



**CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS: RESPONSE, SCENE PROCESSING,
 AND CASE MANAGEMENT**

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the efficient and effective management of the criminal investigative function and the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) by providing administrative guidance that identifies the responsibilities and investigative processes beginning with the patrol division and culminating with the Criminal Investigations Division.

Topics covered within this policy include personnel responsibilities for carrying out the investigative function, notification to CID and required response, crime scene processing, a description of our case management system, and how cases are tracked and followed up upon.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of this agency to manage the function of criminal investigations in an effective and efficient manner by coordinating the efforts of patrol and CID for proper case management and to increase the opportunity for a successful conclusion of a reported crime.

III. DEFINITIONS

Crime Scene: The location(s) at which a crime has been committed and/or where evidence of a crime is located or presumed to be located, and the site(s) of accidents and suspicious incidents where foul play could be involved.

Crime Scene Log: A written record of all people who enter a secured crime scene to include their identity and the date and time of their entry and exit.

Criminal Investigation: The collection of facts and information intended to identify an offender and to organize facts and information in a way that presents evidence sufficient for criminal charges.

Criminal Investigations Division (CID): The unit within the Sheriff's Office staffed by personnel assigned to felony and other time intensive investigations. CID has traditionally been

comprised of multiple Investigators, supervised by a Lieutenant.

Electronic Media: Video or audio signals recorded on any type of storage device.

Electronic Recording: A digital, electronic video or other recording on electronic media.

Evidence Technician: An officer that is certified after successfully completing the DCJS Police Crime Scene and Evidence Specialist Course.

Preliminary Investigation: The preliminary crime-scene investigation and recording of information that will subsequently be turned over to CID for further investigation and follow-up. It is generally the responsibility of first responding deputies, although in some instances Investigators may be assigned or included in this function.

Primary Investigator: The Investigator assigned primary responsibility and accountability for an investigation.

Real or Physical Evidence: Any material in either gross or trace quantities collected at a crime scene for examination and analysis.

IV. PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION

A. PROCEDURE

1. Activities during the preliminary investigation should center on the protection of persons, collection of evidence, apprehension of criminals at or near the crime scene, and solving the reported crime. During the preliminary investigation, first-responding deputies should perform the following duties in order and to the degree deemed appropriate.
 - a. Make the crime scene as safe as possible.
 - b. Notify the 911 dispatch center concerning injured parties and any dangerous conditions present, and request appropriate medical assistance and additional equipment, services or personnel needed.
 - c. Determine if a crime was committed by statute.
 - d. Assist the injured pending arrival of EMS. In serious cases, a deputy should be assigned to accompany the victim or the suspect to the medical care facility when possible and remain with him or her to record information on the incident.
 - e. Take accurate written notes whenever possible.
 - f. Establish a crime scene perimeter, and secure the crime scene to the degree possible in order to protect it until such time as it can be further processed.
 - g. Initiating a crime scene log when needed to track personnel entering and exiting the crime scene.

B. PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION CASE MANAGEMENT

1. Deputies should pursue preliminary investigations to the full extent of their available time and investigative training. In most minor property crimes, patrol personnel should

assume responsibility for the crime scene and conduct any on-scene and follow-up investigation that may be deemed necessary.

2. The preliminary investigation shall, whenever possible, be completed by the end of the shift in which it occurs. The shift supervisor shall review, approve as appropriate, and forward the preliminary investigative report to CID when necessary and as soon as practicable.
3. In exceptional instances, when timely completion of the report is not possible, the supervisor should ensure that a draft report of the incident is completed and ensure that CID is aware of it and has the necessary information to initiate a follow-up.
4. The Road Patrol Sergeant on duty at the time will be required to make administrative notifications in accordance with *G.O. 702 Administrative Notifications*.
5. When on-duty or on-call, a member of CID will be required to immediately respond to the victim or scene (unless the investigation requires an alternative response) for the following incident types:
 - a. Motor vehicle collision resulting in serious physical injury or death with more than one involved party or a suspected criminal component.
 - b. Rape/felony sex offense.
 - c. Shots fired with a possible suspect or multiple witnesses.
 - d. Felony assault.
 - e. Homicide.
 - f. Suspicious death/suicide/death of a child.
 - g. Missing person with special circumstances.
 - h. Burglary:
 - When a resident was home at the time.
 - When an injury occurred to a person involved.
 - The value of the item(s) stolen was of high value or consisted of firearms.
 - Fingerprints or DNA evidence are available.
 - Robbery.
 - i. Child Abuse:
 - When the allegations are of a sexual nature.
 - When signs of physical injury are present.
 - When the suspect is present or immediately available.
 - When time is of the essence.
 - j. Kidnapping/Abduction.
 - k. Hate crime.
 - l. Any incident creating, or risking, civil disorder.
 - m. Hostage.
 - n. Serious physical injury to/death of an on-duty TCSO member.
 - o. Serious physical Injury/death of an inmate.
 - p. Prisoner/inmate escape.
 - q. Officer Involved Shooting, or Defensive Action resulting in serious physical injury or death.
 - r. Need for and/or service of a search warrant.

- s. Any incident that has an extraordinary amount of witnesses, multiple crime scenes, or would otherwise exasperate road patrol resources.

C. INVESTIGATORY RESPONSIBILITY

1. If a Lieutenant (from any division/unit) becomes involved in one of the above referenced investigations, he or she will assume supervision of both Investigatory and road patrol resources. Should the Road Patrol and CID Lieutenants both become involved, the two will work together, with the Road Patrol Lieutenant managing Road Patrol resources and the CID Lieutenant taking overall control of the investigation.
2. If an Investigator responds in the absence of a Lieutenant, the Investigator will take responsibility for the overall investigation, to include:
 - a. Ongoing notifications through the chain of command.
 - b. Ensuring crime scene safety and security, to include a crime scene log if not already started.
 - c. Conducting witness, victim, and suspect interviews, to include recorded interviews, written depositions, and written voluntary statements.
 - d. Conducting suspect identification procedures, i.e., line ups and photo arrays.
 - e. Drafting and serving of any necessary search warrants.
 - f. Crime scene photography.
 - g. Evidence identification and collection.
 - h. Preparing accusatory instruments and arrest warrants.
 - i. Case file management and supplemental reporting beyond the initial response.
 - j. Communication with the District Attorney's Office and/or external Investigatory agencies or resources.
3. Should a deputy be utilized for any of these tasks, it will be arranged through the on-duty Road Patrol Sergeant. Regardless of who handles a task, the Investigator will remain responsible for ensuring proper task completeness and approving the resulting work product.
4. Should ongoing support from deputies be needed by members of CID to complete tasks relevant to the investigation, the request will be made through the Road Patrol Lieutenant by the CID Lieutenant.

V. CID AVAILABILITY, NOTIFICATION AND RESPONSE

A. CID AVAILABILITY AND ON-CALL SCHEDULING

1. The Sheriff's Office will have an Investigator on duty in accordance with the schedule identified in our collective bargaining agreement. Outside normally scheduled hours of work, the Lieutenant in charge of CID will maintain an on-call schedule to be used for after-hours needs.
2. The Sheriff, at his/her discretion, may provide CID members with assigned take-home vehicles for use while an Investigator is working on-call. When on-call, the Investigator will have their assigned vehicle stocked with all items necessary to respond directly to a

crime scene, to include a portable radio, laptop computer, portable printer, bodycam, camera, evidence collection supplies, measuring devices etc. This section is the same as that previously conveyed under *G.O. 1002 CID Availability & Response*.

3. Regardless of the time of day, responding members of CID will report dressed in accordance with *G.O. 703 Uniforms and Personal Appearance*.
4. If it is determined that additional investigatory resources are needed after hours, the on-call Investigator will notify the CID Lieutenant to make the request.

VI. CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT

A. INITIAL RESPONSE

1. The first responding deputy or senior member at the crime scene shall ensure that the following tasks are performed as appropriate and in the order deemed necessary.
 - a. Make a careful and limited walk-through of the crime scene first to secure the location from the threat of perpetrators. Thoroughly assess the scene for hazards, including bloodborne pathogens, explosives, firearms, flammable materials, natural gas, chemicals, and other toxic substances. Relay information on the nature of any dangerous situations to the 911 dispatch center and other responding personnel.
 - b. Take all measures possible not to disturb potential sources of evidence such as footprints or tire marks, or to not cross contaminate potential sources of DNA evidence. Identify paths of entry and retrace the path when existing.
 - c. Be aware of people and vehicles in the vicinity. Record vehicle license plate numbers in close proximity to the crime scene and, where possible and appropriate, video record same. Assess the overall extent and severity of the incident; note the location of evidence in plain view and the location of weapons in particular. Assist the injured, call for medical assistance if required, and request other appropriate police backup as needed.
 - d. Where human bodies are encountered, make a direct approach to the victim, assess their condition, request medical assistance, and provide emergency first aid if feasible. Where dead bodies are encountered, do not move the victim, until cleared by a medical examiner. Retrace the path of entrance when exiting the crime scene and document the original position of the victim(s).
 - e. Attempt to secure a “dying declaration” from any victims on the verge of death.
 - f. Secure the crime scene utilizing physical barriers such as crime scene tape, cones, vehicles etc. and initiate a crime scene log to record and identify any persons who access the scene before or after arrival. All persons irrespective of rank who enter the crime scene are required to obtain approval of the person in charge of the scene and to be recorded on the crime scene log.
 - g. Direct emergency service providers into the scene, pointing out potential sources of evidence and dangers. Remind medical providers to preserve items of clothing etc. Record their activities and the victim’s condition and position when found. Instruct medical personnel to not unnecessarily alter the scene.
 - h. If a victim or suspect is transported to a medical facility, send a law enforcement member for security if possible to document any comments, and preserve

evidence and chain of custody.

- i. Cause suspects and witnesses to be secured and separated to protect individual testimony and prevent them, and other third parties, from entering or re-entering the crime scene.
- j. Create identified points of entry and exit. The perimeter should be expansive enough to reasonably ensure that evidence of the crime will be contained and protected. Keep persons other than those directly involved in the investigation outside the crime scene perimeter.
- k. Take appropriate steps to protect the scene from degradation due to weather conditions such as rain, snow or wind.
- l. If victims, firearms, or other items at the scene must be touched for safety related reasons, put on latex or other non-porous gloves.
- m. Ensure that persons do not smoke, chew tobacco, use the telephone or bathroom at the scene, or otherwise eat, drink, move any items, adjust windows, doors, or thermostats, reposition, or discard items other than those related to medical service providers.

B. CRIME SCENE PROCESSING

1. The scope of crime scene processing is dictated by the seriousness of the crime and the complexity of the scene. For crimes that do not require the assistance of an Investigator or other specialized crime scene technician, or where exigent circumstances demand that immediate steps be taken to preserve evidence, those assigned to process the scene shall be prepared to do the following:
 - a. Locate and preserve items of evidence to include those in and out of plain view.
 - b. Photograph, video record, or sketch the crime scene to include measurements when warranted.
 - c. Package, transport, and prepare evidence to be submitted for laboratory examination when necessary.
 - d. Brief arriving supervisors or Investigators if summoned to the scene, review actions taken thus far by all first responders, the evidence located, witnesses identified, and victims or suspects located and/or identified.
 - e. Prepare the initial incident report unless otherwise directed by a supervisor. Items to include are information on the time of arrival, appearance and conditions upon arrival, any items at the scene that are known to have been moved, modified or touched, information on witnesses, victims, and suspects, and any statements or comments made, as well as actions taken by first responders.

C. CRIME SCENE ASSESSMENT

1. The person in charge of processing the crime scene shall develop an investigative plan and assign specific responsibilities for processing the crime scene.
 - a. Evaluate the measures and steps that have been taken already, to include safety procedures, perimeter security and access control, the adequacy of resources, whether witnesses or suspects have been identified, and the degree to which preliminary documentation of the scene has been made.
 - b. Conduct a crime scene walkthrough in cooperation with the first responder and

- individuals responsible for assisting in processing the scene further to identify any threats to scene integrity, and conduct an initial identification of evidence.
- c. Determine the need for a search warrant prior to further evidence collection.
 - d. Assess the overall scene prior to evidence collection in order to develop a plan for working within the scene without unnecessarily destroying or contaminating evidence.
 - e. Identify evidence collection and documentation team members to include specialists, those assigned to search, photograph, collect DNA or fingerprints, sketch, and log items of evidence.
 - f. Identify protective equipment and clothing that are required to safely process the scene.
 - g. Identify a separate area if needed for equipment and personnel staging, gathering and sanitizing tools, equipment, and personal protective gear between collections.
 - h. Determine the search method to be used and the point at which the search will begin, and establish a working route around the scene to minimize disruption and contamination.
 - i. If possible, secure the scene in such a way, and reroute pedestrian and vehicular traffic if necessary, so as to prevent uninvolved community members from being traumatized from viewing the scene.
 - j. Develop with others involved a collection plan for identified items of evidence detailing the process and the order of collection. This may include focusing initially on easily accessible areas in open view and working outward, selecting a systematic search pattern, and selecting the best progression of processing and collecting so as not to compromise subsequent processing and collection efforts.

D. EVIDENCE COLLECTION

1. The Sheriff's Office provides the equipment necessary to properly process crime scenes. All members have access to a digital camera, documentation forms, packaging materials and labels, crime scene tape, latex gloves, and masks. Additionally, Investigators are issued fingerprint kits, DNA collection kits, alternative light source devices, chemical processing supplies, photo markers/rules, Tyvek suits, and surveillance equipment.
2. Evidence technicians shall, upon their arrival at a crime scene, assume responsibility for the collection and preservation of evidence. When more than one evidence technician is assigned to a crime scene, the initial responding evidence technician shall have primary responsibility for processing the scene. Physical evidence at crime scenes shall be collected and preserved in accordance with established procedures taught in the Evidence Technician Course, and in accordance with established procedures.
3. The location and condition of all items of evidence shall be documented in an evidence log and by means of photographs and/or sketches, and when necessary video recording. All should be done to maintain evidence at the scene securely and in a manner that will prevent degradation and preserve the chain of custody.
4. Sketches may be drawn to accurately depict the location and placement of evidence. They may be made in addition to photographs or video recordings made of the scene as directed by the lead Investigator. Sketches should include the following information:

- a. General layout.
 - b. Case number.
 - c. Title or description of area.
 - d. Date.
 - e. Sketchers name.
 - f. Scale of measurement (to scale or not to scale).
 - g. Location of items or other significant features.
 - h. Compass direction.
 - i. Names of streets and/or landmarks.
 - j. Person who prepared the final diagram.
 - k. Person(s) who took measurements.
5. Photographs and/or video recordings of the overall crime scene should be considered. Use long-range, medium-range, and close-up shots to show how objects relate to each other and the scene as a whole. When indicated, individual photographs should be taken of items in the position found prior to collection.
6. Photographs should be taken of tool marks, footprints, tire marks, blood spatter, serial numbers, latent fingerprints prior to being lifted, and any other items of potential evidentiary value when possible. It is recommended that two photographs of sufficient quality to serve as a permanent record be taken in series, the first in the true or natural state and the second one with a scale. A ruler or other appropriate measuring instrument should be used for scaled photographs.
7. Photographs or a series of video recordings taken for scene documentation and evidence processing should be documented on a Photo Log. The Photo Log will include the Case #, Date, Time, Photographer Name, Incident Type, Location, and the subject/brief description of each. If an officer is utilizing the Photo Log generated in FLEX when uploading the photographs to the case file they must ensure that all of the aforementioned information is included.
8. The intent in taking photographs and/or videos is to provide a true representation of an incident in compliance with legal court standards.
9. All personnel should refer to our agencies "Major Crime Scene – Search Warrant Administrative Packet" for related forms that can be utilized. Depending on the seriousness of the crime, all, some, or none of these forms may be used. This packet includes:
- a. Administrative Worksheet.
 - b. Entry Log.
 - c. Photo Log.
 - d. Crime Scene Sketch Template.
 - e. Latent Lift Log.
 - f. DNA Recovery Log
 - g. Evidence Recovery Log.
 - h. Property Evidence Custody Report

10. Entry logs should be completed for any crime scene that CID is requested to respond to and all unattended death scenes unless there are clearly no suspicious circumstances. An entry log shall be completed for all infant deaths, regardless of the underlying circumstances.
11. Some items of evidence may require special handling and packaging and should be examined for trace evidence prior to packaging. When in doubt concerning appropriate collection or packaging procedures, members shall request assistance from an Investigator or supervisor.
12. For packaging of specific type of evidence, refer to *G.O. 205 Property/Evidence Management*.
13. The collection of firearms and related evidence should be conducted in a manner that will ensure the safety of all personnel involved and the integrity of the items.
 - a. If a firearm must be moved to protect it as evidence or because it cannot be safeguarded, its location and position should be accurately marked and photographed where found if possible. The condition of the weapon, the number of cartridges contained, and the position of safety shall be recorded.
 - b. If moving the firearm, lift it by grasping gently on the serrated surface of the handle. Never insert a pencil or other object into the barrel to lift or move as it may destroy evidence inside the barrel. The weapon must be placed in an appropriate container.
 - c. Generally, firearms should be unloaded before being transported as evidence. If it must be transported in a loaded state, because the firearm is damaged, for instance, it shall be plainly tagged to indicate this fact.
 - d. When unloading a revolver, the position of the cylinder shall be recorded, as should the markings on cartridges and conditions of primers.
 - e. Fired bullets and cartridges should be protected and photographed, and their relative positions from each other and from fixed locations sketched and photographed before collection and packaging.
 - f. Bullets should not be pried from objects or surfaces unless absolutely necessary. Removing entire portions of the objects in which bullets are embedded should be considered as an option.
14. Evidence suitable for DNA analysis can be found at many crime scenes and is a powerful tool for linking a suspect to a crime, eliminating people as suspects, and identifying victims. All members should remain aware of common sources of DNA evidence, ways to protect against contamination of samples, and basic collection and packaging guidelines. Blood and semen are the two most common sources of DNA evidence, however, other body tissues and fluids can be used for analysis even if collected in microscopic amounts.
15. DNA is particularly sensitive and subject to contamination. First responders must be familiar with situations that will degrade, destroy, or contaminate DNA evidence and should:
 - a. Wear a mask to avoid contamination through talking, sneezing or coughing over

evidence when necessary.

- b. Change gloves between collecting samples in different areas.
- c. Familiarize themselves with common sources of potential DNA evidence, and possible locations of DNA evidence.

16. Microscopic and trace evidence almost always require standards of comparison to be of value. Examples include:

- a. Pulled pubic hair from a suspect to compare with hair evidence combed from the victim.
- b. A vehicle paint chip located at the scene of a hit-and-run.
- c. Vegetation, such as weeds, near the scene of a homicide to compare with the seedpods found in the cuffs of a suspect.

E. RELEASING THE CRIME SCENE

1. Prior to releasing the crime scene, the person in charge of the scene processing should ensure that the following steps are taken to the degree an in the order deemed appropriate:
 - a. Conduct a debriefing of members assisting in crime scene processing to share information and review evidence collected.
 - b. Complete a final walk-through of the scene to determine if any items of evidentiary value have been overlooked, and to ensure the gathering of equipment or materials that should not be left behind.
 - c. Determine when, and to whom, the scene can be released.
 - d. Be prepared to discuss preliminary findings, priorities for follow-up investigation, and identify potential forensic tests needed.

VII. AFTER-ACTION REVIEW

A. CONDUCTING AN AFTER-ACTION REVIEW

1. At the conclusion of the initial response of an incident by involving both Road Patrol and CID, either Lieutenant of each division may organize and arrange an after-action review meeting to include the Sergeant(s) and Investigators involved in the initial call response to discuss the response and compliance with this policy, areas of improvement to be had, and continuing resources needed for the ongoing investigation. The results will be reported to the Undersheriff and Sheriff.

VIII. CID FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATIONS

A. PROCEDURE FOR ASSIGNMENT

1. The Lieutenant in charge of CID shall review the preliminary investigation and decide if additional investigative activities may be required. He/she will also assign and prioritize cases to subordinate Investigators based on their seriousness and with consideration of solvability factors, that may include:

- a. If a suspect is in custody.
 - b. If a suspect is named or known.
 - c. Unique suspect/vehicle identifiers or description.
 - d. If a vehicle is in agency custody.
 - e. Writer or reviewer discretion.
 - f. Unique modus operandi or crime pattern.
 - g. Significance or amount of evidence.
 - h. Traceability of stolen property.
 - i. Witnesses.
2. The Lieutenant in charge of CID will maintain a log of cases received and the assigned Investigator for each.

B. PROCEDURE FOR PROCESSING CASES

1. As supplemental reports are completed, they will be added to the records management system and should be accessible to all CID members, unless otherwise determined by the Lieutenant.
2. Investigation of minor property crimes should be discontinued when sufficient solvability factors are not available. In such cases, victims should be informed by the primary investigator of this, and the rationale utilized and be provided with a copy of the investigative report if needed. Such notification to the victim shall be documented in the case file.
3. Cases should remain open as long as leads are not exhausted, resources are not needed on more serious cases, and one or more of the following avenues of investigation appear promising:
 - a. The obtainment of suspect information.
 - b. Physical evidence is obtained.
 - c. Vehicular description or license plate information.
 - d. Identifiable stolen property.
 - e. Crime patterns involving several crimes.
 - f. There remains a clear danger to the public.
4. Both victims of crime and preliminary investigating deputies will be kept informed of the status of case investigations.
5. CID should adhere to the tenets of community policing and problem solving to which TCSO subscribes. As such, the Lieutenant in charge of CID is responsible for the identification of crime trends, and problems that may be addressed by measures not simply limited to arrest.
6. The status of each case assigned to CID will be identified as follows:
 - a. **CLOSED BY ARREST (CAA/CJA):** An arrest has been made, and the defendant has been charged with the commission of the offense(s) and turned over to the court for prosecution.

- b. **ACTIVE/PENDING:** An ongoing investigation. If the investigation has exhausted all leads, yet the possibility remains that new facts may come to light given ongoing investigation, the case should remain open.
- c. **CLOSED:** When all potentially fruitful leads have been exhausted an investigation may be classified as closed. An investigation may be reactivated and assigned to an Investigator's active caseload if sufficient new leads are developed.
- d. **INFORMATION (INF):** For information only.

Attachments:

A: *Major Crime Scene – Search Warrant Administrative Packet*

By Order Of



Derek Osborne
Sheriff