



FIELD INTERVIEWS

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I. DEFINITION

Field Interview – Conduct that places the officer in face-to-face communication with a person for information-gathering purposes.

Consensual Encounter – A voluntary encounter between a police officer and a member of the community when there is no reasonable articulable suspicion to stop, detain and/or search the person. During a consensual encounter, a person does not need to stop for the officer; and if voluntarily does stop, is free to leave at any time and does not need to answer any questions.

Reasonable Articulable Suspicion – When information exists that establishes sufficient specific facts, together with rational inferences from those facts, to give a trained law enforcement officer a basis to believe there is a reasonable possibility that a person is about to, is in the progress of, or has just committed an offense. In these circumstances an officer may stop and temporarily detain a person to conduct a brief investigation; and if further reasonable articulable suspicion exists that the person is armed, the officer may frisk (pat down) the person to determine if they are in the possession of any weapons.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the department to utilize the Field Interview in circumstances when an officer reasonably believes an investigation is warranted. Documentation of that interview shall be made on the Field Interview Report (FIR). Information from the Field Interview is intended for use, in conjunction with other types of data, in evaluating crime trends and investigating possible criminal activity.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Field Interview Circumstances

Field interviews generally may be conducted when an officer encounters subjects in situations where a reasonable officer would believe further investigation is warranted. In the absence of reasonable articulable suspicion, all field interviews are considered consensual encounters.

B. Field Interview Protocols

While an officer may initiate a field interview for any legitimate, police-related purpose, interviews shall not be conducted in a hostile or aggressive manner, or as a means of harassing any individual or attempting to coerce an individual to do anything (e.g. leave the area, consent to a search, etc.). If the field interview is a consensual encounter, the individual is free to end the interview and leave at any time; and to refuse to answer the officer's questions.

If the field interview is based on reasonable articulable suspicion, the individual may be stopped and temporarily detained for the purposes of conducting a brief investigation. ***Absent exigent circumstances, at the commencement***

of the stop, an officer shall display identification (if not in uniform) and provide their name, ID number, law enforcement agency, and the reason for the stop to the subject. The individual will not be detained any longer than is reasonably necessary to conduct the investigation. If the brief investigation does not develop probable cause for further detention or arrest, the individual will be released without unnecessary delay.

Officers must remember that individuals are neither required to carry any means of identification nor can individuals be required to account for their presence in a public place.

C. Documentation of Field Interviews

A Field Interview Report will be used to document both consensual encounter and reasonable articulable suspicion field interviews. See Index Code 1621.1 (Stop and Frisk Report) for additional information pertaining to mandatory reporting of reasonable articulable suspicion stops involving a frisk/pat down for weapons.

1. Complete a Field Interview Report in the records management system.
2. If the field interview is related to an Offense/Incident already reported, the Report Number related to that Offense/Incident Report should be used. If the field interview is not related to an Offense/Incident already reported, a new Report Number will be used.
3. Document the Type of Contact; Primary Reason(s) for the Contact/Stop; and the Disposition of the Contact/Stop.
4. Attempt to obtain positive identification of the subject and document as much information about the subject you can.
5. Document the "Subject Type."
6. Document if the Subject was Stopped and Frisked.
7. Document the Field Contact Location.
8. Document and fully describe any weapons recovered as a result of the field interview by adding the weapon information on the Field Interview Report Property Card, even if the weapon also needs to be documented on an Offense/Incident Report.
9. Document the reason for the field interview, any information obtained, and the reasonable articulable suspicion that led to the field interview (if applicable) on the Field Interview Report Narrative Card.

IV. PROPONENT UNIT: Bureau of Patrol.

V. CANCELLATION: This directive cancels Index Code 1629, dated ***11-01-21***.