

**Lower Providence Township Police Department  
Eagleville, Pennsylvania**

General Order ☒  
Special Order ☐  
Personnel Order ☐

**ORDER NUMBER**

**310**

**Subject**

**Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) Procedures**

**Date of Issue**

**January 29, 2020**

**Effective Date**

**January 29, 2020**

**Expiration Date**

**Until Amended or  
Rescinded**

**Issued by:**

**Michael Jackson, Chief of Police**

**Amends**

**Rescinds**

**All Previous Orders**

**Standard Number:**

**Distribution**

- 1. General Order Manuals**
- 2. Records Manual**
- 3. Reading Verification to all Personnel**

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this General Order is to establish guidelines regulating the access and dissemination of information contained in the national, state and local databases, and to set forth guidelines and procedures for the use of the Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) with the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) functions, as well as the use and care of the MDT.

**II. POLICY**

Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) are communication devices capable of receiving and transmitting data among units and locations equipped with computer-aided dispatch terminals, such as the Dispatch Center dispatch terminals. A mobile data terminal also provides direct user access to national, state and local computer databases. Access to and dissemination of confidential information contained in these databases requires that guidelines and procedures regulating the mobile data terminal user be established.

Exceptions:

Nothing in these policies and procedures shall prevent an officer or dispatcher from choosing MDT communication when:

- a. The nature of the call or its location creates a safety concern to the officer.
- b. The officer or dispatcher needs to communicate lengthy information.
- c. There is an equipment malfunction.

**III. REGULATION**

**A. Use and Dissemination of Information**

1. Information contained in the national, state, and local databases are not in the public domain and are made available for law enforcement purposes only.

2. Information received from national, state or local data bases SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED PROBABLE CAUSE FOR ARREST UNTIL PROPERLY VERIFIED FOR ACCURACY AND CONFIRMED WITH THE AGENCY THAT ENTERED THE WANT OR WARRANT.

B. Mobile Data Terminal Communication

1. Mobile terminals are intended to be used in conjunction with voice radio communications, enhance field personnel safety and provide a secure means of transmitting information and messages.
2. Mobile data terminals may be used to reduce dispatcher and field personnel activity and to reduce voice radio activity for routine vehicle and person checks.
3. Mobile data terminals shall be turned on and logged onto the Montgomery County CAD at all times during the tour. Field personnel shall normally conduct vehicle and person checks via the mobile data terminal, unless it is deemed unsafe to do so.
4. During routine patrol, common sense and safe driving practices dictate that the officer will focus his/her attention on safe operation of the vehicle and view the MDT only when the vehicle is not in motion. The officer will not acknowledge a message until the vehicle is stationary.
5. At no time shall a member of the Lower Providence Township Police Department intentionally deactivate or attempt to disable the global positioning system (GPS) function associated with the MDT.

C. Mobile Data Terminal Dispatched Calls for Service

1. Generally, all calls for service dispatches shall be voice radio dispatched.
2. Response units shall use voice radio to report their arrival, activity and disposition of calls for service.
3. At times, due to security or a hazardous situation, calls may need to be given by MDT. In any such situation, the shift supervisor and the zone car will be told that a call is being shipped by MDT. The receiving units shall acknowledge receipt of the call by voice.

D. Specific Prohibited Mobile Data Terminal Messaging

1. Messages among Dispatch Center CAD Workstations and/or Mobile Data Terminals shall be permitted without restriction except for the following prohibited transmissions:
  - a. Any remarks derogatory to the reputation or image of the police department.
  - b. Any remarks derogatory to the reputation or character of any member of this department or the public at large.
  - c. Any remarks derogatory of any race, sex, ethnic group or religious group.
  - d. Any remarks containing or implying vulgar, degrading or unprofessional commentary.
  - e. Any remarks or comments not authorized by County Communications. E-Mail messages are to be kept to a minimum. Any information that can be relayed via telephone or in person shall be relayed by that means.
  - f. E-Mail shall be for police related matters only.

E. General Responsibilities and Equipment Care

1. Inspection of the Mobile Data Terminal for damage or missing parts shall be recorded on the vehicle inspection reports at the start of the tour. The vehicle operator at the start of the tour shall be held responsible for any damage to a Mobile Data Terminal that is not immediately reported to a supervisor.
2. Response units experiencing Mobile Data Terminal malfunctioning shall immediately report the condition to their immediate supervisor and the dispatcher. A written description of the MDT malfunction shall be forwarded to the police supervisor at the end of the tour.
3. All Mobile Data Terminal-equipped vehicles shall be locked when not occupied.
4. Information displayed on the MDT screen is confidential and caution should be taken to ensure that unauthorized persons do not view it.
5. All available MDT equipped vehicles shall be utilized by response units before non-equipped MDT vehicles are put into service.
6. To ensure that the vehicle battery is not drained unnecessarily, especially in cold weather, Mobile Data Terminals shall be signed off and powered off at the end of a tour or when the vehicle is removed from service for repair.
7. All message activity via the Mobile Data Terminal system is recorded at the County Communications Center. Records of ALL Mobile Data Terminals message activity are monitored and stored by County Communications. County may do a periodic review of the Mobile Data Terminal message activity and may notify this department of any violations of County MDT Policy. Supervisors shall ensure that the procedures articulated in this General Order are adhered to. Command personnel may, on

occasion, request that the County Communications Center provide the message activity to this department to ensure compliance with this General Order, Montgomery County regulations and/or the investigation of internal or personnel matters.

*Michael Jackson*

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Chief of Police