



University of Pennsylvania Police Department 4040 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa 19104		 
Directive: 9	Subject: Responsibilities At Crime Scenes	Effective Date: 05/17/1996
Order of: Maureen S. Rush, Superintendent of Police		Amended Date: 05/26/2021

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to establish responsibilities that will ensure the proper collection, preservation, and identification of physical evidence at the scene of a crime or other major incident.

II. Policy

Collection, proper documentation, preservation, and submission of physical evidence to forensic laboratories may provide key ingredients of any investigation. The crime scene is usually the starting point of a criminal investigation. Crime scene specialists from the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) are available to the University of Pennsylvania Police Department (UPPD) on a twenty-four (24) hour basis. Through evidence located at the scene, suspects are developed or eliminated, investigative leads are established, and theories concerning the crime are substantiated or disapproved. The officer or detective shall be prepared to collect, identify, and package the evidence so that it will not be changed in form and value when it reaches the laboratory and to maintain a chain of custody of that evidence in order to ensure that it is presented to the court professionally and in compliance with the law.

III. Scope

This directive shall affect all sworn police officers.

IV. Definitions

- A. Crime Scene: The location where the crime occurred or where the indication of the crime exists.
- B. Crime Scene Processing: The specific actions taken at a crime scene, consisting of the taking of photographs, preparing the crime scene sketch, and the collecting and preserving of physical evidence.

- C. Crime Scene Specialist: A person who processes the crime scene, who may have a higher level of training than the assigned detective/investigator and whose primary duty is crime scene processing. Larger departments, such as the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD), will assign such persons for this purpose and provide specially equipped vehicles for their use.

V. Procedures

A. Administration

1. The UPPD does not employ trained crime scene processors and therefore does not routinely collect DNA evidence or process crime scenes.
2. The Philadelphia Police Department Mobile Crime Detection Unit (MCDU) will be contacted in the event that a crime scene requires processing (other than the collection of fingerprints and the taking of photographs/videotaping). All UPPD detectives are trained in the collection of fingerprints and the photography of crime scenes.
3. A UPPD detective shall be available twenty-four (24) hours a day. If an incident occurs when there are no UPPD detectives on duty, the scene commander/supervisor will have the PennComm Center contact the on-call detective. In the event the on-call detective cannot be reached the Deputy Chief of Investigations or designee will be notified.
4. If the immediate services of a crime scene specialist are required (i.e., in the case of a homicide, shooting, etc.) the assigned detective will notify the Deputy Chief of Investigations or designee and request the services of the PPD Mobile Crime Detection Unit (MCDU).

B. General Crime Scene Responsibilities

1. It is the responsibility of all police personnel, regardless of their rank or assignment, to protect the scene of a crime.
2. The department's uniformed patrol unit will have the primary responsibility and authority for the protection and security of all crime scenes within the department's prescribed patrol area until appropriately relieved by a UPPD or PPD detective.
3. The police agency with investigative jurisdiction will have the primary responsibility and authority for the investigation and examination of all crime scenes.
4. Whenever the PPD takes over the investigation of a crime scene located on University of Pennsylvania property, the UPPD officer assigned to the crime scene will remain on location for assistance and security until detectives release the scene and a UPPD supervisor approves the officer(s) to return to normal duties.

5. Supervisors will not permit any warrantless searches of private property owned or occupied by a suspect. Prior to any search for evidence at a crime scene located on private property owned or occupied by a suspect, the Deputy Chief of Investigations will ensure that a search warrant has been obtained prior to conducting a search. If any doubt exists, the case will be reviewed with an Assistant District Attorney.
6. Only the assigned UPPD and/or PPD detective(s) and personnel from the PPD MCDU will search a crime scene for evidence and/or contraband. If additional personnel are required, the scene supervisor will assign them.
7. The Detective Unit shall be notified to investigate the scene of a crime for any of the below listed incidents:
 - a. Homicides;
 - b. Robberies;
 - c. Burglaries;
 - d. Aggravated Assaults;
 - e. Arson;
 - f. Kidnapping;
 - g. Sexual Assaults; or
 - h. Institutional Vandalism.

C. First Responder Responsibilities

1. The first UPPD police officer responding to a crime scene will protect the entire scene and summon assistance necessary to perform the following duties:
 - a. Determine whether anyone at the scene needs medical treatment and render First Aid and/or call for emergency medical personnel.
 - 1) Where there is a possibility of life, no matter how slight, have the victim/ defendant transported to a hospital, via the Philadelphia Fire Department's Medic Unit. Outline body position before removal; if possible (do not use indelible crayons or markers).
 - b. If possible, question the victim to find out who inflicted the injury and what occurred.
 - 1) Pay particular attention to dying declarations and record:

- (i) Name of victim
 - (ii) Date, time, and location
 - (iii) Statement of victim - be as precise and accurate as possible
 - (iv) Names of all other witnesses to the statement, both police and civilian.
- c. Notify the PennComm Center of conditions and relay "Flash" information.
- d. Detain all persons found at the crime scene. Prevent unnecessary conversation among witnesses and/or other individuals.
- e. Arrest perpetrators found at the scene. Officers will conduct a search incident to arrest in accordance with Directive 10, "Limits Of Authority."
- 1) Also in accordance with Directive 10, suspects will only be questioned by personnel from the assigned UPPD and/or PPD detective unit. UPPD uniformed officers on the scene will not issue "Miranda Warnings" and will not conduct custodial interrogations.
- f. Secure the scene and establish the crime scene perimeter to preserve evidence.
- 1) Prevent anyone from touching or moving any object on the scene. A motor vehicle will only be moved if it presents a hazard to public safety. If any object/vehicle is moved, outline its original position. In addition, record the exact or original position and reason for move. Give this information to the assigned detective.
 - 2) Establish a perimeter around the scene and direct assisting officers to help secure the scene (i.e., use of additional officers, barricade tape, wooden barricades, etc.).
 - 3) Prevent anyone from entering the crime scene except:
 - (i) police officers necessary to safeguard the scene;
 - (ii) police officers transporting the injured;
 - (iii) UPPD and/or PPD investigative personnel (I.D. card must be displayed on outermost garment); or
 - (iv) PPD MCDU personnel (I.D. card must be displayed on outermost garment).

Note: Supervisory and command personnel not involved in the investigation will remain outside of the crime scene.

- g. Maintain a Crime Scene Log (UPPD-27) of all actions taken at the scene. The log should indicate:
 - 1) time of police arrival;
 - 2) names of all persons present upon arrival;
 - 3) spontaneous statements/admissions made by victims/witnesses/offenders, and
 - 4) names and badge numbers of all persons entering the crime scene, reasons for entering and departure times.
- h. Prevent anyone from eating, smoking, or drinking on the scene.
- i. if conditions at the crime scene are unstable, determine whether firearms located on the scene should be immediately removed. Outline original position prior to removal.
- j. Firearms should not be unloaded or cleaned prior to examination by the PPD Firearms Identification Unit (FIU). If a firearm located on the scene cannot be safely transported in original condition, a UPPD Firearms Instructor will be summoned and his/her advice concerning transportation will be followed.

D. Supervisory Responsibilities

- 1. The UPPD Shift Commander/Supervisor will:
 - a. Initially decide what security is needed at the crime scene.
 - b. Determine the number of uniformed personnel required to protect the scene. Return all excess personnel to patrol.
 - c. Ensure that all persons found at the scene are detained for questioning and that nothing is touched or disturbed.
 - d. Notify the Deputy Chief of Investigations or designee by telephone and relate all available information concerning the crime.
 - e. Ensure that a Crime Scene Log (UPPD-27) is maintained and given to the Deputy Chief of Investigations, if present, or to the assigned detective.
 - f. Prevent anyone from smoking, drinking, or eating on the scene.

2. If a police officer has discharged a firearm, the first commander/supervisor to arrive on scene will personally check the weapon and additional magazines of each officer present and note the number of rounds missing from the weapon and additional magazines.
 - a. When it is necessary to relieve an officer of a weapon or other piece of issued equipment for evidentiary purposes or as part of the general internal investigative process, the commander/supervisor shall:
 - 1) take custody of the officer's weapon in a discrete manner; and
 - 2) if appropriate, ensure that the weapon is replaced with another weapon as soon as practical.

E. Investigative Responsibilities

1. The assigned UPPD detective will:
 - a. Meet with the on-scene supervisor and first responding officer for a briefing;
 - b. Conduct a walk-through of the scene;
 - c. Formulate a plan of action for the documentation and processing of the scene to include (in the order outlined):
 - 1) Documentation of the crime scene through overall, midrange, and close-up photographs with and without scales.
 - 2) Documentation of the crime scene through diagrams (sketches) when applicable.
 - 3) The collection of all relevant physical evidence noting location, date and time collected, name of detective collecting evidence, names and witnesses as well as the assignment of an "item number". Markings will not be placed on any evidence at any time unless absolutely necessary. All identifying information shall be placed on the packaging or container holding the evidence.
 - 4) The securing and protection of all collected evidence at a central location at the crime scene to ensure "chain of custody" pending transport to UPPD Headquarters.
 - 5) The latent processing of the scene for possible fingerprints, palm prints and footprints.
 - 6) A final walk-through of the scene to ensure that nothing was missed or forgotten.

Note: The UPPD shall utilize the Pennsylvania State Police Crime Laboratory Guidelines pertaining to the collection and processing of evidence taken from crime scenes.

- d. Notify the Deputy Chief of Investigations or designee when crime scene specialists from the PPD's MCDU are needed. Requests for MCDU personnel will only be made via the PPD for the recovery of evidence that is not within the capabilities of the assigned detective.

Note: In obvious crime scene situations (e.g., shootings, homicides, suicides) PPD MCDU personnel will be notified and will be dispatched to the scene by PPD Police Radio.

- e. Coordinate with MCDU personnel, upon their arrival, on the manner of perpetration, the processing of the scene, and the relevance and materiality of the physical evidence to be submitted to the PPD Laboratory for evaluation and/or testing.
 - 1) MCDU personnel will determine the method for recovery of evidence or fingerprints (i.e., powder versus cyanoacrylate ester).
 - 2) The amount of evidence (e.g., blood, hair, etc.) to be confiscated for analysis will be determined by MCDU personnel.

Note: When the assistance of the MCDU is not required at the scene, but evidence exists that requires MCDU analysis, the assigned detective will transport the evidence to the MCDU for examination.

- f. Provide all information necessary to aid the MCDU personnel in the collection of evidence.
 - 1) Only personnel from the MCDU may assist in the search.
 - 2) No additional personnel will assist in the search unless they are specifically assigned to do so by the pertinent detective unit supervisor.
- g. Obtain a search warrant prior to searching or processing a crime scene located on private property owned or occupied by a suspect.
- h. Ensure that any evidence/contraband located is properly recorded on a PPD Property Receipt (75-3) and a copy of same is secured in accordance with UPPD policies and procedures.
- i. Conduct a complete investigation and prepare the required reports to include the following:
 - 1) date and time of arrival at the scene;

- 2) location of the crime;
 - 3) name of the victims (if known);
 - 4) name of suspects (if known);
 - 5) action taken at the scene, including the number of photographs taken, and whether measurements were made (yes or no);
 - 6) a list of physical evidence recovered; and
 - 7) case number;
- j. If a MCDU crime scene specialist is requested, the assigned detective shall also include the following in his/her required reports:
- 1) date and time of request for service;
 - 2) name of MCDU specialist(s);
 - 3) arrival time;
 - 4) the disposition of physical evidence and exposed negatives; and
 - 5) crime scene measurement information.
2. Any evidence collected by the assigned detective, or additional personnel assigned to search the scene, requiring scientific examination will be submitted to the PPD Laboratory by the collecting officer.

F. Transfer Of Custody Of Physical Evidence

1. Whenever physical evidence is transferred to authorized agencies outside of the UPPD, the record of transfer should include the following:
 - a. Date and time of transfer;
 - b. Receiving person's name and functional responsibility;
 - c. Reason for the transfer;
 - d. Name and location of laboratory;

- e. Synopsis of the event, and
- f. Examinations desired.

G. Submission Of Evidence To PPD Crime Lab

1. Detectives who submit evidence to the accredited PPD Crime Lab for analysis will insure that the following steps are taken:
 - a. Any evidentiary items submitted will be clearly marked/tagged with the department's name, case number, PPD D/C number, and name of submitting detective.
 - b. Packaging methods for evidence to be analyzed is consistent with the guidelines listed within the "Pennsylvania State Police Crime Laboratory Manual".
 - c. Property receipts, copies of reports and requests for specific analysis shall accompany the evidentiary items to be analyzed.
 - d. Any property receipts submitted will maintain a proper chain of evidence.
 - e. Upon conclusion of the analysis, a written report shall be received from the PPD Crime Lab detailing the results of the analysis.

H. Collection And Use Of Control Samples

1. Sometimes in an investigation there are certain types of evidence that require control samples to be collected, which are needed to ensure that the physical evidence collected is properly analyzed later in a forensic laboratory. Examples of physical evidence in which control samples should be collected include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Hair;
 - b. Fibers or fabric;
 - c. Paint;
 - d. Body fluids, other than blood;
 - e. Blood;
 - f. Handwriting samples, and
 - g. Wood, glass, or metal fragments.

2. The location from which samples from a known source are taken is critical where fractures have occurred, such as in the case of glass, wood, paint and metal.
3. UPPD Detectives will not engage in the collection of any of the above listed material. The PPD MCDU will collect these samples when processing the crime scene.

I. Photography And Video Taping Of Scenes

1. The assigned detective at a crime scene shall take photographs of that scene if necessary. Photographs shall be taken at crime scenes by first taking overall views of the scene. As evidence is identified it shall be photographed at a midpoint and prior to collection at a close up. The close up photo will be taken both with and without measurement scales.
2. The detective's investigative report shall list the date the photos were taken, the location of the scene, the name of the victim or control number, the name of the detective taking the photos and any other pertinent information needed at the time.
3. Videotaping of crime scenes may be utilized as well. This procedure shall be used in concert with photographing the scene. It will serve as an additional record of the scene. Each videotape shall be appropriately marked on both the tape and the tape box regarding its content. The detective's investigative report for the videotaped scene will contain the same information as listed above for evidence photographs.
4. All exposed film, all photos, video tapes, digital media and any other type of pictorial records of a crime scene shall be treated as evidence and shall be retained by the Detective Unit for development and printing when applicable. Further, all of these items shall be retained by the detective who photographed/video graphed the crime scene to qualify as competent evidence and to maintain the chain of custody.

J. Latent And Inked Fingerprints

1. All latent prints developed at a crime scene shall be lifted and placed on a latent lift card. This card will detail all information needed to identify the crime scene location, location of the lift, methods used to develop the latent, detective making the latent lift, their initials as well as the date and time of the lift and a number designation. Photographs of latent prints prior to lifting may also be taken.
2. All latent prints lifted at a crime scene shall be retained and stored within the Detective Unit for future submission to the PPD's Fingerprint Identification Unit (FIU) as warranted.
3. All elimination prints taken from persons at crime scenes shall also be retained and stored within the Detective Unit for similar future submission to the PPD FIU.

K. Personnel, Equipment And Supplies

1. Access to personnel, equipment and supplies used for processing scenes shall be provided for as follows:
 - a. All members of the Detective Unit shall maintain a basic knowledge of recovery of latent prints, crime scene photography, and crime scene sketching.
 - b. Fingerprint lifting and recovery equipment and photography/video equipment will be limited to the use by trained Detective Unit personnel only.

L. Deputy Chief Of Investigations' Responsibilities

1. The Deputy Chief of Investigations or designee will:
 - a. When necessary, ensure that a search warrant is obtained prior to a search of a crime scene located on private property.
 - b. Establish an open telephone line between the crime scene and HQ.
 - c. Ensure that local, state, and federal agencies are notified (when applicable).
 - d. Ensure that the crime scene search is conducted properly. Determine if additional personnel or resources (e.g., PPD MCDU) are needed to assist the assigned detective.
 - 1) When necessary, request the MCDU be dispatched to the scene through PPD Police Radio.
 - 2) Information included in the request for MCDU will be:
 - (i) name and badge number of the assigned detective;
 - (ii) the location of the scene; and
 - (iii) the type and general description of the scene.

M. PPD Mobile Crime Detection Unit (MCDU) Responsibilities

1. The PPD MCDU will provide crime scene specialist(s) to assist at crime scenes for the search and preservation of evidence.
2. MCDU services will not be requested for the sole purpose of transporting evidence or to act as evidence clerks or recorders.

3. MCDU personnel will not be responsible for the collection of narcotics or narcotics paraphernalia.
4. The assigned MCDU crime scene specialist(s) will:
 - a. Consult with the assigned detective to determine which evidence will require scientific examination.
 - b. Determine the necessary equipment and procedures to be utilized.
 - c. Search the crime scene.
 - d. Recover, protect, and preserve objects and evidence by photographing, sketching, lifting stains and fingerprints, making casts, and the performing of all other available techniques.
 - 1) Conform to the rules governing the chain of evidence.
 - 2) Prepare PPD Property Receipts (75 3), in compliance with PPD policy and procedures.

Note: Initial custody of evidence is the actual physical possession, NOT the act of pointing to or bringing it to the attention of another.

- e. Transport and store objects and evidence as required.
 - f. Submit for analysis evidence collected at the crime scene, which requires scientific examination.
 - 1) Any evidence requiring scientific examination which is collected by the assigned detective or additional personnel assigned to search the scene will be submitted by the individual who originally collected it.
5. Requests for PPD photographs will be submitted by telephone or in person to the MCDU.
 - a. The assigned detective will prepare a PPD Request for Photographs form (75 153), in duplicate, listing:
 - 1) PPD District Control Number;
 - 2) requested by; and
 - 3) quantity requested (the quantity will be limited to the amount of photographs necessary for court presentation, exceptions must be approved by the Commanding Officer, MCDU).

- b. The original will be forwarded to the MCDU. The copy will be maintained in the assigned detective's case file.
- c. The assigned detective will report to the MCDU no later than 72 hours after request to sign the PPD (75 153) and receive the photographs.
- d. Photographs provided will be 5" x 7" unless material needed dictates larger photographs (i.e., 8" x 10").

N. PPD Evidence Custodian Responsibilities

1. The PPD Evidence Custodian will:

- a. Maintain all evidence removed from crime scenes except for narcotics, drugs, poisons, liquors, flammable and explosive materials, documents and perishable material (e.g., blood, urine, food, etc.).
- b. Narcotics, drugs, and poisons will be stored in the PPD Chemical laboratory after analysis.
- c. Flammable and explosive materials, after analysis when no arrest is involved, will be photographed and destroyed at the direction of the Commanding Officer, PPD Laboratory Division, after consultation with the Commanding Officer, PPD Ordnance Disposal Unit.
- d. Flammable and explosive materials, after analysis when an arrest is made, will be photographed. A small sample will be retained and stored at the direction of the Commanding Officer, PPD Laboratory Division, after consultation with the Commanding Officer, PPD Ordnance Disposal Unit. All empty containers will be forwarded to the Evidence Custodian.
- e. The PPD Chemical Laboratory will destroy all perishable materials, after analysis.
- f. Documents, after examination, will be stored in the Document Section of the PPD's Laboratory Division.

VI. Procedures For Seizure Of Electronic Evidence

Electronic equipment can be severely damaged or data may be lost due to improper shut down and/or handling procedures. The University of Pennsylvania Police Department (UPPD) does not seize electronic evidence as a matter of routine. In the rare instance where electronic evidence may be seized by UPPD personnel, the Deputy Chief of Investigations must be contacted prior to any seizure. Seizure of electronic evidence by UPPD personnel will only be conducted with the

expressed permission from the Deputy Chief of Investigations and or designated Command Staff member. All UPPD personnel shall follow the U.S. Department of Justice's "Federal Guidelines for Searching and Seizing Computers", and the joint International Association of Chiefs of Police/United States Secret Service publication "Best Practices for Seizing Electronic Evidence" prior to initiating any search and/or seizure of computer equipment.

P. Compliance

Violations of this directive, or portions thereof, may result in disciplinary action.

Q. Officers Assigned To Other Agencies

Officers of this department assigned to or assisting other law enforcement agencies will be guided by this directive.

R. Application

This directive constitutes departmental policy, and is not intended to enlarge the employer's or employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims insofar as the employer's or employee's legal duty as imposed by law. Violations of policy will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.