



**Chapter:** Records, Freedom of Information, and Transparency  
**Subject:** 14-11 – Release of Information Regarding Reported Crimes  
**Effective:** April 19, 2022  
**Supersedes:** Official Order 20, Sections 20.2.2C and E, dated August 5, 2019  
**Distribution:** Department Members

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**PURPOSE:** This Order establishes department policy related to the release of information regarding reported crimes.

#### **14-11-1 RELEASING INFORMATION REGARDING REPORTED CRIMES**

- A. Only essential facts of the crime shall be released.
  - (1) The name, age, and city of the victim, as well as the degree of injury or loss may be released if the next of kin has been notified. If the complainant or victim requests this information remain confidential, the request shall be honored.
  - (2) In sexual assault, sexual abuse, child abuse or similar cases where a juvenile has been victimized, the identity of the victim shall be kept confidential.
  - (3) Care shall be exercised in releasing details of an assault or method of operation used in the perpetration of a crime. Report only those facts that are known.
  - (4) There shall be no speculation or supposition as to how a crime was committed, who may have committed the crime, or why it may have been committed.
  - (5) A description of weapons or specific details of a crime shall not be released. In a homicide case, it is sufficient to report just the victim's manner of death (shot, stabbed, etc.)
- B. Keep in mind that withholding certain specific details of a crime is beneficial to later investigation and interrogation.
- C. News releases should inform the public to contact a particular post instead of an individual officer if they have information concerning the crime in question. Post members receiving such information shall forward it immediately to the officer in charge of the investigation.

#### **14-11-2 RELEASING INFORMATION REGARDING A CRIME UNDER INVESTIGATION**

- A. Members shall work in cooperation with the local prosecuting attorney or the Attorney General's Office regarding the release of information to the media concerning incidents under investigation.

- B. The following cautions shall be observed:
- (1) Speculation or supposition shall not be indulged in.
  - (2) Items of evidence discovered shall not be mentioned or commented on.
  - (3) A witness who is located shall not be identified to the news media.
  - (4) Officers shall not stage posed crime scenes for media photographs. Interviews and photographs showing large seizures are permitted in the vicinity of the crime scene, at the worksite, or other suitable location.
- C. The essential facts of a case may be repeated with some further clarification as the case develops, keeping in mind that the above cautions shall be observed.

DIRECTOR

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**Annual Review Responsibility:** Transparency and Accountability Division

**Accreditation Standards:** CALEA 54.1.1 D-E