CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT
GENERAL ORDER

INVESTIGATIONS

GENERAL ORDER: 08.09	**CREATED:** July 23, 2021	**ISSUE DATE:** July 7, 2026
CALEA STANDARD: 42.1.3, 42.2.1 **NCLEA STANDARD:** 6.05, 6.20		**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 21, 2026
ACTION: Amends general order dated December 17, 2025.		

08.09.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this general order is to establish procedures to ensure the effective and efficient investigation of criminal activity and related incidents.

08.09.1 POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Concord Police Department to conduct investigations into complaints of criminal activity to the maximum extent feasible, in order to resolve complaints and present offenders for prosecution as directed by other elements of the criminal justice system. The preliminary inquiry into complaints of criminal activity shall generally determine how and what decisions shall be made concerning the continuation or termination of an investigation. All officers assigned to perform field duties, including both uniformed and investigative units, shall have a general responsibility for conducting criminal investigations in accordance with prevailing law and the provisions of this general order.

08.09.2 DEFINITIONS

A. FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION

An extension of a preliminary investigation in which the purpose is to gain additional information in order to close a case, arrest an offender, and/or recover stolen property.

B. PATROL CRIME SCENE (PCS)

Specific officers that are responsible for responding to and securing crime scenes during routine patrol duties. This officer typically plays a key role in the initial stages of a criminal investigation by ensuring that a crime scene is preserved and properly documented.

C. PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION

The activity that begins when an officer arrives at the scene of an incident, and continues until such time as the investigation is transferred to another officer for follow-up, or until the incident is closed if no follow-up is needed.

08.09.3 PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS

A. The first officer on the scene, unless otherwise directed by a supervisor, shall be

responsible for conducting the preliminary investigation and completing the initial report. The first officer shall:

1. Observe all conditions, events, and remarks;

2. Locate and identify witnesses;

3. Maintain and protect the crime scene and evidence.

   a. The officer assigned to the crime scene is responsible for the protection, documentation, preservation, and all other needs pertaining to both the scene and physical evidence unless otherwise directed by a supervisor or relieved by other investigative coworkers. If a PCS officer or Forensic Unit coworker is needed to process the crime scene, the guidelines below shall be followed.

   b. If a PCS officer or Forensic Unit coworker is not available to respond or on duty then the investigating officer should contact their supervisor to determine if the investigating officer may process the crime scene or if other resources should be contacted to complete the scene processing.

4. Interview and/or obtain written statements from the complainant, victim(s), and witness(es). Interviews shall be conducted as outlined in General Order 08.04 Interviews / Interview Rooms.

5. Interview and/or obtain written statements from the suspect if such statements can be obtained without jeopardizing the outcome of the investigation. Prior to mirandizing any suspect, the officer should confirm that the investigation is not being assigned to the Criminal Investigations Division. If the suspect asserts their 5th Amendment rights, this shall be documented in the narrative of the Incident/Investigation Report or Supplemental Report. Interviews shall be conducted as outlined in General Order 08.04 Interviews/Interview Rooms.

6. Arrange for the collection of evidence;

7. Effect an arrest, if possible;

8. Report the incident fully and accurately.

08.09.4 CRIME SCENE PROCESSING

A. The processing of crime scenes and the collection of evidence shall be available on a 24-hour basis. Such processing may normally be conducted by Forensic Unit coworkers or PCS officers. The crime scene processing function includes:

   1. Photography and/or videography;

   2. Developing, recovering, classifying and identifying fingerprints;

   3. Diagramming, sketching or digital rendering of the scene;

   4. Evidence searches, preservation, collection, processing, and submission of evidence to crime laboratories for examination/analysis.

B. When it is determined that the Forensic Unit is needed to process a scene,

notification shall be made as soon as practicable. When necessary, the Forensic Unit shall provide instructions on how patrol officers are to proceed until the arrival of a Forensic Unit coworker. The Forensic Unit shall be notified regarding:

1. Deaths of a suspicious nature;
2. Assaults in which there is a probability of death;
3. Robberies of financial institutions;
4. Home invasion robberies involving unknown suspects;
5. Arson resulting in significant property damage or personal injury;
6. Bombings or explosive incidents;
7. Rapes and sexual assaults involving physical evidence that needs collection (except from a medical facility);

C. Any other serious crime that the on-scene supervisor or watch commander believes would benefit from more advanced crime scene processing.

D. The on-duty supervisor shall authorize the request for assistance from the Forensic Unit. The request shall be made to the on-call Criminal Investigations Division supervisor, who shall be responsible for informing their supervisor.

E. If PCS or Forensic Unit coworkers do not respond to the scene then the officer assigned to the crime scene shall take overall photographs of the crime scene Axon Capture.

08.09.5 CRIME SCENE PROCESSING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A. The PCS officer processing the crime scene shall complete Form PCS – 1 (Patrol Crime Scene Processing Report) after processing a crime scene. This shall be attached to the incident report in RMS.

B. The Forensic Unit coworker shall complete a crime scene report and attach the completed report to the incident report in RMS.

08.09.6 FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATIONS

A. Case screening shall be used to determine whether a case should be assigned for follow-up investigation. The decision to assign a case for follow-up shall be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Patrol Bureau Commander.

Criteria used to determine whether a case should be assigned for follow-up investigation may include, but are not limited to:

1. Seriousness of the offense;
2. Presence of solvability factors;

3. Availability of suspect, witness, victim, vehicle, property, video, forensic, digital, or physical evidence information;

4. Need for additional interviews, statements, evidence collection, or forensic examination;

5. Need to identify, locate, or apprehend a suspect;

6. Need to recover stolen property;

7. Pattern, series, or repeat-offender information;

8. Prosecutorial needs or requests from the District Attorney's Office;

9. Current investigative workload and available resources;

10. Whether specialized investigative knowledge, training, or resources are needed; and

11. Any other facts or circumstances indicating that additional investigation may lead to arrest, case clearance, prosecution, or recovery of property.

B. The following procedures are provided as a guide for conducting follow-up investigations and are to be used only in the event they are found to be necessary. The officer may:

1. Review and analyze all previous reports prepared for the preliminary investigation;

2. Conduct additional interviews and interrogations;

3. Review any pertinent departmental records;

4. Seek additional information from patrol officers, informants, etc.;

5. Review laboratory results;

6. Arrange for dissemination of information, as necessary;

7. Plan, organize, and conduct searches, as needed;

8. Identify and apprehend suspects;

9. Collect any physical evidence available;

10. Determine involvement of suspects in other crimes;

11. Check suspect's criminal histories;

12. Prepare for court presentation;

13. Assist in prosecution;

14. Any other legal methods that may lead to an arrest or case closure.

C. EYEWITNESS IDENTIFICATION ACT

1. Eyewitness Identification procedures shall follow those set out in NCGS 15A-284.52.

2. Coworkers shall attend training in the administration of show-ups, live or photographic lineups prior to administering a lineup.

08.09.7 CASE ASSIGNMENT AND FOLLOW-UP REPORTING

A. The department's criminal investigation function may be performed by any officer. Patrol officers shall be assigned to conduct preliminary and follow up investigations of reported incidents, except those instances where Criminal Investigation Division investigators would be more effective.

B. When a case is assigned for follow-up investigation, a primary investigating officer shall be designated to ensure accountability and investigative continuity. When practical, cases requiring specialized skill, training or experience should be assigned to officers with the appropriate knowledge, training or experience.

C. When a case is assigned for follow-up investigation, a record shall be maintained that includes, but is not limited to, the name of the officer assigned, date assigned, case number and current status of the case.

D. The assigned officer shall document all follow-up investigative activity in the department-approved software.

08.09.8 CASE DESIGNATION

Each investigation is assigned a status in order to assist with case management and control. Designations shall be:

A. ARRESTED BY OTHER AGENCY/CLOSED

Indicates another agency has arrested one or more of the offenders in the case, and they have been dutifully charged with the commission of the crime and will be turned over to the court system for prosecution.

B. CLEARED BY ARREST

Indicates one or more offenders have been arrested and/or charged with the commission of the crime and will be turned over to the court system for prosecution.

C. CLOSED/ACCIDENTAL DEATH

The investigation shows that the victim died of an unnatural death that was caused by an accident.

D. CLOSED/LEADS EXHAUSTED

Indicates the case will no longer be investigated by the department. The case has not been solved, but it has been determined that further investigation of the case is not merited.

E. CLOSED/NATURAL DEATH

Indicates the investigation shows that the victim died because of sickness, disease, or the aging process.

F. CLOSED/SUICIDE

Indicates the investigation shows that the victim died by injuring oneself with the intent to die.

G. EXCEPTIONALLY CLEARED

There are certain situations, elements beyond law enforcement's control, that prevent the arrest and charging of the offender. When this occurs, the case can be cleared as exceptionally cleared. The following four conditions must be met and a disposition has to be listed.

To clear a case by exception all of the following conditions must be met:

1. The investigation must have clearly and definitely established the identity of at least one offender.

2. There must be sufficient probable cause to support arresting, charging, and prosecuting the offender.

3. Investigating officer must know the exact location of the offender so an arrest could be made if it were possible.

4. There must be a reason outside your control preventing the arrest, charging, and prosecution. Indicates the investigation has been concluded satisfactorily, and one of the following case dispositions shall be indicated:

If a case is cleared Exceptionally Cleared one of the following dispositions has to be listed:

1. DEATH OF OFFENDER

Indicates that it has been determined who the offender is in a case, but the offender is deceased.

2. IN CUSTODY OF OTHER JURISDICTION

Indicates that another department has arrested the offender, but that extradition of that offender for criminal prosecution has been declined.

3. JUVENILE/NO CUSTODY

Indicates that the officer has handled one or more juvenile offenders who have committed the offense and are taken into custody under such circumstances that if the juvenile were an adult, an arrest should have been made.

4. PROSECUTION DECLINED

Indicates that the offender has been identified, there is probable cause to make an arrest, but the District Attorney declines to prosecute.

5. VICTIM REFUSED TO COOPERATE

Indicates that the offender has been identified, but the victim in this case is unwilling to prosecute or is unwilling to cooperate making prosecution unlikely.

H. INACTIVE

Indicates the department is not actively following up on leads unless additional information becomes available. The case is not considered to be closed, but will not be investigated at this time. This designation is typically used when awaiting laboratory results or the recovery of property.

I. LOCATED MISSING PERSON

Indicates a missing person has been located.

J. OPEN/FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Indicates the case is still active for additional investigation.

K. TURNED OVER TO ANOTHER AGENCY

Indicates that the case was turned over to another agency for additional investigation, such as a state or federal agency.

L. UNFOUNDED OR FALSE REPORT

Indicates that a crime was reported but the investigation determined that either no crime actually occurred or the crime occurred in another jurisdiction. It shall be titled according to the reported crime, with a status of "unfounded".

08.09.9 RECORDS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A. The status of investigations shall be controlled by the use of the department's Records Management System (RMS), which is maintained by the Customer Service supervisor and operated by authorized coworkers in accordance with department directives. The following information is available through the system;

1. Officer assigned;
2. Case number;
3. Victim's name;
4. Date reported and date assigned;
5. Case status;
6. Report date.

B. Investigative files shall be maintained by the primary investigating officer on all active

cases. The file shall contain a copy of the preliminary incident report, statements from victim(s)/witness(es)/suspect(s), results of examinations of physical evidence, and other reports or records pertinent to the investigation.

C. Investigative files shall be made accessible to the assigned officer's supervisor. Officers have 24-hour access to case information using RMS.

D. Investigative files shall be consolidated into RMS or the Customer Service Unit records system when the case status is designated inactive or closed.

E. The investigative officer shall purge the file of any information that is duplicated in RMS or within a digital evidence management system.



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