



University of Pennsylvania Police Department 4040 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa 19104		 
Directive: 81	Subject: Criminal Investigations – Operational Procedures	Effective Date: 02/07/2000
Order of: Gary Williams, Chief of Police		Amended Date: 08/01/2023

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to establish operational policy and procedure for criminal investigations conducted by the University of Pennsylvania Police Department (UPPD).

II. Policy

It shall be the policy of the UPPD that the Detective Unit will conduct investigations into certain criminal incidents. The mission of the Detective Unit shall be to satisfactorily resolve criminal incidents that escape resolution by the uniformed patrol officers. Detectives shall be assigned the responsibility of conducting follow-up investigations, or continuing investigations initiated by uniformed patrol. These follow-up investigations shall be conducted in the most expeditious, efficient and effective manner as possible. The Pennsylvania Rules of Evidence, Rules of Criminal Procedure, and the directives of the UPPD shall guide detectives assigned the task of follow-up investigations.

III. Scope

This directive shall affect all sworn officers.

IV. Procedures

A. Procedures in Criminal Investigations

1. Information Development

- a. The development of pertinent case information begins when the call for the police is received and continues until the case is cleared or suspended. Obtaining and recording even apparently minor information is often crucial to the successful conclusion of the case.
- b. Sources of information within the UPPD that are valuable and will be utilized as needed include:

- 1) UPPD Master Records file;
 - 2) Arrest records;
 - 3) Traffic Accident reports;
 - 4) Photo and fingerprint records; and
 - 5) Juvenile records.
- c. Outside information that can be valuable in an investigation and should be utilized when appropriate, including:
- 1) CLEAN/NCIC criminal history records information (CHRI);
 - 2) BMV records;
 - 3) Probation and parole records;
 - 4) Local and federal agencies records;
 - 5) Court records;
 - 6) Tax records;
 - 7) Board of education records;
 - 8) Real estate records;
 - 9) Post office records; and
 - 10) Pawn shop records.
- d. Private organizations and agencies can also provide information valuable to investigations. Court orders may be necessary to obtain certain records. Such sources of information include:
- 1) Utility companies;
 - 2) Telephone companies;
 - 3) Banks and credit agencies;
 - 4) Unions and professional agencies;
 - 5) Insurance companies;
 - 6) Neighbors, social contacts, and business associates; and

- 7) Welfare and social service agency records.
2. Interviews and Interrogations
 - a. The effective use of field interviews, interviews of victims and witnesses, and interrogations of suspects are often crucial in solving many types of crimes.
 - 1) Field interviews are a productive tool and a source of information for the UPPD. They should only be used in the pursuit of legitimate goals of the department and not to harass any segment of the community. When used properly they can discourage criminal activity, identify suspects and add intelligence information on known criminals.
 - 2) Field interviews will be documented with incident or supplemental reports. Officers coming in contact with people whose behavior is suspicious must articulate the facts and circumstances surrounding the incident in writing.
 - b. Victim/Witness Interviews
 - 1) Detailed notes will be made for future reference listing time, date, location, officers present, etc.
 - 2) The trauma/stress to which the victim or witness has been subjected should be considered and the interview conducted in such a manner as to reduce stress and minimize further problems.
 - 3) The age, physical/mental limitations, and credibility of witnesses should be considered.
 - c. Interrogation of Suspects
 - 1) Any interrogation of suspects shall be conducted in accordance with **Directive 33, "Interrogations and Confessions"**.
 3. Collection, preservation, and use of physical evidence
 - a. Officers must realize that physical evidence is of major importance in all cases, particularly those without witnesses. The successful prosecution of a case often hinges on the quality of the physical evidence collected and preserved.
 - 1) All officers are responsible for the preservation of evidence and for maintaining and documenting the chain of custody of all evidence that is in their custody.
 - 2) Most evidence collection will be handled by Detective Unit personnel who are trained in evidence processing or evidence collection.

- b. Officers having questions about the collection and preservation of specific items of evidence should consult a Detective Supervisor.
4. Background Investigations (other than pre-employment)
- a. Criminal investigations frequently involve background investigations of person(s) suspected in white-collar crimes, organized crime and major vice activities. The very nature of these types of crime requires a considerable degree of discretion.
 - b. When officers of the UPPD develop information that suggests an in-depth background investigation of person(s) involved in the above-mentioned crimes, this information will be documented in an initial Incident Report (UPPD-10) or Supplemental Report (UPPD-10A) and passed on to a Detective Supervisor.
 - c. The Detective Supervisor will evaluate the information to determine if an investigation is merited; the Detective Supervisor will then:
 - 1) Identify the purpose of the investigation;
 - 2) Identify and recommend potential sources of information;
 - 3) Provide avenues for the use of the information collected;
 - 4) Designate a detective to coordinate the investigation;
 - 5) If warranted, collaborate and facilitate investigative needs of the UPPD with the sources and resources of:
 - a) The State Attorney General's Office;
 - b) The Philadelphia District Attorney's Office;
 - c) The Internal Revenue Service;
 - d) The Philadelphia Police Department Drug Task Force; and
 - e) Any other criminal justice agency deemed necessary.
 - 6) Maintain liaison and control of the investigation.
 - a) Information gathered as the result of a joint investigation will be controlled and disseminated by the initiating agency.
 - b) Retention and destruction of investigative records will be consistent with state statutes of limitations of the crime being investigated or as prescribed by law.

5. Surveillance

- a. The secretive observation of a person, place or vehicle is a basic police technique that can be used by all members of the UPPD. Surveillance can be used effectively to gather evidence of illegal activity or to apprehend criminals after a pattern of their criminal activity has been identified.
- b. Specific units of the UPPD can use surveillance routinely and it should be utilized by other units as crime trends and manpower permits.
- c. All officers should be encouraged to use surveillance of known trouble spots and known violators as part of their efforts to suppress crime and arrest suspects within their areas of patrol.

B. Preliminary Investigations

1. Definition

- a. The preliminary investigation begins when the first police unit arrives at the scene or makes contact with the complainant or victim by telephone or other means, and continues until a postponement of the investigation, or transfer of investigative responsibility may be made without jeopardizing the successful completion of the investigation.
- b. The reduction of crime through police action depends in large part on the success of the criminal investigation process that should identify, cause an arrest and conviction of the perpetrator of crimes, and recover stolen property.
- c. The preliminary investigation is a critical step in the overall criminal investigation process. Often the success or failure of the entire case hinges on the quality of this phase of an investigation.
- d. In addition, national surveys indicate that over ninety percent of all cases cleared are cleared as the result of information developed during the initial investigation. Thereafter, additional research indicates that a basic tool in any investigative system is a reliance on neighborhood contacts or canvassing of neighbors, merchants and others in the vicinity of a crime. It is estimated that the systematic use of neighborhood canvassing within a short time of the commission of a crime (such as the following morning) results in positive information of investigative value in twenty percent of cases. The neighborhood contact procedure also has preventative value and leads to better contact between police and the community.

2. Procedures

a. Preliminary Investigation

- 1) Officers having responsibility for the preliminary investigation should:

- a) Provide aid to the injured;
 - b) Protect the crime scene to ensure that evidence is not lost or contaminated;
 - c) Observe and record all conditions, events, and remarks;
 - d) Determine if an offense has actually been committed and, if so the exact nature of the offense;
 - e) Determine the identity of the suspect or suspects and affect an arrest, if it can be accomplished either at the scene or through immediate pursuit;
 - f) Through the PennComm Center, furnish other officers with descriptions, method and direction of flight, and other relevant information concerning wanted persons or vehicles;
 - g) Locate and obtain complete identification of all witnesses;
 - h) Determine what information is known by the victim and each witness;
 - i) Arrange for the collection of evidence and crime scene processing;
 - j) Determine in detail the exact circumstances of the offense;
 - k) Accurately and completely record all pertinent information on an Incident Report Form (UPPD-10); and
 - l) Make appropriate NCIC/CLEAN inquiries, if applicable.
- 2) The officer should also brief the detectives who may assume the follow-up investigation as to the known facts of the case.
- b. General Responsibilities
- 1) Except in those cases where the presence of a uniformed officer would obviously hinder a proper investigation, or specific expertise is required, the uniformed patrol officer assigned to the call shall conduct the preliminary investigation.
 - 2) The assigned patrol officer shall initiate and complete as many of the activities listed above as are necessary. The individual circumstances of the incident will determine how many of the activities are required.
 - 3) The patrol officer assigned shall be responsible for initial action. The officer will further advise the PennComm Center of the nature of the incident and request immediate on-the-scene follow-up by the Detective Unit as necessary.

- 4) Detectives may respond to any crime to assist the uniform patrol officer. Any detective in the vicinity of or available for an “in progress” call will respond to the scene and offer appropriate assistance.
- 5) The initial Incident Report (UPPD-10) shall be completed in detail by the officer and submitted to the PennComm Police Supervisor for review. This submission should be made at the earliest possible time, consistent with workload demands and public safety concerns. The initial Incident Report (UPPD-10) will in no case be retained by the reporting officer beyond his/her daily tour of duty.
- 6) The initial Incident Report (UPPD-10), after being reviewed and signed, will be placed with the shift paperwork sent to the Records Unit at the end of the tour. The Records Unit will then distribute copies of the Incident Reports to the Detective Unit the following business day. (Incident Reports involving crimes of a serious nature will be submitted directly to a Detective Supervisor after review by the PennComm Police Supervisor.
- 7) There must be an Incident Report (UPPD-10) completed for any case in which there has been a criminal arrest.

C. Follow-Up Investigation

1. Definition

- a. The follow-up investigation should be an extension of the activities of the preliminary investigation and not a repetition of it. The purpose of the follow-up investigation in a non-criminal case is to gather additional information or to carry out actions that will lead to closure of the case. In a criminal case, the purpose of the investigation is to gather additional evidence and information to prove the elements of a particular crime in order to affect an arrest and support prosecution of the perpetrator, and/or to recover stolen property.
- b. The role of the Detective Supervisor in this process is very important. First, he/she must ensure the proper utilization of manpower by:
 - 1) Assigning for investigation criminal cases that have the potential for closure;
 - 2) Not assigning for investigation criminal cases that have little potential for closure;
 - 3) Ensuring that personnel assigned to conduct each investigation have the skills, knowledge, and abilities for that assignment.
- c. Secondly, the Detective Supervisor must ensure mutual cooperation, understanding and exchange of information between all units within the UPPD.

2. The decision to assign a case for follow up investigation, or to continue an investigation, shall be made in accordance with **Directive 80, "Criminal Investigations - Administrative Procedures"**.
3. When a case is assigned to a detective for follow-up investigation, the assigned detective will be responsible for that particular case until its conclusion or reassignment.
4. Detective Responsibilities
 - a. Basic steps of the follow-up investigation in a non-criminal case include, if applicable:
 - 1) Interviewing complainants and witnesses;
 - 2) Locating missing persons;
 - 3) Determining if information or suspicious activity may/does relate to criminal activity;
 - 4) Locating lost property and returning same to owner;
 - 5) Investigating deaths, overdoses, suicides and injuries to determine if a crime was committed;
 - 6) Making necessary notifications,
 - 7) Offer services of DPS Special Services Unit; and
 - 8) Recording information obtained.
 - b. Basic steps of the follow-up investigation in a criminal case shall include at a minimum, if applicable:
 - 1) Reviewing and analyzing results of preliminary investigation reports;
 - 2) Recording information obtained during follow-up investigation;
 - 3) Reviewing departmental records for investigative leads;
 - 4) Seeking additional information from uniformed officers, informants, community contacts, other detectives or other agencies;
 - 5) Interviewing victims and witnesses in an initial or second contact;
 - 6) Interviewing suspects;
 - 7) Arranging for dissemination of information as appropriate (i.e. Crime Alerts, Roll Call announcements, etc.);

- 8) Planning, organizing and conducting searches;
 - 9) Collection of physical evidence;
 - 10) Recovery of stolen property;
 - 11) Arranging for the analysis and evaluation of evidence;
 - 12) Reviewing results from laboratory examinations;
 - 13) Identifying and apprehending the perpetrator;
 - 14) Checking for suspect(s) criminal history;
 - 15) Determining if other crimes may have been committed by the suspect;
 - 16) Determine if suspect/perpetrator meets habitual offender criteria;
 - 17) Consulting with the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office in preparing cases for court presentation and assisting in the prosecution thereof; and
 - 18) Attendance to testify in court or hearings.
- c. The functions outlined above will serve as a guideline, but are not necessarily intended to be used in every follow-up investigation.

D. Investigative Checklists

1. Checklist(s) for a detective will assist in the documentation of specific crime scene information in many minor cases. However, the use of any developed checklist(s) is necessary for the efficient and orderly documentation of serious incidents that will involve the use of many elements and functions of the UPPD. In addition, the use of checklists will minimize confusion and aid in the coordination of efforts at the crime scene.
2. The authority to develop, approve, and institute any checklist(s) for criminal investigations will be with the Deputy Chief of Investigations.

E. Roll Call Attendance

1. Detective's attendance at roll call is a means of enhancing relationships between the uniformed patrol officers and the Detective Unit.
2. Periodically, at the discretion of the Detective Supervisor(s), detectives shall attend uniformed patrol roll calls.
3. When there is a major crime pattern or a series of apparently connected events, this information will be disseminated by attendance at roll calls.

F. Compliance

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

G. Officers Assigned to Other Agencies

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

H. 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.