Officer-Involved Shootings and Deaths

305.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish policy and procedures for the investigation of an incident in which a person is injured or dies as the result of an officer-involved shooting or dies as a result of another action of an officer.

In other incidents not covered by this policy, the Chief of Police may decide that the investigation will follow the process provided in this policy.

305.2 POLICY

The policy of the Greece Police Department is to ensure that officer-involved shootings and deaths are investigated in a thorough, fair and impartial manner.

305.3 TYPES OF INVESTIGATIONS

Officer-involved shootings and deaths involve several separate investigations. The investigations may include:

- A criminal investigation of the suspect's actions.
- A criminal investigation of the involved officer's actions.
- An administrative investigation as to policy compliance by involved officers.
- A civil investigation to determine potential liability.

305.4 CONTROL OF INVESTIGATIONS

Investigators from surrounding agencies may be assigned to work on the criminal investigation of officer-involved shootings and deaths. This may include at least one investigator from the agency that employs the involved officer.

The following scenarios outline the jurisdictional responsibilities for investigating officer-involved shootings and deaths.

305.4.1 CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION OF SUSPECT ACTIONS

The investigation of any possible criminal conduct by the suspect is controlled by the agency in whose jurisdiction the suspect's crime occurred. For example, the Greece Police Department would control the investigation if the suspect's crime occurred in Town of Greece.

If multiple crimes have been committed in multiple jurisdictions, identification of the agency that will control the investigation may be reached in the same way as with any other crime. The investigation may be conducted by the agency in control of the criminal investigation of the involved officer, at the discretion of the Chief of Police and with concurrence from the other agency.

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2024/06/07, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Greece Police Department

305.4.2 CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS OF OFFICER ACTIONS

In incidents involving a death, the criminal investigation into the involved officer's conduct during the incident will be conducted by the New York State Office of the Attorney General Office of Special Investigation. If the Office of Special Investigation does not assert jurisdiction, or in cases not involving a death, the criminal investigation will be handled according to the Criminal Investigation section from this policy when an officer of this department is involved.

305.4.3 ADMINISTRATIVE AND CIVIL INVESTIGATION

Regardless of where the incident occurs, the administrative and civil investigation of each involved officer is controlled by the respective employing agency.

305.4.4 COORDINATION WITH THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

Since there is the potential for overlap between investigations into alleged criminal conduct of involved officers and alleged criminal conduct involving suspects, and in situations where a suspect is seriously injured and death remains a possibility, the Operations Bureau Deputy Chief is responsible for coordinating with the Office of Special Investigation before proceeding with the criminal investigation.

305.5 INVESTIGATION PROCESS

The following procedures are guidelines used in the investigation of an officer-involved shooting or death.

305.5.1 UNINVOLVED OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon arrival at the scene of an officer-involved shooting or death, the first uninvolved GPD officer will be the officer-in-charge and will assume the responsibilities of a supervisor until properly relieved. This officer should, as appropriate:

(a) Secure the scene and identify and eliminate hazards for all those involved.

(b) Take reasonable steps to obtain emergency medical attention for injured individuals.

(c) Advise dispatch whether or not any suspects are outstanding; including suspect description and mode of escape

(d) Request additional resources from the Department or other agencies.

(e) Coordinate a perimeter or pursuit of suspects.

(f) Check for injured persons and evacuate as needed.

(g) Ensure pertinent officer and public safety information is broadcasted

(h) Brief the supervisor upon arrival.

305.5.2 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon arrival at the scene, the first uninvolved GPD supervisor should ensure completion of the duties as outlined above, plus:

(a) Attempt to obtain a brief overview of the situation from any uninvolved officers.

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2024/06/07, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Greece Police Department

1. In the event that there are no uninvolved officers who can supply adequate overview, the supervisor should attempt to obtain a brief voluntary overview from one involved officer.

(b) If necessary, the supervisor may administratively order any GPD officer to immediately provide public safety information necessary to secure the scene, identify injured parties and pursue suspects.

1. Public safety information shall be limited to such things as outstanding suspect information, number and direction of any shots fired, perimeter of the incident scene, identity of known or potential witnesses and any other pertinent information.
2. The initial on-scene supervisor should not attempt to order any involved officer to provide any information other than public safety information.

(c) Provide all available information to the Platoon/Unit Commander and ECD 911 Center. If feasible, sensitive information should be communicated over secure networks.

(d) Take command of and secure the incident scene with additional GPD members until properly relieved by another supervisor or other assigned personnel or investigator.

(e) As soon as practicable, ensure that involved officers are transported (separately, if feasible) to a suitable location for further direction.

1. Each involved GPD officer should be given an administrative order not to discuss the incident with other involved officers or GPD members pending further direction from a supervisor.
2. When an involved officer's weapon is taken or left at the scene for other than officer-safety reasons (e.g., evidence), ensure that he/she is provided with a comparable replacement weapon or transported by other officers.

305.5.3 PLATOON/UNIT COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon learning of an officer-involved shooting or death, the on-duty shift supervisor shall be responsible for coordinating all aspects of the incident until he/she is relieved by the Chief of Police or a Deputy Chief.

All outside inquiries about the incident shall be directed to the on-duty shift supervisor until relieved.

305.5.4 NOTIFICATIONS

The following persons shall be notified as soon as practicable:

- Chief of Police
- Operations Bureau Deputy Chief
- Outside agency investigators (if appropriate)
- Internal Standards and Compliance Bureau Deputy Chief
- Psychological/peer support personnel

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2024/06/07, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Greece Police Department

- Chaplain
- Medical Examiner (if necessary)
- Involved officer’s Collective Bargaining Unit representative (if requested)
- Public Information Officer
- The NYS Attorney General's Office of Special Investigation

305.5.5 INVOLVED OFFICERS

The following shall be considered for the involved officer:

(a) Any request for legal or union representation will be accommodated.

1. Involved GPD officers shall not be permitted to meet collectively or in a group with an attorney or any representative prior to providing a formal interview or report.
2. Requests from involved non-GPD officers should be referred to their employing agency.

(b) Discussions with licensed attorneys will be considered privileged as attorney-client communications.

(c) Discussions with agency representatives will be privileged only as to the discussion of non-criminal information.

(d) A licensed psychotherapist shall be provided by the Department to each involved GPD officer. A licensed psychotherapist may also be provided to any other affected GPD members, upon request.

1. Interviews with a licensed psychotherapist will be considered privileged.
2. An interview or session with a licensed psychotherapist may take place prior to the member providing a formal interview or report. However, the involved members shall not be permitted to consult or meet collectively or in a group with a licensed psychotherapist prior to providing a formal interview or report.
3. A separate fitness-for-duty exam may also be required (see the Fitness for Duty Policy).

(e) Although the Department will honor the sensitivity of communications with peer counselors, there is no legal privilege to such communications. Peer counselors are cautioned against discussing the facts of any incident with an involved or witness officer.

Care should be taken to preserve the integrity of any physical evidence present on the involved officer's equipment or clothing, such as blood or fingerprints, until investigators or lab personnel can properly retrieve it.

Each involved GPD officer shall be given reasonable paid administrative leave following an officer-involved shooting or death. It shall be the responsibility of the Platoon/Unit Commander to make schedule adjustments to accommodate such leave.

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2024/06/07, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Greece Police Department

305.6 CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

The prosecuting office with jurisdiction over the incident is responsible for the criminal investigation into the circumstances of any officer-involved shooting involving injury or death.

If available, investigative personnel from this department may be assigned to partner with investigators from outside agencies or the prosecuting office with jurisdiction over the incident to avoid duplicating efforts in related criminal investigations.

Once public safety issues have been addressed, criminal investigators should be given the opportunity to obtain a voluntary statement from involved officers and to complete their interviews. The following shall be considered for the involved officer:

(a) Internal Standards and Compliance Bureau personnel should not participate directly in any voluntary interview of GPD officers. This will not prohibit such personnel from monitoring interviews or providing the criminal investigators with topics for inquiry.

(b) If requested, any involved officer will be afforded the opportunity to consult individually with a representative of his/her choosing or an attorney prior to speaking with criminal investigators. However, in order to maintain the integrity of each involved officer's statement, he/she shall not consult or meet with a representative or an attorney collectively or in groups prior to being interviewed.

(c) If any involved officer is physically, emotionally, or otherwise not in a position to provide a voluntary statement when interviewed by criminal investigators, consideration should be given to allowing a reasonable period for the officer to schedule an alternate time for the interview.

(d) Any voluntary statement provided by an involved officer will be made available for inclusion in any related investigation including administrative investigations. However, no administratively coerced statement will be provided to any criminal investigators unless the officer consents.

305.6.1 REPORTS BY INVOLVED GPD OFFICERS

In the event that suspects remain outstanding or subject to prosecution for related offenses, this department shall retain the authority to require involved GPD officers to provide sufficient information for related criminal reports to facilitate the apprehension and prosecution of those individuals.

While the involved GPD officer may write the report, it is generally recommended that such reports be completed by assigned investigators, who should interview all involved officers as victims/ witnesses. Since the purpose of these reports will be to facilitate criminal prosecution, statements of involved officers should focus on evidence to establish the elements of criminal activities by suspects. Care should be taken not to duplicate information provided by involved officers in other reports.

Nothing in this section shall be construed to deprive an involved GPD officer of the right to consult with legal counsel prior to completing any such criminal report.

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2024/06/07, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Greece Police Department

Reports related to the prosecution of criminal suspects will be processed according to normal procedures but should also be included for reference in the investigation of the officer-involved shooting or death.

305.6.2 WITNESS IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVIEWS

Because potential witnesses to an officer-involved shooting or death may become unavailable or the integrity of their statements compromised with the passage of time, a supervisor should take reasonable steps to promptly coordinate with criminal investigators to utilize available law enforcement personnel for the following:

(a) Identification of all persons present at the scene and in the immediate area.

1. When feasible, a recorded statement should be obtained from those persons who claim not to have witnessed the incident but who were present at the time it occurred.

2. Any potential witness who is unwilling or unable to remain available for a formal interview should not be detained absent reasonable suspicion to detain or probable cause to arrest. Without detaining the individual for the sole purpose of identification, attempts to identify the witness prior to his/her departure should be made whenever feasible.

(b) Witnesses who are willing to provide a formal interview should be asked to meet at a suitable location where criminal investigators may obtain a recorded statement. Such witnesses, if willing, may be transported by a member of the Department.

1. A written, verbal or recorded statement of consent should be obtained prior to transporting a witness. When the witness is a minor, consent should be obtained from the parent or guardian, if available, prior to transportation.

(c) Promptly contacting the suspect’s known family and associates to obtain any available and untainted background information about the suspect’s activities and state of mind prior to the incident.

305.6.3 INVESTIGATIVE PERSONNEL

Once notified of an officer-involved shooting or death, it shall be the responsibility of the designated Criminal Investigation Division supervisor to assign appropriate investigative personnel to handle the investigation of related crimes. Department investigators will be assigned to work with investigators from the prosecuting office with jurisdiction over the incident and may be assigned to separately handle the investigation of any related crimes not being investigated by the prosecuting office with jurisdiction over the incident.

All related department reports, except administrative and/or privileged reports, will be forwarded to the designated Criminal Investigation Division supervisor for approval. Privileged reports shall be maintained exclusively by members who are authorized such access. Administrative reports will be forwarded to the appropriate Deputy Chief.

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2024/06/07, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Greece Police Department

305.7 ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION

In addition to all other investigations associated with an officer-involved shooting or death, this department will conduct an internal administrative investigation of involved GPD officers to determine conformance with department policy. This investigation will be conducted under the supervision of the Internal Standards and Compliance Bureau and will be considered a confidential officer personnel file.

Interviews of members shall be subject to department policies, Collective Bargaining Agreements, and applicable laws.

(a) Any officer involved in a shooting or death may be requested or administratively compelled to provide a blood sample for alcohol/drug screening. Absent consent from the officer, such compelled samples and the results of any such testing shall not be disclosed to any criminal investigative agency.

(b) If any officer has voluntarily elected to provide a statement to criminal investigators, the assigned administrative investigator should review that statement before proceeding with any further interview of that involved officer.

1. If a further interview of the officer is deemed necessary to determine policy compliance, care should be taken to limit the inquiry to new areas with minimal, if any, duplication of questions addressed in the voluntary statement. The involved officer shall be provided with a copy of his/her prior statement before proceeding with any subsequent interviews.

(c) In the event that an involved officer has elected not to provide criminal investigators with a voluntary statement, the assigned administrative investigator shall conduct an administrative interview to determine all relevant information.

1. Although this interview should not be unreasonably delayed, care should be taken to ensure that the officer's physical and psychological needs have been addressed before commencing the interview.

2. If requested, the officer shall have the opportunity to select an uninvolved representative to be present during the interview. However, in order to maintain the integrity of each individual officer's statement, involved officers shall not consult or meet with a representative collectively or in groups prior to being interviewed.

3. Administrative interviews should be recorded by the investigator. The officer may also record the interview.

4. The officer shall be informed of the nature of the investigation. If an officer refuses to answer questions, he/she should be given his/her *Garrity* rights and ordered to provide full and truthful answers to all questions. The officer shall be informed that the interview will be for administrative purposes only and that the statement cannot be used criminally.

5. The Internal Standards and Compliance Bureau shall compile all relevant information and reports necessary for the Department to determine compliance with applicable policies.

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2024/06/07, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Greece Police Department

6. Regardless of whether the use of force is an issue in the case, the completed administrative investigation shall be submitted to the Use of Force Review Board, which will restrict its findings as to whether there was compliance with the Use of Force Policy.
7. Any other indications of potential policy violations shall be determined in accordance with standard disciplinary procedures.

305.8 CIVIL LIABILITY RESPONSE

A member of this department may be assigned to work exclusively under the direction of the legal counsel for the Department to assist in the preparation of materials deemed necessary in anticipation of potential civil litigation.

All materials generated in this capacity shall be considered attorney work product and may not be used for any other purpose. The civil liability response is not intended to interfere with any other investigation but shall be given reasonable access to all other investigations.

305.9 AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDINGS

Any officer involved in a shooting or death may be permitted to review available Mobile Audio/ Video (MAV), body-worn video, or other video or audio recordings prior to providing a recorded statement or completing reports.

Upon request, non-law enforcement witnesses who are able to verify their presence and their ability to contemporaneously perceive events at the scene of an incident may also be permitted to review available MAV, body-worn video, or other video or audio recordings with the approval of assigned investigators or their supervisor.

Any MAV, body-worn video, and other known video or audio recordings of an incident should not be publicly released during an ongoing investigation without consulting the prosecuting attorney or Town Attorney's Office, as appropriate.

305.10 DEBRIEFING

Following an officer-involved shooting or death, the Greece Police Department should conduct both a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing and a tactical debriefing. See the Wellness Program Policy for guidance on Critical Incident Stress Debriefings.

305.10.1 TACTICAL DEBRIEFING

A tactical debriefing should take place to identify any training or areas of policy that need improvement. The Chief of Police should identify the appropriate participants. This debriefing should not be conducted until all involved members have provided recorded or formal statements to the criminal and/or administrative investigators.

305.11 MEDIA RELATIONS

Any media release shall be prepared with input and concurrence from the supervisor and the department representative responsible for each phase of the investigation. Releases will

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2024/06/07, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Greece Police Department

be available to the Chief of Police, Office of Operations and Special Services Deputy Chief, Operations Bureau Deputy Chief and Public Information Officer in the event of inquiries from the media.

No GPD member shall make any comment to the media unless he/she is authorized by the Chief of Police or a Deputy Chief.

Department members receiving inquiries regarding officer-involved shootings or deaths occurring in other jurisdictions shall refrain from public comment and will direct those inquiries to the agency having jurisdiction and primary responsibility for the investigation.

Copyright Lexipol, LLC 2024/06/07, All Rights Reserved.
Published with permission by Greece Police Department