

15-20 - Documenting Vehicle Searches

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

NEWSLETTER

Field Operations Support Services, (323) 890-5411



Documenting Vehicle Searches

The purpose of this newsletter is to review and re-emphasize the importance of documenting vehicle searches and the reason for the search. There have been recent cases where deputies have needed to testify on a detention and any subsequent search of the vehicle years after the incident. In instances where a car was searched but no arrest was made or citation issued, the deputy's Mobile Digital Computer (MDC) clearance should reflect a search was conducted, along with the reason for the search. Incident Reports (SH-R-49) should document a vehicle search when an arrest is made, including the reason justifying the search.

The MDC call clearance screen has a search field requiring an answer of yes or no (Y or N) as to whether or not the vehicle was searched, along with the entering of an appropriate code to indicate the type of search conducted, such as a probationary search, consensual search, vehicle inventory, etcetera.

Manual of Policy and Procedures section 5-09/520.25 states, "all significant public contacts and activity shall be appropriately logged on the Mobile Digital Computer's Deputy's Daily Work Sheet."

Properly documenting vehicle searches may reduce the frequency of preventable lawsuits.

This Newsletter was created with the assistance of the Department's Master Field Training Officers.

Information regarding the content of this newsletter may be directed to [Field Operations Support Services](#) at (323) 890-5411.

References

Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Section 05-09/520.25:

<http://intranet/Intranet/MPP/Vol5/5-09/5-09-520.25.htm>

Field Operations Directive (FOD) 00-04:

<http://intranet.lasd.sheriff.sdn/intranet/sites/rmb/foss/fods2/documents/00-004.pdf>
