



Police Service
of Northern Ireland

**we care
we listen
we act**

Collision Advice

**A step by step guide for
motorists involved in a
collision on the road**

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Our service to you

The Police Service of Northern Ireland is committed to providing the best possible service to the public in relation to the investigation of road collisions.

However, the Police Service does not investigate road traffic collisions on behalf of insurance companies.

Our primary role is

- To protect the scene from further collisions.
- To ensure the injured are treated.
- To ensure the free flow of traffic.
- To arrange the recovery of vehicles where appropriate.
- To investigate the collision to determine the cause and whether offences have been committed.
- To provide assistance to those in need at this stressful and sometimes traumatic time.
- To investigate on behalf of the coroner in fatal collisions.
- To ensure safe custody of personal belongings when required.

A helping hand

This booklet has been compiled as part of our ongoing commitment to provide you with the best service possible.

It contains useful information about where to go for help and advice and provides answers to some of the most frequently asked questions.

If you require specific information relating to a collision, call the Police **101** and ask for **“OCMT”** in the area where the collision occurred

For your convenience we have included

- A section where you can make your own notes.
- A section for you to make a quick sketch plan of the scene to help you remember useful details like road names and house numbers. This will be useful if you are required to make a statement about what happened at a later date.

What happens next?

You may have been given this booklet by Police following their attendance at a road traffic collision or after you have reported a collision at the police station.

In these circumstances the officer in charge of the case will have written his or her details into the back of the booklet, together with the date and location of the collision.

Alternatively you may have picked the booklet up from a police station. Keep it in the glove compartment of your vehicle and use it if you are involved in a collision in the future.

Non-attendance collision

Police will not attend collisions where

- No injuries are reported; or
- A damage only collision has occurred and the parties have left the scene; or
- An animal has been injured and the involved parties have exchanged details.

However, if you suspect the other driver has been drinking or has no insurance or has clearly committed an offence, then police should be informed of these facts.

In the case of a non-injury collision involving no allegations of any offences and where the law in relation to exchanging particulars has been fully complied with, police will not normally attend or prepare a report. In these cases, the Police will only make out an incident log at the station to which it is reported.

In all other cases, the Police will compile a collision report in keeping with the seriousness of the occurrence.

Hit and run collisions

If you are involved in a 'Hit and Run' collision, contact 101 where you will be diverted to the telephone resolution unit. Here you will be asked a number of questions to establish if there is anything evidential to assist police with their investigation, such as; are there any other witnesses available or; is there CCTV in the area. Police will not usually attend these collisions but will make all attempts to identify the other vehicle involved.

Eye witness accounts

These are the statements of the people involved in a collision, or those who have witnessed a collision, or the vehicles prior to a collision. **You need to obtain the details of anyone at the scene unconnected with any vehicle**

involved, who may have seen what happened.

If a statement is required, you may be interviewed later by a Police Officer.

If you have 'dash cam' footage available this should be made available to Police for use in their investigation.

Normally we will complete an investigation in six weeks, but for a variety of reasons this can take longer, especially in cases of death or serious injury.

Driving documents

If you were unable to produce your driving documents (*eg driving licence, certificate of insurance, test certificate*) for examination by police at the time of the collision, you will be issued with a request to do so. This request will be either generated electronically by an officer and you will be given a reference number or they will issue you with a Driving Documents Production Form (Form 55/8).

The Form 55/8 will have been completed by the police officer at the scene. It will list the documents you are required to produce at a police station you will have agreed on.

- You must do this within a maximum of SEVEN WORKING DAYS to comply with the law and avoid prosecution.

- It is essential you take the Form 55/8 with you when you produce your documents or have the reference number ready.
- You must produce your driving licence in person.

Vehicle removal from the scene of a collision

- In the interests of road safety, police may require vehicles damaged in road traffic collisions to be removed from the scene as soon as possible.
- If you have breakdown cover, the Police may contact your recovery company on your behalf.
- When circumstances dictate, and if necessary, a garage may be called to carry out the recovery at your expense.
- This can be a garage nominated by you (if readily available) or a garage nominated by our contracted recovery agent.
- Where police use their powers to remove a vehicle it will be in accordance with The Road Traffic Regulation (NI) Order 1997. Further information is available in the FAQ section of the PSNI website.

www.psni.police.uk

Frequently asked questions and answers

The following pages will help answer some of the most frequently asked questions from motorists involved in a road collision.

Q:Should I inform my insurance company?

A: Yes. You must do this as soon as possible and irrespective of whether you wish to make a claim or not.

Don't worry if you do not possess all the information that may be required. These details will be provided on request approximately 14 days after the collision by calling the "OCMT" in the District Command Unit for the area where the collision occurred.

Q:What information will my insurance company require?

A: • Date and time of collision.
• Names and addresses of all parties.
• Details of any witnesses.

Once more, don't worry if you are unable to supply the insurers with all the information they require.

This may be obtained later from the Police after the collision report has been completed.

To assist you, there is space on pages 10-12 in this booklet for you to make your own notes/sketch at the scene.

Q:Do prosecutions follow in every case?

A: No. Police investigators are seeking to try and establish the facts about what has happened. However, if it appears that a driver may have committed an offence, they will be informed that they may be prosecuted. This may be verbally at the time, or in writing at a later date.

The purpose of a prosecution is to find out if someone is guilty of an offence and punish the offender.

Q:Who decides to prosecute?

A: Prosecutions are recommended by the Public Prosecution Service (PPS) where there is clear evidence of an offence. The PPS is an independent agency responsible for prosecuting cases in court. They will make the decision whether or not to prosecute when they have examined the police report.

The PPS will only proceed if there is enough evidence for a realistic prospect of a conviction.

Decisions are made by PPS's lawyers who consider the law, the evidence and whether it is in the public interest for a prosecution to be brought.

The PPS is guided by the Code for Prosecutors. You can get a copy from their website or by contacting them (details on page 13).

Q:Where can I get help and advice if criminal charges are to be brought?

A: If your collision is likely to result in criminal charges being brought against someone else, you may get help and support from the **Victim Support Scheme**. They can help you through court procedures and trials.

Victim Support Belfast

Foyle Hub Office

6th Floor, Embassy Building
3 Strand Road BT48 7BH
028 7137 0086
foyle@victimsupportni.org.uk

Belfast Office

2nd Floor Albany House,
73/74 Great Victoria Street
Belfast BT2 7AF
028 9024 3133
belfast@victimsupportni.org.uk

(Other useful agencies are listed at the end of this booklet on page 14.)

Q:How is a person charged or summoned?

A: If a court action is to be taken, a person may be issued with a summons which outlines the alleged offence and their requirement to attend court to answer the allegations.

In certain circumstances a person may be charged at a police station to appear before the court, but this very much depends on the circumstances surrounding the particular case.

Q:Where are cases heard?

A: Depending on the charge, cases are heard in a:

- **Magistrates' Court** or
- **Crown Court.**

Serious charges are heard in the Crown Court.

Q:Can I get further information from the Police Officer who attended the scene?

A: No, not under normal circumstances. The officer who attended the collision may have completed a written report at the scene and may have provided you with

contact details. However, this officer will have been part of an emergency response team who react to 999 calls, 24 hours a day.

It is vital that members of this team are kept away from non-emergency administrative tasks wherever possible and all such calls should be referred to the "OCMT" in the District Command Unit where the collision occurred. Allow at least 14 days from the date of the collision for all information to be gathered.

Q: Can I get a copy of the Police Collision Report?

A: Yes, an abstract from the Police Collision Report will be made available after the investigation has been completed.

This may be obtained by your insurers or your legal representatives. An administration fee is payable.

Q: What about civil proceedings?

A: Any person involved in a collision may initiate civil proceedings.

A decision not to prosecute will not prejudice any civil action you may decide to take. However, civil claims are the responsibility of the parties

involved and their respective insurance companies or legal advisers.

Q: What if I have been injured?

A: If you are injured but don't require hospital treatment, you should nevertheless seek medical advice from your GP.

You may be entitled to make a claim for loss of wages/overtime/damage to your personal belongings/prescription costs and compensation for any injury you have received.

Compensation claims for loss or injury are not a matter for the Police. The Police do not support or endorse any company's products or services.

If you have been involved in a collision with an uninsured motorist, advice is available through the Motor Insurers Bureau (*see useful contact numbers on page number 14*)

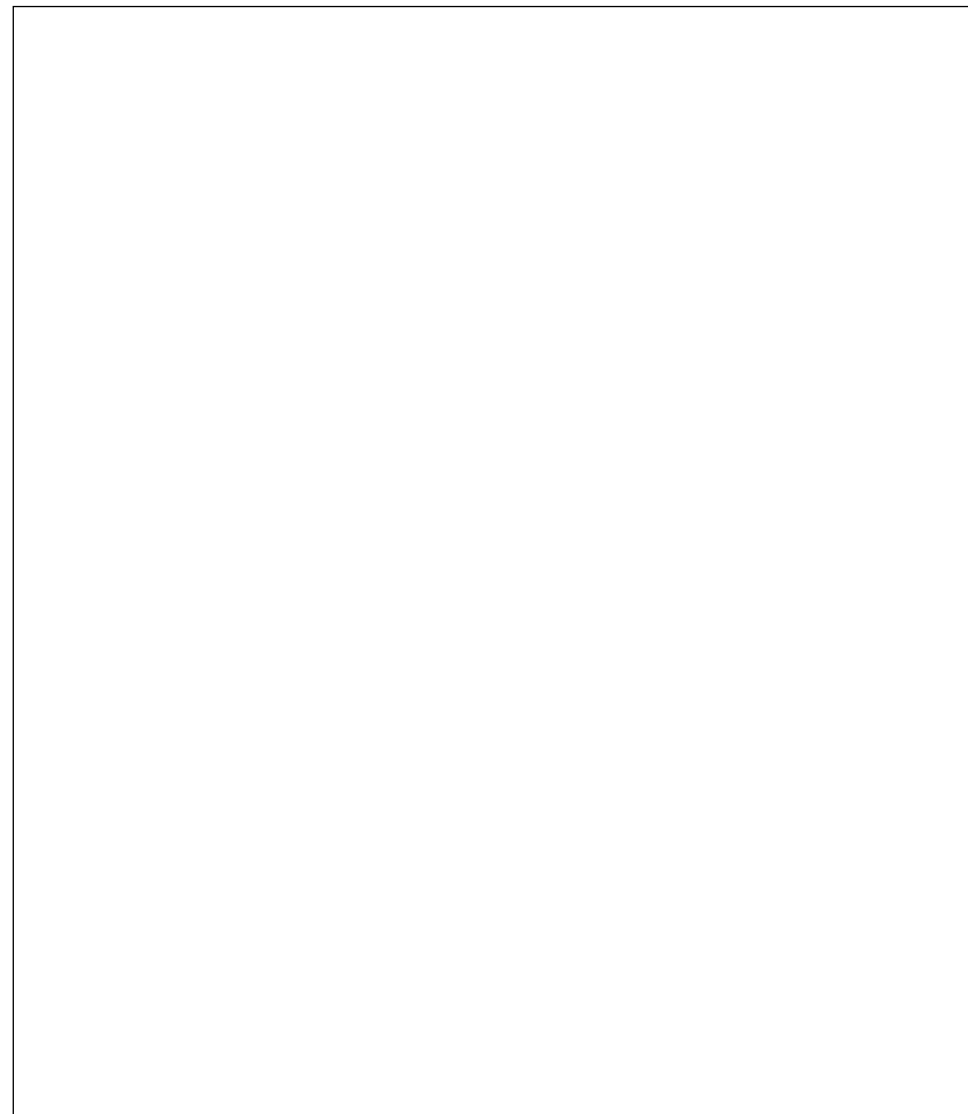
Q: What about publicity?

A: Publicity stresses the importance of preventing collisions and encourages witnesses to come forward. We always seek to minimise embarrassment and take measures to avoid vulnerable people being identified.

Sketch plan

This section is for you to draw up a sketch plan of the scene including street names and house numbers wherever possible, where the vehicles came to rest and the direction they were travelling in. If appropriate you may take photographs of the scene, both close up and wide angle.

This is not compulsory but may assist you if you are required to make a statement.





If you have a complaint

If you have concerns about the criminal justice system or you would like to make a suggestion to the authorities, the following details may be of assistance.

Police Ombudsman

New Cathedral Buildings,
Writers' Square, 11 Church Street,
Belfast BT1 1PG

Telephone: 028 9082 8600
www.policeombudsman.org

Northern Ireland Policing Board

Waterside Tower
31 Clarendon Road,
Clarendon Dock, Belfast BT1 3BG

Telephone: 028 9040 8500
information@nipolicingboard.org.uk

Public Prosecution Service: PPS Belfast Region/HQ Sections

Belfast Chambers,

93 Chichester Street,
Belfast, BT1 3JR
Telephone: 028 9054 2444
Deaf/Hard of Hearing (SMS):
07795 673 927

Foyle Chambers,

35 Limavady Rd,
Londonderry BT47 6LP
Telephone: 028 7134 0648
Deaf/Hard of Hearing (SMS):
07795 675 338

PPS Western and Southern Region

Omagh Chambers,

2 Townhall Square, High Street,
Omagh, BT78 1BL
Telephone: 028 8224 4319
Deaf/Hard of Hearing (SMS):
07795 831 188

Newry Chambers,

1 Downshire Close,
Newry, BT34 1FD
Telephone: 028 3083 2500
Deaf/Hard of Hearing (SMS):
07795 810 114

Useful contacts:

Police Service of Northern Ireland

www.psni.police.uk
Report online, Call 101.
In an emergency dial 999
info@psni.police.uk

DFI

Road Safety & Vehicle
Regulation Division
Telephone: 02890 540 540

BRAKE

Road Safety Charity
Telephone: 0808 800 0401

Motor Insurers' Bureau

Telephone: 01908 830001
Enquiries@MIB.org.uk

Beware of collision scams

If you are involved in a collision where the circumstances make you suspect that you may have been the victim of a “staged collision” you should immediately contact police.

Examples of “staged collisions” may include:

- Sudden and unexplained braking by a vehicle in front of you.
- Erratic and sudden lane changing.
- Aggressive driving by a third vehicle which forces a collision and then leaves the scene.

The advice in these circumstances is to take a detailed description of the vehicle including:

- Colour, make and model
- Vehicle Registration Mark
- Distinguishing Marks
- Description of occupants
- If safe to do so, take photographs of the scene/vehicle.

Collision and Police Contact Details

The officer investigating is:

Name:

Rank:

Service Number:

The date and time of the collision:

The location where the collision took place:

Collision reference:

Your vehicle has been taken to:

For further enquiries call the Police (101) and ask for “OCMT” at:

**This book is also available
on the Police website**

(under Advice and Legislation)



psni.police.uk

Report online. Call 101.

In an emergency call 999