



The Arizona Correctional Peace Officers Association

Check and Mate Newsletter

No. 14



A bi-weekly newsletter to inform Union members on important grievance results, trends, procedures and important information relevant to a better quality of work life.

In This Issue:

-Information Reports: A "Case Study" on what to write down.



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*Information Reports: A
“Case Study” on what to
write down.*

No. This article is not about “How” to write an Information Report. That has been covered before in a previous newsletter. What we will discuss here is “What” to put down in that report.

While it is clear that the elements that constitute a well written report has been established since your first day at C.O.T.A., they being the What? Where? Who? When? How? common to all reports, there is much confusion on exactly “what” you are allowed to put down in said report when one is required.

I will give you the quick and only answer there is, and then, I will elaborate on the reasoning.

You are allowed to write down, to your heart’s content, anything, as long as you believe that information to be relative, to what it is, that you are trying to make clear.

Let me “clarify” my reasoning as to “why” we are “clarifying” what you can write down on an Information Report.

We at the Arizona Correctional Peace Officers Association deal with many situations requiring an Information Report on a daily basis and have been witnessing a nasty trend lately that we

must now make you, dear fellow member, aware of.

It appears, more often than not, that the following two faulty methods of logic are being followed by administrators and line staff as well, and need to be corrected:

FIRST- Administrators and supervisors alike are advising staff on “What” to put down on a report as if they have the authority to dictate to staff, “what” is allowed as relevant or not. This is incorrect. Only you can make that determination and you don’t need permission to include what you believe to be relevant.

SECOND- The very nasty habit employed by upper administration of deflecting a main problem, one that is going to make them look bad, with an alternate one that steers away from the main problem. In other words, asking you to deflect without actually asking.

Let’s look at a perfect example that just transpired, and to ensure that confidentiality and dignity is maintained, I have altered the actual facts and names but rest assured, the lessons remain the same.

Case Study

An employee reports a misconduct on an inmate’s behavior. The inmate, in turn, upon being questioned about the behavior, immediately makes their own allegation about the reporting staff member.

Now, the administration decides to pursue the inmate allegation and completely ignores the staff members report, that was the catalyst for this inmate to retaliate with their own accusation.

Administration in turn now, asks you to submit an Information report addressing the inmate’s story but asks you to leave your main complaint out of the report because they only want to know what you have to say about the inmate’s side of the story.

Sounds familiar?

This crap happens every day, in many of our institutions, in a variety of combinations but they all serve the same purpose: to save the department from embarrassment should your story be more damaging than the inmates.

And yes, this is a true story and it is completely annoying, demeaning, immoral and unacceptable.

So, what do you do?

I'll tell you what you can do and should do: you should include, in that report, your original complaint and how the inmate spring boarded off that complaint to deflect with one of their own, that's what you do.

No one, and I mean no one, can tell you what you can and cannot put in a report.

Period!

Remember this: all

Information Reports are a potential catalyst for an investigation on you and they will hold you to what you originally reported on that report so make it clear and thorough the first time around.

Remember this: no one can advise you what to put down or omit on a report that you are submitting.

Remember this: Once written no one can order you to re-write the report to omit facts that are known and relevant to you.

Remember this: it is your "hide" so you better take care of it. Don't leave it up to providence or trust in someone else.

Remember this: before submitting any report, consult an AZCPOA representative to discuss the situation should you need assistance.

Yours in Solidarity,

Carlos Garcia

*Executive Grievance
Coordinator*

Deeds not words!

