

CRIME STOPPERS PROGRAM

PREAMBLE:

Omaha Crime Stoppers is a 501(c) 3 Community Program comprised of a board of citizens that includes members from the public, the media, and area law enforcement agencies in the fight against crime. Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards and anonymity to persons who furnish information leading to the arrest of criminal offenders. Crime Stoppers also accepts tips and offers enhanced rewards for information leading to arrests related to certain crimes in an effort to reduce violent crime. Crimes qualifying for enhanced rewards include homicides, felony assault shootings, gun crimes, bank robberies, assaults on First Responders, opioid dealing, pharmaceutical robberies (the robbery of scheduled drugs), and the Gun Bounty Program (arrests made where an illegal firearm is recovered).

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Omaha Police Department (OPD) to participate in and promote the Crime Stoppers Program in an effort to reduce crime in the City of Omaha. The Omaha Crime Stoppers Coordinator (OCSC) within the Public Information Office (PIO) facilitates the program within the Department.

DEFINITIONS:

Funneling: This occurs when an informant reports crime-solving information to a law enforcement employee who notes the information then directs the informant to call Crime Stoppers and act as though the information is not already known to law enforcement. This can be through an unknown source or a known source who wished to remain anonymous, and is strictly prohibited.

PROCEDURE:

I. Crime Stoppers Program — General

- A. Persons with information about criminal activity and/or the identity or location of suspects who have committed a crime who wish to remain completely anonymous are encouraged to contact Crime Stoppers. Tips can be submitted one of three ways:
 - 1. By phone at 402-444-7867 (402-444-STOP).
 - 2. Online at www.omahacrimestoppers.org.
 - 3. Via the mobile app “P3Tips” available at www.omahacrimestoppers.org.
- B. Anonymity of the tip provider is an absolute priority and critical to the program. Persons with information will be advised that their identity will not be revealed by Crime Stoppers, law enforcement, or the media; however, the anonymity of the tip provider cannot be guaranteed in the following circumstances:
 - 1. The person discloses their own identity by agreeing to appear as a witness in a criminal proceeding.
 - 2. The person tells others they provided the information.
 - 3. The person fails to follow the Crime Stoppers procedures.
 - 4. The person’s call is, in and of itself, part of a criminal act or scheme (e.g., person calling in with a bomb threat or other terroristic threat).

- C. Tips may be submitted in Spanish and/or other languages. The Call Center has access to translation services 24/7.
- D. All reward payments are approved by the Crime Stoppers Board. After tips have been approved for payment, tipsters are given a password and instructions on how to pick up their cash reward anonymously through a secure bank location previously set by the Crime Stoppers Board.

II. Crime Stoppers Enhanced Rewards

- A. The Omaha Crime Stoppers program offers enhanced rewards for information leading to the arrest of suspects for the following crimes:
 - 1. Homicides. A \$25,000 reward is offered for information leading to the solving of a homicide case that results in the arrest of the homicide suspect(s).
 - 2. Homicide Fugitive. A \$5,000 reward is offered for information that results in the arrest of homicide fugitive(s).
 - 3. Felony Assault Shootings. A \$10,000 reward is offered for information leading to the solving of a felony assault shooting case that results in the arrest of felony assault shooting suspects.
 - 4. Pharmacy Robberies in which Pharmaceuticals (i.e., scheduled drugs) are stolen. A \$2,500 reward is offered for information leading to the solving of a pharmacy robbery in which pharmaceuticals are stolen that results in the arrest of the suspect(s).
 - 5. Bank Robberies. A reward of \$20,000 is offered for information leading to the solving of a bank robbery case that results in the arrest of the bank robbery suspect(s).
 - 6. Credit Union Robberies. A reward of \$10,000 is offered for information leading to the solving of a credit union robbery case that results in the arrest of the credit union robbery suspect(s).
 - 7. Opioid Dealers. A reward of \$5,000 is offered for information leading to the arrest of an Opioid Dealer suspect(s).
 - 8. Possession of Illegal Firearms (referred to as the Gun Bounty Program). A reward of \$1,000 is offered for information leading to the arrest of suspects who are in possession of illegal firearms.
 - a. The Gun Bounty Program awards apply to information about the following categories of firearms:
 - (1) Stolen firearms.
 - (2) Altered firearms.
 - (3) Firearms in the hands of convicted felons.
 - (4) Firearms used in violent crimes.
 - (5) Firearms in the possession of gang members.
 - (6) Firearms in the possession of persons convicted of domestic violence.

9. Assaults on First Responders. A reward of \$2,500 is offered for information leading to the arrest of the suspect(s) wanted for assaulting a First Responder.
- B. Command officers will present cleared tips to their Captain for approval prior to “Tip Disposition” when the possible/requested payment amount is \$10,000 or more.

III. Crime Stoppers Coordination

- A. The PIO command officer will designate an OPD officer as the Omaha Crime Stoppers Coordinator (OCSC). The OCSC will:
 1. Coordinate and disseminate information within the OPD.
 2. Maintain the Crime Stoppers P3 Tips Account. This includes making certain the account users/recipients are up-to-date and accurate, protecting participants’ anonymity, and documenting and maintaining tips and information, etc.
 3. Coordinate information with the Crime Stoppers Board.
 4. Work as a liaison with the media to encourage participation in the Crime Stoppers Program.
 5. Coordinate speaking engagements and events with various community organizations.

IV. Crime Stoppers Tip Procedures

- A. The OCSC or the operator who receives the tip will assign the caller a code number. This must be done even if callers indicate that they do not want a code number.
 1. If callers indicate they would prefer to call back with additional details, they must still be assigned a code number to use when they call back.
- B. The OCSC or operator who receives the tip shall never request any identifying information from the person providing the tip other than their code number.
- C. The Crime Stoppers line is staffed 24-hours-per-day, seven-days-per-week with the use of a Call Center. Upon receiving a call and interviewing the tipster, the Crime Stoppers operator will evaluate the tipster’s information and enter the information into the P3 Tips Account.
 1. The OCSC will assign the tip to a command officer, who will make certain the tip is followed-up on.
- D. Tips to the Crime Stoppers line will be forwarded to an appropriate investigative or UPB patrol unit as quickly as possible.
 1. Time-Sensitive tips regarding gun possession will be routed expeditiously. These types of tips will be forwarded by the OCSC to the appropriate investigative or UPB patrol unit as quickly as possible.
 2. Tips to the Crime Stoppers line regarding the current location of a violent felon or violent wanted person shall be forwarded to the OPD Fugitive Squad Sergeant (or designee).
 - a. If a UPB officer is inadvertently dispatched as a result of a Crime Stoppers tip call to apprehend a violent felon or violent wanted person, the officer who is dispatched should immediately contact the Fugitive Squad Sergeant via cell phone (See [Appendix A](#) for the phone number).

- b. The Fugitive Squad Sergeant (or designee) will provide further direction regarding how to proceed.
- 3. Tips to the Crime Stoppers line regarding non-violent suspect apprehension or fugitives wanted for property crimes may be dispatched to UPB for immediate follow-up.
- 4. Tips to the Crime Stoppers line regarding the collection of evidence (ex. firearm) shall be forwarded directly to the CIB Console Operator or Field Investigations. (See [Appendix A](#) for phone numbers).
- E. The investigative unit/officer to whom the tip is assigned has 30 days from the date the tip was taken to respond to the information.
 - 1. If more time is needed to investigate the tip, the person to whom the tip is assigned will advise the OCSC or will make a notation in the P3 Tips Account so that tipsters can be updated on the status of the tip if they call back and inquire about their reward.
 - 2. If a response is not received within 30 days, the OCSC will advise the unit commander that a disposition is needed to make certain the tip was followed-up on.
- F. Officers will be certain to take steps to maintain the anonymity of the tip provider if the identity or any identifying information about the tip provider is discovered in the course of the investigation.
- G. Anonymous Calls.
 - 1. Anonymous callers who wish to be considered for a Crime Stoppers reward will sometimes call OPD employees directly instead of the Crime Stoppers Tip Line. When this occurs, employees shall:
 - a. Advise the tipster that if they wish to remain anonymous, the employee will not take additional steps to identify the tipster.
 - (1) For example, the employee will not utilize Caller ID to identify the phone number from which the tipster is calling.
 - b. Inform the tipster that they must contact the Crime Stoppers Tip Line immediately upon completion of the phone call if they want to be considered for a Crime Stoppers reward.
 - (1) The employee will provide the tipster with three ways to contact the Crime Stoppers reward program.
 - (a) These include tips by phone, tips by computer, and tips by mobile tip app. Details are available on the [Omaha Crime Stoppers website](#).
 - c. If the employee is a sworn officer, the officer should obtain as much investigative information as possible from the tipster, as if attempting to qualify the information for a search warrant.
 - (1) No information such as gender, race, relationship to the suspect, etc., that could reveal the tipster's identity will be contained in supplemental reports.

- (2) Remember, the tipster may be calling anonymously out of fear of retaliation, so this may be the first and last time an officer may speak to the caller. Therefore, the officer should get as much information as possible.
 - (3) The employee taking the tip will contact the Crime Stoppers Coordinator as soon as possible to advise them of the situation.
2. Under no circumstances shall an employee offer the Crime Stoppers Tip Line information to an anonymous caller when the caller does not request Crime Stoppers reward information, nor to a caller who has been identified.
3. Employees are strictly prohibited from purposely funneling informants to contact the Crime Stoppers program after the informant has already provided the relevant information. Doing so subjects the Crime Stoppers Board to paying charitable reward funds to a person who is not entitled to receive such funds.
4. When a sworn officer receives information from an informant, whether or not the informant wishes to remain anonymous, and the officer wishes to pay the informant for providing reliable information, the officer will consult with their Shift or Unit Lieutenant to determine if the Confidential Informant Fund may be utilized.

V. Tip Disposition Procedures

- A. Tips that have led to the arrest of a suspect will be documented as “Cleared by Arrest” in the P3 Tips Account for the disposition.
- B. If assigned by the OCSC, officers/detectives may log into the P3 Tips program and update the tip disposition. They can click on the disposition update link on the bottom of the P3 PDF tip, or they can email the OCSC to close out the tip.
- C. Tip dispositions must include the following details:
 1. The officer’s/detective’s name.
 2. The RB number.
 3. A list of any property, narcotics, or money recovered from the arrest.
 4. Whether a weapon was recovered.
 5. If the tip is eligible for an enhanced reward.
 6. The suspect(s)’s name(s), date(s) of birth, and listed charges.
- D. Command officers will track assigned tips and the disposition of each tip.
- E. In cases where multiple tips were received and led to an arrest, detectives will notify the OCSC of which tip was received first and which tip they felt was the most helpful in solving the case for tips that qualify for payment.

REFERENCES:

I. Previous OPD Orders

- A. Previous General Orders: #29-89, 39-89, 1-02, 1-02 Supplement #1, 36-14, 67-17, 67-17 Supplement #1, 8-18, 40-20, and 45-21.

II. Accreditation Standards

- A. CALEA Accreditation standard 82.2.5 is relevant to this policy.

III. Other

- A. PPM Monthly Updates: #1-2023.