

# Community Reporting



## CASE STUDY

How the Southaven Police Department used Caliber's Online RMS to reduce the amount of time officers spent on non-emergency reports.

## OVERVIEW

The number of non-emergency requests for reports has steadily increased for the last several years. We sat down with Officer Kevin Sanders of Southaven PD to hear how his department was using this powerful feature to save staff hours and limit in-person responses to non-emergency calls for service.

*"Nowadays people want to file a Police Report for everything. Someone loses their cell phone and they can't get a replacement from their insurance without a report, or they go to work and they come home and their lawn mower is gone. We have guidelines that specify when a Police Report should be written, and many of the requests that we receive for a police report do meet our criteria, but not all reports require an in-person emergency response."*

Sending Officers to respond to non-emergency calls for service, having them speak with the reporting party, gather relevant information, and decide whether or not the call for service met the Department's criteria for writing a Police Report can often take upwards of 20 minutes per incident. In addition, these calls for service are diverting resources away from higher priority emergency calls that may be going on simultaneously.

To address this issue, Kevin and his colleagues realized they needed to establish a different way for their residents to provide non-emergency information to the Department, information which could then be evaluated and followed up on according to the Department's rules.

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# APPROACH

Using Caliber's Online RMS, the Department quickly created a custom form with several fields to collect detailed information from residents who wish to file a report. This new form, referred to as the "Online Self-Reporting Form", is currently embedded within the Southaven Police Department's website to make it easily accessible to everyone.

## RESULTS

According to Kevin, it isn't the goal of the Online Self-Reporting process to lower the number of reports their agency receives; instead it's to assist in collecting non-emergency details while limiting the number of in-person visits, freeing valuable resources.

*"When we first launched online reporting, we had two civilian clerks assigned to review every submission to see if it required a police report; however, we have since changed that and now have a sworn Desk Officer who is responsible for not only reviewing each submission, but also creating the report when warranted, or following up with the reporting party to let them know when a report does not meet our report guidelines."*

In addition to helping the Department recognize a savings of over 350 staff hours on non-emergency reporting this year, the online portal has proved helpful to Southaven in identifying other improvements they can make to serve their community better.

*"For example, we had some reports of loud cars racing through residential neighborhoods recently. That report did not meet our guidelines to create a Police Report, but it did help us identify that we needed to add extra patrols in that area."*

The Online Self-Reporting form has helped the Southaven Police Department collect over 780 submissions so far from area residents and visitors, from its initial go-live in January 2021 to mid-November 2021. This number will surely continue rising through the end of the year as residents and visitors travel in and out of town for the holidays.



**20+**

minutes are spent tied up on non-emergency calls



**780**

online submissions in approximately 11 months of being live



**350+**

staff hours saved this year on non-emergency reporting

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