
Mobile Data Terminal Use

422.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the proper access, use and application of the Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) 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 members and Dispatch.

422.2 POLICY

Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety members using the MDT shall comply with all appropriate federal and state rules and regulations and shall use the MDT in a professional manner, in accordance with this policy. The MDT shall be used for official department business only.

Messages/Material that are of a sexual, racist or offensive nature or otherwise critical of any member of the Department are strictly forbidden.

422.3 PRIVACY EXPECTATION

Members forfeit any expectation of privacy with regard to messages accessed, transmitted, received or reviewed on any department technology system (see the Information Technology Use Policy for additional guidance).

422.4 RESTRICTED ACCESS AND USE

MDT use is subject to the Information Technology Use and Protected Information policies.

Members shall not access the MDT system if they have not received prior authorization and the required training. Members shall immediately report unauthorized access or use of the MDT by another member to their supervisors or Shift Commanders.

Use of the MDT 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 a member has questions about sending a particular message or accessing a particular database, the member should seek prior approval from his/her supervisor.

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

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

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422.4.1 USE WHILE DRIVING

Use of the MDT by the vehicle operator should generally be limited to times when the vehicle is stopped. When the vehicle is in motion, the operator should only attempt to read messages that are likely to contain information that is required for immediate enforcement, investigative or safety needs.

Short transmissions, such as a license plate check, are permitted if it reasonably appears that it can be done safely. In no case shall an operator attempt to send or review lengthy messages while the vehicle is in motion.

422.4.2 FRONT LINE PATROL / FIRE USE

All officers assigned to a patrol vehicle equipped with a MDT, shall promptly log into the MDT at the start of their shift and log off at the conclusion of their shift. Officers assigned to rescue vehicles and fire apparatus will ensure that the MDT in both vehicles are operating and properly login on. Officers shall not operate a vehicle where a MDT is required without Shift Commander approval.

422.5 DOCUMENTATION OF ACTIVITY

Except as otherwise directed by the Shift Commander or other department-established protocol, all calls for service assigned by a dispatcher should be communicated by voice over the public safety radio and electronically via the MDT unless security or confidentiality prevents such broadcasting.

MDT and voice transmissions are used to document the 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 MDT.

422.5.1 STATUS CHANGES

All changes in status that do not risk officer safety (e.g., arrival at scene, meal periods, in service) should be done through the MDT system.

Members responding to in-progress calls should advise changes in status over the radio to assist other members responding to the same incident. Other changes in status can be made on the MDT.

422.5.2 EMERGENCY ACTIVATION

If there is an emergency activation and the member does not respond to a request for confirmation of the need for emergency assistance or confirms the need, available resources will be sent to assist in locating the member. If the location is known, the nearest available public safety officer should respond in accordance with the Public Safety Officer Response to Calls Policy.

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Members should ensure a field supervisor and the Shift Commander are notified of the incident without delay.

Public Safety Officers not responding to the emergency shall refrain from transmitting on the public safety radio until a no-further-assistance broadcast is made or if they are handling a different emergency.

422.6 EQUIPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

422.6.1 MALFUNCTIONING MDT

Whenever possible, members will not use vehicles with malfunctioning MDTs. Whenever members must drive a vehicle in which the MDT is not working, they shall notify Dispatch. It shall be the responsibility of the dispatcher to document all information that will then be transmitted verbally over the public safety radio.

422.6.2 BOMB CALLS

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