

# Mobile Digital Computer Use

## 511.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the proper access, use, and application of the Mobile Digital Computer (MDC) system in order to ensure proper access to confidential records from local, state, and national law enforcement databases, and to ensure effective electronic communications between department staff and the dispatcher.

## 511.2 POLICY

Sonoma County Probation Department staff using the MDC shall comply with all appropriate federal and state rules and regulations and shall use the MDC in a professional manner, in accordance with this policy.

## 511.3 PRIVACY EXPECTATION

Staff forfeit any expectation of privacy with regard to messages accessed, transmitted, received, or reviewed on any department technology system.

## 511.4 RESTRICTED ACCESS AND USE

Staff shall not access the MDC system if they have not received prior authorization and the required training. Staff shall immediately report unauthorized access or use of the MDC by another staff member to their supervisors.

Use of the MDC system to access law enforcement databases or transmit messages is restricted to official activities, business-related tasks, or communications that are directly related to the business, administration, or practices of the Department. In the event that staff has questions about sending a particular message or accessing a particular database, the staff member should seek prior approval.

Sending derogatory, defamatory, obscene, disrespectful, sexually suggestive, harassing, or any other inappropriate messages on the MDC system is prohibited and may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

It is a violation of this policy to transmit a message or access a law enforcement database under another staff member's name or to use the password of another staff member to log in to the MDC system unless directed to do so by a supervisor. Staff members are required to log off the MDC or secure the MDC when it is unattended. This added security measure will minimize the potential for unauthorized access or misuse.

### 511.4.1 USE WHILE DRIVING

Use of the MDC by the vehicle operator should be limited to times when the vehicle is stopped. Information that is required for immediate enforcement, investigative, tactical, or safety needs should be transmitted over the radio.

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In no case shall an operator attempt to send or review lengthy messages while the vehicle is in motion.

#### **511.5 DOCUMENTATION OF ACTIVITY**

MDC and voice transmissions are used to document the staff member's daily activity. To ensure accuracy:

- (a) All contacts or activity shall be documented at the time of the contact.
- (b) Whenever the activity or contact is initiated by voice, it should be documented by a dispatcher.
- (c) Whenever the activity or contact is not initiated by voice, the member shall document it via the MDC.
- (d) Home visits and other field contacts will be documented appropriately in the department's case management system by staff as soon as possible.

##### **511.5.1 STATUS CHANGES**

All changes in status (e.g., arrival at scene, no further assistance needed, contact completed) will be transmitted over the department radio or through the MDC system.

Staff responding to in-progress calls should advise changes in status over the radio to assist other staff members responding to the same incident. Other changes in status can be made on the MDC when the vehicle is not in motion.

##### **511.5.2 EMERGENCY ACTIVATION**

If there is an emergency activation and the staff member does not respond to a request for confirmation of the need for emergency assistance or confirms the need, available staff may assist local law enforcement in locating the staff person. If the location is known, the nearest available local law enforcement agency should be requested to respond to the location by dispatch.

Staff should ensure a supervisor, or in the absence of a supervisor, a Division Director are notified of the incident without delay.

Officers not responding to the emergency shall refrain from transmitting on the department's radio until a no-further-assistance broadcast is made or unless they are handling a different emergency.

#### **511.6 EQUIPMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

##### **511.6.1 MALFUNCTIONING MDC**

Staff will notify a supervisor whenever they identify a malfunctioning MDC.

##### **511.6.2 BOMB CALLS**

When investigating reports of, or in the area of, possible bombs, staff should not communicate on their MDCs when in the evacuation area of a suspected explosive device. Radio frequency emitted by the MDC could cause some devices to detonate.