of a case.

What if I have a question about a past incident?

Please provide as much specific information as possible about the incident to the Detective Lieutenant. Given times, places or names, we can track it down and provide you the information.

Why don't police make reports on everything they respond to?

Police are charged with addressing criminal matters. Officers often respond to calls and find no criminal activity appears to have taken place. When that happens, often no police report is made. Civil situations like neighbor disputes or landlord-tenant disputes, Fire or EMS assists often do not result in police reports.



More FAQ's

Can we do a live shot during a bomb call or SWAT operation?

During a bomb call, SWAT operation or critical incident, the Chief, Watch Commander or Incident Commander may request that media cooperate with the department to broadcast only those images that will not compromise officer or public safety. This cooperation may include the location of live trucks, the location of the reporter on scene, and the background video shown while the incident is in progress.

The danger is that television live shots may reveal to a suspect the position or tactics of officers during a critical incident. This may jeopardize public safety, officer safety and a peaceful resolution. Some radio frequencies may also be a danger in triggering live explosive devices.

The media will be given a safe vantage point to record pictures for later broadcast.

Can the RPD give information about an active fire within the City of Reno?

Generally, no, the Department **only** responds to assist the Reno Fire Department with traffic control and evacuations. Any other questions should be directed to the Fire Department.

Public Records Requests

You may request information on any incident involving the Reno Police Department through the Public Information Officer. Nevada law provides all public records be accessible pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes (Chapter 239) unless specifically made exempt under NRS or applicable case law.

For police records, this means:

- If a case is still under investigation, any or all of the related police records will likely not be available.
- If the investigation on a case is complete any or all of the related police records may be available (unless otherwise exempt by law).
- If the case is closed, and court proceedings are complete, the entire record is generally releasable, with possible redactions for victim's safety and privacy (unless otherwise exempt by law).

All public records requests from the media made through the Reno Police Department should be:

- In writing on media letterhead and sent to: **Reno Police Department, Attn: Records Division, P.O. Box 1900, Reno NV 89505**
- **As specific as possible**, including names, dates, incidents and exactly what records you are requesting

How long does it take to fill a Public Records Request?

Generally, five business days from the date we receive the request. Every effort will be made to process your request as soon as possible.

How will the public records be delivered?

Requests for information may be picked up in person or mailed upon receipt of Self Addressed Stamped Envelope.

Will it cost money?

It might. Your public record is free up to 10 pages. Subsequent pages will be .05 cents per page. The average report cost is less than \$5, or may be more, based on the Records fee schedule. Requests for information consisting of 10 pages or more will be fulfilled only after payment has been received. Payment must be in the form of a money order or cash in the exact amount. You can pick up the records and make your payment at the Public Counter located in the main lobby of the Reno Police Department at 455 E. 2nd Street, Reno, NV 89502.

Public records are not faxed due to privacy and security concerns.

Critical Incidents and High Risk Operations

The Watch Commander and/or personnel on the scene or responding to a critical incident will likely not be able to answer questions until they have either stabilized the scene or relinquished the scene to other personnel.

The Reno Police Department is a member of the Washoe County Officer Involved Shooting Protocol. This protocol establishes a multi-jurisdictional investigative team in the event of an Officer Involved Shooting. It is the practice of the investigative team to establish a lead agency, which is not the agency involved in the incident. The lead agency will handle all media communication during the investigative process. At the conclusion of the investigative process, the primary responsibility for media communication is passed to the Washoe County District Attorney's Office.

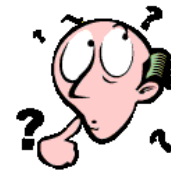




Reno Police Department

10-Codes

10-2	Copy, Loud and Clear
10-4	Acknowledgement (OK)
10-6	Busy
10-8	Clear – Available for calls
10-9	Repeat
10-10	Fight
10-16	Domestic disturbance
10-20	Location
10-21	Phone call
10-22	Disregard
10-23	Arrive at scene
10-24	Assignment completed
10-25	Meet in person
10-27	Driver's License Information
10-28	Vehicle Registration Information
10-29	Check for wanted
10-41	Beginning tour of duty
10-42	Ending tour of duty
10-46	Stalled vehicle – motorist assist
10-50	Vehicle accident
10-55	Intoxicated driver
10-56	Intoxicated person
10-57	Hit and Run Accident
10-76	Enroute
10-78	Officer needs assistance Code 3
10-89	Explosive device
10-90	Alarm – residential or business
10-95	Prisoner/Subject in custody
10-96	Mental subject
10-99	Wanted/Stolen indicated
Code 50	Deceased person



Who is talking???

The Truckee Meadows has several law enforcement agency frequencies that are accessible by scanner. If you are listening to a police scanner in scan mode, you may become confused as to which agency is responding. The below guide may assist you in determining which law enforcement agency is the primary agency you will need to call for information.

Reno Police Department :

Patrol personnel are, generally, identified by a four digit unit identifier beginning with a letter.

S254 = Sam – Two – Fifty Four

The letter notes the district in which the unit has primary responsibility; N – north, S - South, C – Central. The second digit notes which shift they are working; 1st –graveyard shift (1), 2nd – dayshift (2), 3rd – swing shift (3). The last two digits are the beat in which the unit has primary responsibility. (* Each agency has their districts broken down into beats. Beat books should be available at each agency.)

Washoe County Sheriff's Office :

Patrol personnel are, generally, identified by a four digit unit identifier beginning with a number.

1N34 = One – Nora – Thirty four

The number notes which shift they are working. The second digit is the district in which the unit has primary responsibility. The last two digits are the beat in which the unit has primary responsibility.

Sparks Police Department :

Patrol personnel are, generally, identified by a three digit unit identifier with no letter.

211 = Two - Eleven

The first number denotes which shift they are working. The last two denote the beat in which the unit has primary responsibility.