

**POLICY
306**

**EFFECTIVE
DATE
7-01-04**

**Eugene
Police Department**



Social Security Numbers

It is important that the department maintain accurate records of its actions and the identity of individuals who are victims of crimes or subjects of enforcement action. Social security numbers are one form of identification which can be helpful to verify the identity of a person contacted and to maintain accurate law enforcement records, as well as to assist individuals who have been victims of identity theft. Other forms of identification which can be useful in establishing a person's identity include valid, government-issued picture identification (e.g., passport, military identification, consular identification). The intent of this policy is to standardize when social security numbers will be requested, balancing our need to have that information in certain cases with the desire of individuals to protect their social security numbers to the extent possible.

PART I – Responsibilities and Procedures for All Personnel

- A. Requests for social security numbers
- B. Requirement to provide social security number
- C. Release of social security numbers

PART I – Responsibilities and Procedures for All Personnel

A. Requests for social security numbers

1. You will normally request the social security number:
 - From a person who is being taken into physical custody;
 - From a person who is being issued a citation in lieu of custody for an offense that would normally generate an arrest warrant if the person fails to appear as required (e.g., misdemeanor, traffic crime);
 - For a person who is the subject of a missing person or runaway juvenile report;
 - If reasonably necessary to determine whether a person is or is not the subject of a warrant or other "locate" request (e.g., missing person); or
 - If reasonably necessary to investigate or resolve an issue involving identity theft or improper/fraudulent use of a social security number.
2. You may request the social security number of an individual if you reasonably believe, under the circumstances, that the social security number is needed to satisfactorily establish the person's identity and you are:

- taking some other enforcement action (e.g., traffic citation); or
 - completing a computer check on the individual.
3. You will not normally request that a person provide his/her social security number in other situations. Except as provided in the paragraphs above, we do not normally collect social security number information from victims and witnesses.

B. Requirement to provide social security number

1. If you ask for a person's social security number, advise him/her that:
- He or she is being asked for the social security number based on department policy in order to ensure accurate record-keeping, and
 - He or she is not required to provide the social security number.
2. No person is required to provide his/her social security number to you in any situation. You may not take any action against the person for declining to provide his/her social security number. (The presence or absence of a social security number may be one factor considered, along with other relevant factors, in determining whether a person's identity has been adequately established for purposes of *Policy 302 Citation in Lieu of Custody* if he or she is being cited and released.)
3. If you are preparing a report or citation, simply write "DECLINED" in the appropriate space if the person has a social security number and declines to provide it.

C. Release of social security numbers

Social security number information will be removed from any reports or other documents released by the department.