



# GENERAL ORDER

## HALES CORNERS POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **RECORDS**

SCOPE: All Sworn Personnel

DISTRIBUTION: General Orders Manual

REFERENCE:

NUMBER: 10.01.1

ISSUED: 12/31/2025

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RESCINDS

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**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this General Order is to delineate between information and records by establishing types of Records to foster compliance with the Open Records Law of the State of Wisconsin. This General Order works in conjunction with General Order 10.03 *Release of Information Manual*.

This General Order consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. DEFINITIONS
- III. PROCEDURES
- IV. INFORMATION OF OTHER AGENCIES

### I. POLICY

Members of the Hales Corners Police shall generally treat the official business of the Department as confidential information and shall disseminate information with established procedures and in compliance with Wisconsin State Statutes. However, the Hales Corners Police Department also recognizes that its undertakings are matters of continuing interest and concern to the community. Acknowledging this fact, it shall be the policy of the Department to provide the news media and other interested citizens with timely and accurate information regarding Department activities while adhering to prescribed guidelines for information release.

### II. DEFINITIONS

**Confidential Investigations:** Investigations involving organized crime, undercover operations, and internal affairs cases.

**Department Records:** Any material on which written, drawn, printed, spoken, visual, or electromagnetic information is recorded or preserved, regardless of physical form or

characteristics, which has been created or is being kept by the department. "Record" includes, but is not limited to, handwritten, typed, or printed pages, maps, charts, photographs, films, recording, tapes (including computer tapes) and computer printouts.

"Record" DOES NOT include drafts, notes, preliminary computations, and like materials prepared for the originator's personal use or prepared by the originator in the name of a person for whom the originator is working. See Section 19.32(2) Wisconsin Statutes for a more detailed description of "Record".

**Department Juvenile Records:** Records of children shall be kept separate from records of persons 17 years of age or older and shall not be open to inspection or their contents disclosed except under Section 48.396 (5) Wisconsin Statutes or by order of the court assigned to exercise jurisdiction under this chapter. This subsection shall not apply to: the representatives of newspapers or other reporters of news who wish to obtain information for the purpose of reporting news without revealing the identity of the child involved; or to the confidential exchange of information between the police and officials of the school attended by the child; or other law enforcement or social welfare agencies; or to children 14 or older who are transferred to the criminal courts (in some instances children 10 or older); or victim/witness coordinators; victim's insurance companies; children's attorneys or guardian-ad-litem; victims of crimes; or the parent, guardian, legal custodian or juvenile (or an individual so named in writing).

**Information:** Information differs from Records in that information about an incident or event may be passed on to the media prior to the reports being completed and actual real records about the incident or event are completed.

**Investigative Reports (IR's):** These are copies of the department's daily case reports. Case reports will be made available to the media after having been approved for filing by a supervisor. For purposes of this General Order, supervisors shall be required to verify that the information contained in reports appears correct and that the release of the information will not adversely affect an on-going or pending investigation.

**News Releases:** Informational releases designed to: 1) Inform/update the community of criminal or internal investigation; 2) Inform/educate the community of department services or activity; 3)

Promote the department's image in the community.

**Public Information Officer:** The Chief of Police or his/her designee will act as the Public Information Officer. The primary duty will be to report on newsworthy incidents and situations, subject to the restrictions of Wisconsin State Statutes, Chapters 19 and 48.

**Records Custodian:** The person who has been appointed as having the authority for control and dissemination of the Department's records.

**Records Inspection:** Release of records shall be in accordance with state statutes. Requester's may inspect releasable records without having to purchase copies of same.

**Requester:** Any person who requests inspection or copies of police records.

### III. PROCEDURES

- A. Procedures for the protection of the public's interest in Department records are contained in General Orders; 10.03 *Release of Information Manual* and 10.05 *Retention of Records*.
- B. Procedures to ensure integrity of information shared with and by the United States Criminal Justice Information System and State of Wisconsin Crime Information Bureau are contained in General Order 10.02 *Criminal Records*.
- C. Procedures to ensure compliance with the Driver's Privacy Protection Act (DPPA) are contained in General Order 10.04 *Driver's Privacy Protection Act*.
- D. Procedures pertaining to general Public Information and deliberate Community Outreach are contained in General Order 8.01 *Public Information*.

### IV. INFORMATION REGARDING OTHER AGENCIES

- A. Information requests that pertain to another agency should be directed to that agency.
- B. The agency having primary jurisdiction will be responsible for coordinating any release of information, when multiple service agencies, i.e., other police departments, fire departments, medical examiner's office, etc., are involved.

Eric R. Cera  
Chief of Police

This General Order cancels and supersedes any and all previous written directives relative to the subject matter contained herein.

Initial 06/20/2025