

# Alaska Motor Vehicle Collision Report Form. 12-200 Instruction Manual

## INTRODUCTION

The State of Alaska Motor Vehicle Collision Report Form, 12-200 (formerly known as the 12-208) is to be used by all law enforcement officers to report motor vehicle crashes in Alaska.

A reportable motor vehicle traffic crash must meet one of the following criteria (AS 28.35.080):

1. Resulted in a fatality as a result of the crash, or
2. A non-fatal personal injury as a result of the crash, or
3. Total property damage amounting to \$2,000 or more, as a result of the crash.

When you, as a law enforcement officer submit a report on a motor vehicle crash, you provide valuable data to many different groups of people working to make Alaska streets and highways safer. Some users of the data may include the municipal engineer planning to resurface a road, the city consultant developing safe school routes, or the public works director applying for a state grant for reconstructing a hazardous intersection. It is important that you are also aware of some of the state level uses of this data, such as enforcement of Alaska's financial responsibility law by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

In addition to borough and city officials, other users of crash data include the university researcher studying the problems of older drivers, the automobile manufacturer evaluating a design, or the people at all levels of the public and private sectors who support law enforcement's efforts to combat drunk driving. Their progress in highway traffic safety reaches into each officer's community.

Traffic crash reports are subject to be viewed by attorneys, judges, insurance companies and the general public. Crash prevention programs and successful prosecution in court are both dependent upon proper and complete crash investigation and report writing. Subsequent levels of investigation rely on the quality of the information contained in the 12-200. The location of the crash, the road condition at the time of the crash and the other evidence at the scene cannot be re-created, unless these things are documented by the officer during the initial investigation. Therefore, the information contained in this report should be as accurate and complete as possible.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) defines a motor vehicle traffic crash investigation as *"The thorough examination of all elements contributing to the crash, resulting in a well-founded explanation of the series of events which occurred based upon the factual data."* Only you, as the investigating officer can collect timely information at the crash scene and provide the experience, objectivity and professionalism needed to represent the public's interest. As the source, you are **THE** key to useful quality data entering both local and state systems.

## THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES (DOT/PF) and the Traffic Safety Perspective

DOT/PF is the primary custodian of collision data. The department maintains a statewide database containing several years worth of data on all reported collisions, either police generated (12-200) or driver generated (12-209). DOT/PF uses collision data for a number of reasons.

What is the reason for collecting all of this data and who uses this information? Some officers believe that this information is primarily for insurance companies to try to determine collision fault, and therefore, decide whether or not to pay a claim. Collision data is frequently used for

## **Alaska Motor Vehicle Collision Report Form. 12-200 Instruction Manual**

this purpose. However, this data is used for much more than insurance investigations and/or lawsuits. There are many users of the collision data collected on the 12-200 form that you may not be aware of. Among the data users are:

- Department of Transportation & Public Facilities,
- The Alaska State Troopers Bureau of Highway Patrol
- Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
- The Alaska Highway Safety Office
- The Alaska Court System
- Other Municipalities and Boroughs including the Municipality of Anchorage,
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
- Consulting Engineers working for various government agencies,
- Public Health and EMS personnel
- Attorneys representing both plaintiffs and defendants,
- General Public through data requests,
- And many other users.

Crash data from the 12-200 and 12-209 forms is the primary crash data source used for:

- Alaska's Strategic Highway Safety Plan.
- Establishment of Alaska's Traffic Safety Corridors.
- Alaska Bureau of Highway Patrol
- Preparation of the annual Alaska Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).
- Alaska Traffic Accidents Annual Report
- Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS).

### **ROUTING COMPLETED 12-200 REPORTS**

Route one copy of completed 12-200 report forms to the Division of Motor Vehicles. Maintain a copy for your files. In addition, all fatality crash reports must be submitted within ten days to:

DOT Statewide Planning  
3132 Channel Drive  
Juneau, Ak. 99801  
Attn: FARS

Once DMV receives completed 12-200 and 12-209 Citizen reports, they inspect them and follow up on whether drivers are properly licensed, whether the vehicles were properly registered, and whether the vehicles were properly insured. DMV then takes action against those operators and owners who are not in compliance with these requirements. DMV does this whether or not a citation is issued to a driver.

The 12-200 and 12-209 reports next go to DOT/PF to be entered in the statewide crash database. This data is used for statistical analysis and directly results in projects intended to achieve a reduction in motor vehicle crashes, - which will result in less need for law enforcement response to crashes.

### **COMPLETING THE 12-200 REPORT FORM**

At first glance, completing the 12-200 appears to be a rather large undertaking, requiring an officer to fill out a minimum of three pages, possibly more, depending on the type of crash, number of vehicles involved and/or number of occupants involved. However, the 12-200 has been

## **Alaska Motor Vehicle Collision Report Form. 12-200 Instruction Manual**

designed to save the officer time. There is only one form to complete for an accident. The officer circles the choice or place an X by the appropriate choice for each field.

The 12-200 has three primary pages - Part A; Part B and Part C.

### PART - A

Part - A is a single page used to document basic crash data including the date, time, location and other pertinent data. There should only be one Part - A form for each crash.

### PART - B

Part - B is a single page used to document information for a one driver (or pedestrian or bicyclist) and one unit. Depending on the number of units involved, there could be one or several Part - B pages for a crash.

### PART - C

Part - C is a single page used to document information for up to four passengers or witnesses. Depending upon the number of involved parties, there could be one or several Part - C pages for a crash.

To complete the form, refer to the field definitions on the following pages.

Alaska Motor Vehicle Collision Report Form 12-200 – Instruction Manual

## General Provisions

## **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

- 12-200 Collision form does not contain a selection for “hit and run” crashes. Therefore, the coding of these crashes as “hit and run” is as specified by individual police departments.
- Use UNKNOWN or N/A when applicable rather than leave a field blank.
- Commercial vehicle related crashes SHOULD be reported on a 12-200. An exception would include a single vehicle collision with a moose where law enforcement would not normally respond.
- Parked vehicles. When a parked vehicle is involved, include registered owner information for that vehicle/unit.