
Web Based Community Information System Use (NIXLE™)

332.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

In an effort to enhance public safety and promote community awareness, a web based Community Information System (NIXLE™) is to be used to disseminate timely, geographically relevant information to community members.

The purpose of this policy is to outline criteria and procedures for posting a NIXLE message.

332.2 AUTHORITY TO RELEASE LAW ENFORCEMENT INFORMATION

It is ultimately the responsibility of the Chief of Police to release information to the public. Information pertaining to Department activity will be made readily available to the public through Web Base Community Information System (NIXLE), subject to guidelines established in this directive. That responsibility is delegated to the following personnel:

- (a) A designated Field Operation Division Watch Commander should serve as the department's NIXLE Administrator. Additional administrators will be added as directed by the Chief of Police. The designated Department NIXLE Administrator can publish any level of message on NIXLE regarding information under their direct responsibility. Lieutenants, and Sergeants can publish any level of message on NIXLE and authorize Communications Unit personnel to publish NIXLE messages on their behalf when it is in the best interest of the agency or public to release in an immediate or timely manner.
- (b) Investigation supervisors are encouraged to use the service when a crime pattern, trend, or other emergent matter is determined.
- (c) In a multi-jurisdictional investigation, the lead investigative agency is responsible for providing or coordinating the release of public information on NIXLE. The Departmental Press Information Officer (PIO) or his/her designee for the lead agency shall share that information with all involved agencies in advance of public dissemination. Any NIXLE release involving a multi-jurisdictional investigation shall be coordinated by the lead agencies Chief of Police or his/her designee.

332.3 USE OF NIXLE

All users of NIXLE on behalf of this department must first receive a dedicated user name and password from the department's NIXLE Administrator. When authorized or directed to send a message via NIXLE at the following we address: <https://agency.nixle.com/login/>.

The user will sign in using their dedicated user name and NIXLE password. From there the user can choose one of three message types: Alert, Advisory, and Community. The following describes each type of message.

332.3.1 ALERT MESSAGE

An Alert Message is intended for "urgent, must know" and time-sensitive information including:

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- Missing person alerts (at risk)
- Major building or area evacuations
- Real-time life threatening crime related situations
- Imminent life threatening weather or natural disaster advisories
- Shelter in place advisories
- School lockdown

Alert information is sent to every NIXLE user registered in the jurisdiction or defined geographical area and users cannot opt out of receiving these messages; therefore, Alert messages must be sent prudently.

Posting authority:

- Due to the emergent nature of alerts, they should only be posted by the Watch Commander, or their designee.

Special note:

- Any message relative to an active tactical situation, search warrant, or other incident type that could put an officer or the public's safety in jeopardy shall receive approval prior to posting.
- Investigative implications should be taken into consideration on advisory postings, and shall be de-conflicted with the Investigations Section Lieutenant or Sergeant.
- Once the event has been resolved, a follow-up "Community" message shall be disseminated to notify the public. The time of day or night shall be considered before sending the follow-up message via the text message option.

332.3.2 COMMUNITY MESSAGES

Community Messages are non-time-sensitive messages and information including:

- Police/City sponsored events
- Community meetings
- General proactive announcements
- Person and/or property crime trends

Special note:

- Any message relative to an active tactical situation, search warrant, or other incident type that could put an officer or the public's safety in jeopardy shall receive approval prior to posting.
- Investigative implications should be taken into consideration on advisory postings, and shall be de-conflicted with the Investigations Section Lieutenant or Sergeant.

332.3.3 ADVISORY MESSAGES

Advisory Messages are intended to communicate important, need to know information to include:

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- Road closures
- Traffic congestion
- Severe weather watch
- Policy activity
- New releases
- Request for community assistance

Special note:

- Once an active event has been resolved, a follow-up "Community" message shall be disseminated to notify the public. The time of day or night shall be considered before sending the follow-up message via the text message option.

332.3.4 REACH RECIPIENTS

Alert Messages will reach subscribers by SMS (text message) and Email (Web & Mobile App) unless they have opted out.

Advisory Messages will reach subscribers by email (Web & Mobile App), or by SMS (text message), if email is not available.

Community Messages will reach subscribers by email (Web & Mobile App).

Voice Dialing is a tool that can be used to send a recorded message to a select Public Group or to residents in a certain geographic area. The geographic area can be selected by entering a zip code, using the Point and Radius option, or creating a Custom Area in the Geographic Filtering section. Voice Dialing may be appropriate for notifying the public of incidents such as:

- Missing person alerts (at risk)
- Major building or area evacuations
- Real-time life threatening crime related situations
- Imminent life threatening weather or natural disaster advisories
- Shelter in place advisories
- School lockdown

332.3.5 CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE POSTING

Items to be considered prior to posting a NIXLE message in any category include:

- Accuracy of the information you are distributing
- Keep the message short
- Provide a summary of the problem, trend, or pattern
- Limit radius of notification postings to the area that is meaningfully impacted

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- Specify location of nearest cross street
- If possible, picture(s) should be included in postings
- Include unit, investigator, or PIO contact information in the bottom of the notification
- A notification that is of an emergency nature (at risk missing person or major public safety issue) must include notification of chain-of-command.

Although NIXLE was designed as a community/neighborhood level notification system, it should be expected that any NIXLE posting will be monitored by the media. As such, protocol as outlined in Union City Police Department News Media Relations Policy shall be adhered to. There should also be an expectation that inquiries from the media will occur based on NIXLE postings. These inquiries shall be addressed in the usual manner by an on-duty PIO, Watch Commander, Field Operations Division Lieutenant, Field Operations Division Commander or their designee.

332.4 LAW ENFORCEMENT INFORMATION RELEASE GUIDELINES

The release of information is subject to restrictions placed by applicable local, state, and federal laws. The News Media Relations Policy shall be adhered to when posting a NIXLE message. No member of this agency shall release any information that would hamper the successful conclusion of an investigation or jeopardize the safety of affected persons.

332.4.1 INFORMATION THAT IS ACCEPTABLE FOR RELEASE

Authorized agency members may release the following information on crime/criminal activity:

- Basic information about a crime or incident
- Description of suspects, basic description of weapons and vehicles used, and basic description of stolen items
- Basic description of injuries and conditions of victims
- The name, age, city, and other basic information about arrestees and the charges against them
- Information contained in arrest affidavits and other applicable crime or incident reports
- Booking photographs, in compliance with UCPD Procedure #347
- Suspect photographs or sketches necessary to identify an unknown offender

332.4.2 INFORMATION THAT SHALL NOT BE RELEASED

Any member of this department shall not release the following information through NIXLE:

- Names, addresses, and any other information that would identify the victim of any crime
- Names, address, or identifying information related to juvenile arrestees
- Active criminal investigation information, active criminal intelligence information, surveillance techniques, or personnel deployment
- Names of informants and information provided by them

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- Active Internal Affairs investigations, as governed by state law
- Names of witnesses
- Information concerning on-going City of Union City litigation
- The identity of critically injured or deceased persons prior to notification to next of kin
- Home address, telephone numbers, and familial information of law enforcement personnel
- Any other information prohibited by state or federal law from public disclosure

332.4.3 LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE AND SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION

Unauthorized release of Law Enforcement Sensitive (LES) and Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) information or material to the public is prohibited.

- (a) All LES/SBU information requires accountability and approval for release. Release of SBU information to unauthorized personnel is prohibited. Unauthorized release of sensitive information may result in prosecution and/or disciplinary review.
- (b) LES information is defined as unclassified information of a sensitive and proprietary nature that if disclosed could cause harm to law enforcement activities by jeopardizing investigations, compromising operations, or causing life-threatening situations for confidential informants, witnesses, or law enforcement personnel. These categories are designated as law enforcement sensitive.
 1. Informant and witness information
 2. Grand Jury information subject to the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, Rule
 3. § 6(e), Grand Jury Secrecy Proceedings and Disclosure.
 4. Law enforcement sources and undercover operations
 5. Law enforcement intelligence sources and methods
 6. Federal law enforcement agency activities
 7. Federal support to state and local law enforcement activities
 8. Information pertaining to the judiciary, to include investigations of inappropriate communications.

Sensitive, but unclassified information is defined as "unclassified information of a sensitive nature, not otherwise categorized by statute or regulation, the unauthorized disclosure of which could adversely impact a person's privacy or welfare, the conduct of Federal programs, or other programs or operations essential to the national interest."

332.5 NIXLE DISPATCH CENTER

A NIXLE message can be posted in the field, via telephone, when access to the Internet is unavailable or impractical. To access the service via telephone, call [REDACTED] and speak to the NIXLE Customer Service. After providing your user name and a password, the posting will

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be entered and disseminated to the desired geographic area just as if it were posted via the Internet. NIXLE suggests that this to be used as a supplement to the standard service, and is not meant to replace it. The password for field access can be obtained from the department's NIXLE Administrator.

332.6 REVISIONS

Revised: August 29, 2018

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