



POLICY STATEMENT

Investigative Procedures

SU Policy Number: 404-420.0

ORIGINATING OFFICE

Department of Public Safety

PURPOSE

To describe the stages in the investigative process and to furnish general guidelines for conducting investigations.

OBJECTIVE

The coordination of an investigation between the personnel assigned to investigate crimes and all other functional units of the Department is essential to the successful conclusion of that investigation. An investigation is successfully concluded if the person(s) responsible for a crime is identified and either charged with all applicable violations, or the matter is cleared "exceptionally." "Exceptional Clearance" will occur only if all of the criteria as required by the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) System are met. The Department's procedures are designed to ensure a coordinated and effective investigative process.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Shippensburg University Police Department to thoroughly investigate all violations of state and local law that occur within its jurisdiction, as well as other administrative inquiries as assigned. Such investigation requires a systematic approach to ensure that all possible investigative leads are pursued to the fullest, including the use of specific expertise when indicated. To accomplish this without unnecessary duplication of effort, individual tasks are routinely assigned to appropriate personnel and exceptions are made when particular circumstances dictate. Personnel will follow all procedures for both preliminary and follow-up investigations as taught in the Police Training Academy or specialized training courses

PROCEDURES

THE INVESTIGATIVE PROCESS

1. The investigative process consists of the "preliminary investigation" and the "follow-up investigation."
2. Except where enumerated herein, uniformed officers generally conduct the preliminary investigation of all crimes reported to the Department. Certain serious offenses, e.g. homicides, rapes, child abuse and certain fraud offenses may be investigated during the preliminary investigation by detectives in cooperation with the officers assigned to conduct the preliminary investigation.

3. Follow-up investigations generally are conducted by detectives upon referral from the unit that conducted the preliminary investigation and acceptance of that investigation by the
4. Supervisor of the Investigations Section. The entire investigation, however, may be conducted by any one officer or group if circumstances make this option appropriate.

GENERAL PROCEDURES TO BE USED IN CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

1. INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT - The most likely method of developing information is to identify and interview witnesses and victims and obtain information from a confidential source, or informant so that additional witnesses or sources of information may be identified. Other sources of information that also may be beneficial to the outcome of the investigation include:
 - a. Previous reports relating to the incident or subjects involved;
 - b. Arrest records;
 - c. Field interview reports;
 - d. Arrest photographs;
 - e. Fingerprint records;
 - f. Motor Vehicle Administration records;
 - g. NCIC Criminal History records;
 - h. Parole and Probation records;
 - i. Real estate records;
 - j. Local, state and federal records;
 - k. Post office records;
 - l. Utility company records;
 - m. Telephone company records;
 - n. Bank and credit agency records;
 - o. Insurance company records;
 - p. Unions and professional association records; and,
 - q. Employment records;
 - r. Student records;
2. INTERVIEWS AND INTERROGATIONS – The ability to obtain comprehensive, accurate information from victims, witnesses and suspects is also crucial to the outcome of the investigative process. Proper preparation is essential, as is proper listening and analysis of the information provided. A proper setting is also essential, particularly when conducting an interrogation of a suspect. Elements to be considered regarding interviews with specific groups include:
 - a. Victim/ Witness Interview
 - i. Trauma or stress which the victim or witness has experienced;
 - ii. The location of the interview;
 - iii. The age and physical limitations of the victim or witness; and,
 - iv. The victim or witnesses' ability to actually observe what they report.
 - v. Victims should not be polygraphed when reporting a sexual assault. There are some instances in which a polygraph examination may be used. This will be determined on a case by case basis.
 - b. Suspect Interrogation
 - i. Proper advice and waiver of Constitutional Warnings;
 - ii. Detailed recording of information provided by suspect;
 - iii. Repeated covering of information to identify inconsistencies;
 - iv. Follow-up investigation into information provided; and,
 - v. Utilization of polygraph examination.

3. COLLECTION, PRESERVATION, AND USE OF PHYSICAL EVIDENCE – Evidence will be properly packaged, labeled, secured and documented for chain of custody by trained individuals. Refer to G.O. "Collection of Physical Evidence" for procedures.
4. BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS – Conducting a background investigation on the suspect is beneficial to the outcome of the investigation. Other “as-of-yet” unidentified suspects may be developed through a background investigation. This is especially true when conducting white collar, drug, vice and other organized crime investigations, and investigations involving gang members.
 - a. Sources of information that should be queried when conducting a background investigation include:
 - i. Departmental Records;
 - ii. Federal and State Records;
 - iii. Allied Agency Records;
 - iv. LexisNexis Internet or other private databases; and,
 - v. Government Licenses.
 - vi. Student Records(i.e. Housing schedules)
 - b. Because much of this information may be confidential, discretion in seeking and disseminating this information is essential and is to be restricted to the purpose of the investigation.
5. SURVEILLANCE – Certain investigations when analyzed may indicate the existence of a pattern or the probability that the same person(s) may be involved. When a pattern is identified, the apprehension of suspects through surveillance and subsequent interviews may result in a suspect being linked to previously committed crimes. Surveillance operations will be conducted with supervisory approval in an effort to apprehend suspects in the act of committing offenses currently under investigation.

SOLVABILITY FACTORS

Leads existent in an investigation that may lead toward the identification of a suspect or the seizure of evidence are considered to be solvability factors. Solvability factors include:

1. Witnesses to the crime;
2. Informant information;
3. Physical evidence;
4. Surveillance video/photography;
5. Indicative modus operandi;
6. The identity of accomplices; and,
7. Neighborhood canvass.
8. Electronic Records
9. Collaborate with other agencies

PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION

1. The preliminary investigation is directly concerned with the arrest of perpetrators at, or fleeing from, the scene and with initial crime scene processing and recording of information. It is conducted at the time that the crime is reported and includes activities at the scene, as well as other locations that are directly linked to the crime.
2. The preliminary investigation is generally the responsibility of uniformed officers. This investigation includes, but is not limited to, the following tasks:
 - a. Proceed to the scene safely and quickly;
 - b. Render aid to the injured;
 - c. Effect the arrest of suspects;
 - d. Locate and identify witnesses;
 - e. Interview complainant and witnesses;

- f. Maintain the crime scene and protect evidence;
- g. Interrogate the suspect(s);
- h. Note all conditions, events and remarks;
- i. Arrange for the collection of evidence;
- j. Report the incident fully and accurately; and,
- k. Yield the responsibility to the follow-up investigator(s).

FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION

1. Investigative efforts that are conducted after the at-scene investigation has been completed are considered to be part of the follow-up investigation. It is a continuation of the preliminary investigation and occurs under any of the following conditions:
 - a. When a complete at-scene investigation by uniformed personnel is not possible or practical;
 - b. When additional evidence or information is required to identify and apprehend the perpetrator and these investigative efforts occur after the at-scene investigation has been completed; or,
 - c. When complexities of the case require the use of specialized personnel.
2. A follow-up investigation includes, but is not limited to, the following tasks:
 - a. Review and analyze all previous reports prepared during the preliminary investigation, departmental records, and results from forensic examinations;
 - b. Conduct additional interviews and interrogations;
 - c. Seek additional information (from uniformed officers, additional witnesses, informants and other agencies);
 - d. Plan, organize and conduct searches and collect physical evidence;
 - e. Identify and apprehend defendants;
 - f. Determine the involvement of suspects in other crimes;
 - g. Check the criminal histories of the defendants;
 - h. Continuation of the development of witnesses;
 - i. Assessment of information and evidence obtained;
 - j. Liaison with the Crime Scene Unit and assessment of forensic examination results;
 - k. Determine and conduct appropriate surveillance, interrogation, or identification processes;
3. Coordinate tasks when the investigation extends beyond jurisdictional boundaries;
 - a. Present evidence and statements of probable cause to judicial officers to obtain arrest or search warrants;
 - b. Present evidence and investigative results to prosecutors for presentation to the Grand Jury or at trial;
 - c. Develop exhibits for presentation at trial;
 - d. Prepare and submit required reports; and,
 - e. Prepare investigative reports for prosecution.

FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION BY UNIFORMED OFFICERS

Investigations proceeding beyond the preliminary stage may be conducted by uniformed officers upon supervisory approval and when one or more of the following factors exist:

1. When there is a reasonable chance of apprehending a suspect in a short period of time;
2. When additional information is needed for the initial report;
3. When there are other compelling circumstances, such as the collection of physical evidence that might be immediately destroyed or altered;
4. When the identity of potential witnesses may be lost or
5. When the supervisor determines that follow-up investigation by the original officer or a specialized unit is appropriate

ASSIGNMENT OF INVESTIGATIONS TO CRIMINAL INVESTIGATORS

1. Other than those investigations assigned for follow-up under Section .35, all other investigations that are determined by a supervisor to require follow-up investigation will be referred to the investigators. All copies of investigative reports documenting all Part I (UCR) offenses to the Lieutenant.
2. Each investigation will be reviewed by Supervisory personnel prior to assignment for follow-up investigation. Those investigations that involve solvability factors will be assigned to a criminal investigator for follow-up investigation. Those investigations not stating solvability factors will involve investigative personnel. This will include investigators re-contacting the complainant for any additional evidence or information which will justify continued investigation, or to verify the absence of solvability factors. If no solvability factors are identified, the case will be suspended and the victim(s) so notified.

PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION BY CRIMINAL INVESTIGATORS

1. Investigations of the following types will involve the assignment of a Criminal Investigator during the preliminary investigation. The on-duty supervisor will request involvement by on-duty or on-call investigative personnel after the initial response and investigation has verified the occurrence of the crime in question.
 - a. Homicide;
 - b. Death investigation (excluding fatal automobile accidents) involving the Medical Examiner;
 - c. Child abuse investigation involving serious Injury;
 - d. Rape;
 - e. Armed robbery;
 - f. Felonious assault;
 - g. Forcible abduction; or,
 - h. When requested by a supervisor.
2. The initial incident report will be completed by the uniformed officer. Supplementary incident reports will be completed by the criminal investigator.

USE OF SPECIALIZED PERSONNEL

1. The officer investigating a given incident, with supervisory overview, is ultimately responsible for the outcome of that investigation. Supervisory personnel are responsible for monitoring the activities of each investigation conducted during their tour of duty and assuring that when indicated, a specialist, e.g., crime scene technician, detective, etc., is summoned to either assist, or assume primary investigative responsibility. Investigating officers will remain aware of the potential value of evidence or other information and should determine whether their own training, skills, knowledge, experience, and time available is sufficient to collect such evidence or information effectively and efficiently. Decisions should be based on the seriousness of the crime and whether functions require special handling. Functions which may require special handling include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Collection of certain fragile evidence;
 - b. Sketching or photographing the crime scene or other areas;
 - c. Subsequent investigations away from the crime scene area; and,
 - d. Interviews and interrogations.
2. If it is determined that the facts and circumstances warrant the use of specialists, it is the responsibility of the investigating officer to maintain the crime scene pending the arrival of the specialized personnel. Prompt requests for assistance should be made so as to allow the investigation to proceed in a timely manner.

3. Specialists may be of many types, including the following:
 - a. Uniformed personnel with expertise in selected areas;
 - b. Canine assistance;
 - c. Detective assistance;
 - d. Crime Scene Unit assistance; or,
 - e. Personnel from other county/city departments: barricades, lighting, etc.

IDENTITY THEFT PROCEDURES

1. As outlined in Pennsylvania Criminal Law, CR-4120: A person commits the offense of identity theft of another person if he/she possesses or uses, through any means, identifying information of another person without the consent of that other person to further any unlawful purpose.
2. Any part of the county in which the person lives; or
3. Responding officers will complete an incident report for any victim who knows or reasonably knows that another has unlawfully used his personal identifying information, as listed above.
4. All other victims, not listed above, should be encouraged to promptly report the identity theft to the law enforcement agency where they reside.
5. If a portion of the identity theft occurs outside the State of Pennsylvania, every effort should be made to put the victim in contact with the proper agency in that state.
6. The types of unauthorized activities that have taken place will be classified in the report, such as:
 - a. Credit card accounts opened or account address changed
 - b. Establishment of a line of credit at a store or lending institution
 - c. Goods or services purchased in their name
7. Attempt to determine the types of personal identifying information used to commit the crime.
8. Document any information concerning where the crime(s) took place, the financial institutions or related companies involved and the residence or whereabouts of the victim at the time of these events.
9. Any original or copied documents or any kind used in the commission of the crime and obtained by the victim should be collected and submitted as evidence.
10. Officers taking reports of identity theft should take those steps reasonably possible to help victims resolve their problem.
 - a. Provide the victim with the Case Report Number and advise how they can obtain a copy of the report.
 - b. Advise the victim, if applicable, to cancel each credit and charge card and request new cards with new account numbers.
 - c. If bank accounts are involved, advise the victim to report the loss to each financial institution, cancel existing accounts, and open new accounts with new account numbers. If deemed necessary, advise the victim to place stop payments on outstanding checks and contact the creditors to explain the situation.
 - d. If the driver's license is involved, advise the victim to notify the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (Penndot).
 - e. Advise the victim to contact the three credit reporting agencies and the Federal Trade Commission;
11. Equifax 1-800-525-6285
12. Experian 1-888-397-3742
13. TransUnion 1-800-680-7289
14. FTC 1-877-IDTHEFT or www.consumer.gov/idtheft

- a. Advise the victim to change the locks on their residence and vehicles if there is any indication that the keys have been copied or otherwise compromised.
15. The investigating officer will coordinate the investigation with other applicable agencies as determined by the follow-up investigation. All efforts will be made to contact other
16. Involved or potentially involved law enforcement agencies for collaboration and avoidance of duplication.
17. Where reasonable and appropriate, officers engaged in public education/information forums, community crime prevention and awareness presentations, or similar speaking or information dissemination efforts shall provide the public with information on the nature and prevention of identity theft.

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