



GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

Chapter: Operations

Section: 406.10

Subject: Response to Selected Situations

Topic: Control at Crime and Civil Disaster Scenes

Accreditation: ADM. 24.06, 24.07

Revised:

Reaffirmed:

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to provide specific guidance for the control of scenes, which can only be successful when each member of the agency, from the moment of notification, exercises sound judgment to ensure the preservation of such scenes. The presence of personnel who wish to observe a scene to satisfy their personal curiosity is contrary to the best interest of the agency and cannot be tolerated.

This policy shall apply to all persons, regardless of rank or position in the County of Loudoun, any other governmental unit or the community

II. POLICY

To assure the preservation of evidence critical to the successful identification, apprehension and prosecution of offenders, it shall be the policy of the Sheriff's Office to limit access to the scenes of crimes or civil disasters. Only those persons immediately and directly connected to the investigation of the event for which the scene was established shall be granted access

III. TERMINOLOGY/SCOPE OF AUTHORITY

- A. Crime/Civil Disaster Scene -The physical area in which a crime or civil disaster occurred or the area in which evidence may be found. The extent of the area will be determined by the course of the investigation in each circumstance. It includes the area immediately surrounding the crime or disaster as well as any secondary perimeter established away from the scene that is needed to control access to the scene itself
- B. Supervisor -The supervisor directly responsible for the security of a crime/disaster scene and the support of investigative personnel assigned to the scene. At scenes that require the presence of only one supervisor for command, the supervisor shall act as Incident Commander and have sole authority for control of a scene and ordinarily will be the ranking patrol supervisor
- C. Investigating Deputy -The deputy, assigned to patrol or investigative duties, who assumes primary responsibility for an investigation at a scene and who directs the progress of the investigation.
- D. Scene Commander -Crime/disaster scene, Scene Commander will have overall administrative authority and shall direct activity outside the crime/disaster scene and within any perimeter established to control access to the vicinity of the scene, and should

be accountable for assuring that all reasonable requests for resources are met.

IV. FIRST DEPUTY'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Regardless of the location, nature and extent of the crime/disaster scene, the first deputy to arrive shall have command and control authority and shall:

1. Determine jurisdiction of the incident and request, if appropriate, an officer from the affected jurisdiction
2. Render medical assistance to injured persons
3. Provide for the security of the scene until the arrival of a first-line supervisor or until responsibility for security is assigned to other personnel
 - a. No persons shall be permitted within the scene
 - b. No physical object shall be moved or evidence collected for any reason other than safety or for the prevention of the destruction of evidence until directed by the investigating deputy
 - c. Scenes involving establishments open to the public shall be closed if access to any portion of the establishment interferes with the security of the scene
4. Assess the scene to determine if additional units are needed for security and if support from Criminal Investigations Division and/or the Crime Scene unit are required. If support is necessary, the deputy's first-line supervisor shall be notified

V. OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR

- A. The supervisor notified by the first deputy at a crime/disaster scene shall review the information in order to determine the feasibility of the support requested and whether or not the resources directly under their supervision are sufficient to effectively control the scene. In scenes which require only the presence of one supervisor for effective control, they shall be designated the Incident Commander
- B. The responsibilities of the Operations Supervisor shall include:
 1. Command of the crime/disaster scene unless specifically relieved by a individual of superior rank
 2. All measures to prevent any unauthorized access within the perimeter required to assure Sheriff Office and Loudoun County Fire-Rescue personnel operations may proceed effectively

- a. No persons shall be permitted within a crime scene unless their presence will directly further the investigation being conducted, except personnel involved in a lifesaving role. All persons shall report to the Supervisor before entering the scene
 - b. All persons permitted within a crime scene shall submit a supplemental report providing details of their activity and function at the scene
 - c. Loudoun County Fire-Rescue personnel shall be assisted in performing any lifesaving effort if injured persons are found at the scene and shall not be hampered until their task is concluded. At the time they have completed their duties, the Supervisor shall re-establish restriction of access to the scene, limited only to those actively involved in the investigation.
- 3. Assure that no physical object is moved or collection of evidence occurs, unless at the direction of the investigating deputy
 - 4. Request assistance from Criminal Investigations Division, Crime Scene unit or any other needed support elements
 - 5. Notify and brief the Staff Duty Officer and/or ECC in all circumstances which may be significant for inclusion in the Daily Activity Report or which may require notification of authorities outside the Sheriff's Office
 - 6. Assist the investigating deputy and support elements in the conduct of the investigation. Assistance shall include expediting all reasonable requests for additional resources for conduct of the investigation
 - 7. Establish a command post
 - 8. Assure that ECC personnel are given adequate information so they may provide sufficient assistance
 - 9. Assure that civilians denied passage through the area are given a reasonable explanation of the reason for the denial and are provided directions on other routes they can use to reach their destination. In the case of residents of the area, provide controlled egress to their homes, whenever such egress will not impede or damage the investigation or disrupt the crime scene.

VI. INVESTIGATING DEPUTY

- A. The responsibilities of the investigating deputy whether uniform or plainclothes, shall include:
 - 1. Requesting all support necessary for an adequate investigation

2. Direct all personnel assigned within the scene that are involved in the investigation or processing being conducted
 3. Identify and record all personnel within the scene along with their assigned function
- B. In all scenes in which the investigating deputy is assigned to C.I.D. or Internal Affairs, the appropriate investigative supervisors shall have access to the scene. The supervisor shall determine if additional investigative resources are needed and provide assistance as needed to the investigating deputy

VII. SCENE COMMANDERS

- A. In circumstances in which it becomes apparent to the supervisor that control of a crime/disaster scene will necessitate the use of resources from another shift, the supervisor shall contact the ranking Patrol Supervisor. Whenever possible, the ranking Patrol Supervisor shall respond and coordinate the assignment of personnel and equipment to the scene. The ranking Patrol Supervisor shall be the Scene Commander until otherwise relieved by a higher authority.
- B. The Scene Commander's responsibilities shall include:
1. Overall administrative command of all personnel assigned to duties related to activity within and surrounding the scene
 2. Assist the investigation through the supervisor and provide all reasonable requests for resources for use within the perimeter of the crime/disaster scene
 3. Brief the Sheriff and Chief Deputy or their designee and the Public Information Officer
 4. Request the Public Information Officer to respond and assume responsibility for contact with members of the media present at the scene
 5. The Scene Commander, or their designee, shall record the presence and assignment of all personnel and equipment at the scene, and provide for the relief of personnel and deployment of new personnel assigned to the scene

VIII. CRIME SCENE UNIT

The Crime Scene Investigator (CSI) shall report to the Scene Commander to ensure knowledge of their presence for recording. The CSI shall confer with the investigating deputy before the start of any activity. The investigating deputy shall establish the scope of the processing needed and rely upon the expert knowledge of the CSI for the practical method to be used to complete the processing.