

CARFAX for Police

614.1 PURPOSE

St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office has entered into an agreement with CARFAX to participate in CARFAX for Police. The program provides deputy sheriffs with access to CARFAX data including vehicle VIN history, vehicle service history and accident reports. CARFAX for Police is a web-based application and differs from CARFAX used by car dealerships and insurance companies. The system gathers data from over 100,000 sources including salvage yards, dealerships, fire departments, and service shops. It partners with over 4,900 law enforcement agencies to provide information of interest to law enforcement. It is a secure website which is password protected and has audit capabilities to track searches by authorized users. As part of the agreement with CARFAX, the sheriff's office has elected to make accident investigative reports completed by the agency available to citizens online via a designated web portal.

614.2 DEFINITIONS

Vehicle History Report - (Located under the Investigative Tools Icon) The VHR contains the complete history of the vehicle. There is no personal identifiable information in the VHR.

CARFAX High Mileage Alerts - (Located under the Investigative Tools Icon) This tool provides users with access to a nationwide list of potentially fraudulent vehicles on the road. This list identifies recent model year vehicles that appear on the road nationwide with high mileage and no previous history. Vehicles missing early title, inspection, and sales records can often indicate vehicle fraud. The High Mileage Alerts can be used as an auto-theft tool. Information stays on the account for 30 days and the list updates and changes every 30 days.

VIN Alert - (Located under the Investigative Tools Icon) This alert tool sends an email to the user whenever information on a flagged VIN is updated in the CARFAX database. The user can set up a VIN alert for stolen vehicles or can search for stolen vehicles using the VIN alert tool. VIN alerts can go to everyone with an account through CARFAX.

Crash Report Center - (Located under the Investigative Tools Icon) This tool allows users to search for police accident reports, including the vehicle history, from police departments across the country. Reports appear on a list and can be viewed by clicking on the icon on the report. These reports contain detailed information to include personal data and can only be accessed by law enforcement. The reports can be searched by state, agency, date range, report number, VIN, year, make, model, plate, first name, and last name. When a name is searched through this tool, results include passengers, witnesses, or other involved parties.

614.3 CARFAX FOR POLICE USE

- (a) Access to CARFAX for Police Service will be managed by the Information Systems and Analytics Manager or their designee, as the agency administrator.
- (b) Personnel desiring access must show an investigative need and obtain approval from their respective supervisor.

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- (c) Prior to obtaining access, users are required to meet the training requirements outlined within this policy.
- (d) The use of CARFAX for Police is for law enforcement purposes. The sharing of any information obtained from a CARFAX report for other than legitimate law enforcement purpose is strictly prohibited.
- (e) The agency administrator will have user access terminated upon the following conditions:
 - 1. The user is no longer employed by the Agency.
 - 2. The user no longer has a legitimate purpose to have access to CARFAX for Police.
 - 3. The user is no longer in good standing.

614.4 TRAINING

Prior to obtaining access to CARFAX for Police, approved personnel will receive training from a CARFAX for police representative, or an agency designated instructor. The training will consist of a minimum of one hour of either online or classroom instruction covering the capabilities of the system and the process for conducting search queries.

As part of the training, each authorized user is required to view the following videos:

CARFAX Overview

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CaONHBpZzd8&feature=youtu.be>

CARFAX Partial Plate

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1zO9RResF8

CARFAX Vehicle History Report

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYI3l0Urt4M&feature=youtu.be>

CARFAX App Tutorial

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2LfSaa6tBE&feature=youtu.be>

614.5 ACCIDENT REPORTS ONLINE

Approved accident reports will be made available for purchase through a CARFAX portal online. A link to the CARFAX site will be made available on the Sheriff's Office Website Welcome Screen. To purchase a report via the portal, the requestor will be required to have the involved parties' last name, report number and date of the accident. The cost to a citizen requesting a report through the online portal will be the same price charged to citizens who walk in.

All fees collected through the CARFAX portal will be distributed to the agency monthly by CARFAX and deposited in the designated account as identified by the agency fiscal section.