


**The Pennsylvania State University
Police and Public Safety Department**

POLICY AND PROCEDURAL ORDER

SUBJECT 6.14 Criminal Investigation Procedures		
CALEA REF. 42.1.1, 42.1.4, 42.1.5, 42.2.1, 42.2.2, 42.2.7	EFFECTIVE DATE 2/18/20	REVISED DATE 11/1/23
APPROVED BY Chief of Police and Public Safety, Wesley Sheets 		ASSIGNED TO GROUP(S): 6

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for The Pennsylvania State University Police and Public Safety (UPPS) Department to provide thorough investigation of criminal cases.

II. POLICY

Officers who respond to a complaint of a criminal nature are responsible for all preliminary investigation of the incident. The initial officer dispatched to a complaint generally will be the officer primarily responsible for the investigation. Absent a response by a supervisor, the primary officer should also coordinate the efforts of additional officers who respond to the same complaint. Officers are expected to complete all aspects of cases they are assigned. Cases may be reassigned to another officer as circumstances warrant.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Habitual Offender** - Any person who has plead guilty or has been convicted of two or more felonies or three or more misdemeanor/summary charges arising out of separate incidents will be considered a habitual offender (42.1.5a).
- B. **Serious Offender** - Any person who has committed a felony crime of violence, is considered a serious offender.

IV. PROCEDURE

- A. Preliminary Investigation (42.1.4)
 - 1. The preliminary investigation is normally a sworn officer function performed by the officer in response to a report that a crime has occurred. The purpose of a preliminary investigation is to determine if in fact a crime has occurred, who committed it, the details of what happened, who witnessed it, and what physical evidence is present. Officers will conduct preliminary investigations on all incidents except those incidents reported directly to investigative personnel or when otherwise directed by a supervisor.
 - 2. If a security officer (no police officer on campus) comes across a crime in progress contact the local responding authority for immediate assistance. For crimes that have already occurred, hold the scene and contact the appropriate supervisor.
 - 3. The initial officer is responsible for the following tasks unless directed otherwise by a supervisor:
 - a. Be alert for possible suspects leaving the scene while in route to the scene.
 - b. Be observant, recording conditions, remarks, and events taking place when arriving on the scene (42.2.1a).
 - c. Care for injured persons. The officer may be required to give first aid in addition to calling for emergency medical response.
 - d. Evaluate and determine if the scene is safe and relay to any further responding officers or personnel if there is a possibility of any unsafe conditions.

- e. Secure and maintain the security of the crime scene. The primary officer is responsible for requesting assistance as necessary to secure a crime scene. For serious crime scenes, establish an entry point and maintain a crime scene log.
 - f. Officers should also be aware that a secondary scene might exist (i.e., vehicle interior or on the person of a victim or suspect) and make a supervisor or other officers aware of the need for the security of that scene as well.
 - g. Identify, preserve and collect evidence. Officers are responsible for the proper collection and marking of evidence in a manner that will not alter or contaminate it. Officers will request assistance for the collection of certain evidence that may require specialized methods of recovery. All recovered evidence will be transported to the evidence room as soon as practicable. All evidence must be placed into temporary evidence storage prior to the end of their shift in accordance with the Evidence Handling Policy 8.2 (42.2.1c).
 - h. Identify the nature of the offense, identify the victim, witnesses, and potential suspects and make sure they are appropriately separated before being interviewed (42.2.1b).
 - i. Take suspect(s) into custody if appropriate and arrange for a timely removal from the scene. Officers will notify other officers (if available) and investigators of any statements made by the suspect and if the suspect has invoked her/his constitutional rights.
 - j. Gather and transmit any information to other officers if necessary, concerning fleeing suspects or vehicles.
 - k. Interview all complainants, victims, witnesses, and suspects and obtain complete identifying information and how they were identified. Obtain names, addresses and phone numbers of any other persons in the area of the scene and determine if they may be witnesses. Officers are also responsible for confirming that the person who reported the incident to communications (if applicable) is contacted to determine if he or she has witness information (42.2.1d).
 - i. Officers will obtain all pertinent information from witnesses at the scene, including the correct names, addresses and contact phone numbers to assure the ability to recontact them at a later time for additional interviews, subpoena service, etc.
 - ii. Officers will obtain and accurately document and record all pertinent facts and details of the incident in the investigative case report.
 - l. Initiate the written case report. The primary officer is also responsible for coordinating efforts of additional officers filing supplemental reports.
4. Although not assigned on-duty shifts throughout a 24-hour period, an employee from the Criminal Investigations Unit will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for any incident requiring investigative assistance or consultation (42.1.1).
- a. When investigative assistance is necessary, contact the appropriate supervisor. If further assistance is needed, contact the Communications Center at University Park to inquire the on-shift availability of a Criminal Investigator. If an Investigator is not currently on shift, contact (via the Communications Center), will be made to the Criminal Investigations Unit (CIU) supervisor for assistance.

B. Follow-up Investigation (42.1.4)

1. Cases requiring follow-up investigation may be returned to the officer submitting the original report. However, supervisors will use the following criteria in determining whether a case will be forwarded to the CIU supervisor for assignment:
 - a. Investigations involving the need for an investigator to travel outside of their assigned campus or local area;
 - b. Investigations requiring expertise beyond that of the investigating officer; or
 - c. Investigations requiring an investment of time that would not normally be available to an officer.
2. Investigating officers assigned to a case will also be responsible for further necessary investigation and collection of information. Methods used to gather information might include:
 - a. Gathering information from officers, informants, other department reports or reports from other agencies, particularly on the same suspect (42.2.2a)
 - b. Obtaining laboratory reports or reports from other forensic specialists (42.2.2a);
 - c. Conducting additional interviews and/or interrogations (42.2.b);
 - d. Seeking clarifying or additional information (i.e., from other responding officers or informants) (42.2.2c);
 - e. Developing additional witnesses;
 - f. Identifying, apprehending, and interrogating the suspect(s) (42.2.2e);
 - g. Seeing criminal history data of suspect(s)
 - h. Determining involvement of suspects in other crimes (42.2.2f); and
 - i. Determining if there are related crimes or patterns that suggest serial activity (42.2.2g).
3. Investigating officers are also responsible for planning, organizing, and conducting searches, collecting evidence, and ensuring that evidence seized (42.2.2d):
 - a. Was seized legally;
 - b. Is properly preserved, collected and identified; and
 - c. The chain of custody is maintained and documented.

C. Court Preparation (42.2.2h)

1. The investigator assigned to a case will be responsible for contacting Records to coordinate submitting and disseminating all proper paperwork to the appropriate district attorney's office. The complete case report including the following documents:
 - a. Two copies of the investigative case report;
 - b. Warrant request form;
 - c. Criminal history;
 - d. Completed petition form for juvenile offenders;
 - e. Photos, diagrams, and other visual aids;
 - f. Audio recordings including calls to the communications center; and
 - g. Any other pertinent documents.
2. If the District Attorney's office needs evidence, contact the appropriate Evidence Custodian.

3. The case report (documents included) will be secured at the appropriate District Attorney's office in accordance with their office protocol. Receipt of case reports is tracked by the DA, and may typically include the date of receipt, agency and charges requested.
- D. Criminal Investigation Procedures – General
1. Information development is concerned primarily with the collecting and recording of facts surrounding the offense. Facts about persons, things, actions, times, places, methods, and means are of concern in information development and may be obtained by:
 - a. Review of preliminary reports;
 - b. Background investigations;
 - c. Review of university records;
 - d. Review of applicable statutes; and
 - e. Contact with informants.
 2. Investigations
 - a. Generally, background investigations are conducted on suspect(s) to obtain relevant information about them for use during the course of the investigation.
 - b. Information obtained from a background investigation may be helpful in establishing motive, reliability, and methods to be used in the investigative process.
- E. Habitual/Serious Offenders
1. Officers and investigators will request a Criminal History Record inquiry through NCIC for all persons arrested (42.1.5b).
 2. A supervisor will review each report and will ensure the appropriate District Attorney is aware of the information (42.1.5c).
- F. Cold Case Investigations
1. Cold cases are defined as violent "crime against person" cases, either recently inactivated or old, that have not been solved (42.2.7a).
 2. Evaluating the criteria for investigating cold cases is used as a bases for assessing and measuring the potential success of solving an unsolved crime. These criteria generally includes but is not limited to the following (42.2.7b):
 - a. Legal considerations, such as the application or expansion of statutes of limitations;
 - b. Technological considerations, such as the availability of witnesses and chain of custody;
 - c. Practical considerations, such as time, money, and personnel available for investigation and forensic analysis;
 - d. Resource considerations, such as time, money and personnel available for investigation and forensic analysis.
 3. The actions and activities of the cold case investigation generally include but are not limited to (42.2.7c):
 - a. Identifying potential unsolved cases and establish priorities such as solvability factors and statutes of limitation.
 - b. Reviewing case files, evidence logs, laboratory reports and autopsy reports;
 - c. Evaluating the case evidence for potential probative DNA sources.

- d. Consulting with appropriate labs and District Attorney's office in submitting appropriate evidence to the laboratory for testing;
- e. Identifying and re-interviewing all witnesses and potential suspects in the case;
- f. If DNA or other evidentiary analysis is to be conducted, obtaining voluntary reference samples from suspects and other identified subjects for elimination;
- g. If a DNA profile does not match suspect's DNA profile, submitting the evidence profile to CODIS;
- h. Submitting investigative intelligence to State and Federal profiling repositories for information such as the FBI's VICAP (Violent Criminal Apprehension Program)

Updates:

- 9/28/23
 - Title changes made
- 11/1/23
 - Section IV.A.4.a updated