



Fitchburg State University Police Department

Subject: INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES	
Reference: IACLEA: 13.1.1, 13.1.2, 13.1.3, 13.1.4, 13.1.5, 13.1.6, 13.1.7	
MPAC: 42.1.1, 42.2.1, 42.2.2, 42.1.4, 42.2.4, 42.1.3	
Rescinds: Section: 39	
Effective Date: November 23, 2020	Review Date:
By Order of: Michael J Cloutier, Chief of Police	

Policy and Procedure

13.1

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to serve as a guide for the officers of the Fitchburg State University Police Department when they are conducting preliminary and follow-up investigations. It is important that the officers have a clear understanding that the most significant factor determining the success of an investigation is often that information gathered by the first responding officers.

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Fitchburg State University Police Department to conduct investigations for the purpose of solving crimes or incidents; to prosecute offenders; and to recover stolen property. Investigation of certain university policy violations may also be conducted, as they become known to this department.

PROCEDURE:

I. General Investigation Considerations

- A. Sworn officers of the Fitchburg State University Police Department are responsible for conducting investigations for all calls they are dispatched to or become aware of during their shifts. This allows the Fitchburg State University Police Department to provide 24 hour investigative capabilities.
 - 1. The department detectives may assist officers in their investigations or take over an investigation if the incident being investigated requires specialized training or additional resources not readily available to patrol.

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2. If an incident being investigated requires specialized training, such as a sexual assault, and no on duty officer is certified and/or trained in the investigative techniques, the shift supervisor or officer in charge shall notify the on call lieutenant, who may authorize overtime for a detective or specially trained officer to respond to the station for the investigation.
3. If a department detective or specialized officer is unavailable, the Fitchburg Police Department or Massachusetts State Police may be contacted for assistance.

IACLEA 13.1.1/MPAC 42.1.1

B. Officers will be responsible for all investigations that they initiated. If officers requires assistance from other officers they may request their assistance or speak to a supervisor who will designate and officer to assist. This includes those investigations that requires follow up investigations on an officer's day off, or extends beyond their shift.

1. The responding investigating officer should pursue the initial investigation until such time that it seems unlikely to produce additional information or as determined by the shift supervisor.
2. If a detective or an officer with specialized training, knowledge, or experience assist, they will collaborate to enhance the likelihood of a successful resolution of the incident, particularly in the early stages of an investigation.
3. Seniority amongst officers should not play a role when assistance is requested in any investigation.
4. If an external law enforcement agency is requested to assist in an investigation, full cooperation from this department is important to ensure that the investigation is completed and appropriately documented.

IACLEA 13.1.2

C. Incidents and crimes reported to the Fitchburg State University Police Department will receive an immediate response and a preliminary investigation by on shift-sworn personnel. In most cases, the initial responding officer will also be responsible for the follow-up investigation. The shift supervisor or officer in charge will determine in which circumstances a preliminary investigation will be handed over to a specialized officer or the department detectives for an immediate follow up investigation. Incident report review by the Chief of Police, Lieutenant, or Detective Sergeant may lead to a case, which had not previously received a follow-up investigation being assigned to an officer for that purpose.

1. The Detective Sergeant, under supervision of the Operations Lieutenant, will keep track of all ongoing investigations.
2. The Detective Sergeant will also be responsible for updating the lieutenants of all ongoing investigations that he/she is conducting; as well as the investigations of officers of the department on a regular basis. Lieutenants will in turn keep the Chief updated on all ongoing cases, any major developments, and any concerns that may require additional follow up.

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- D. The detective sergeant will be responsible for sharing crime trends on campus, internal and external crime bulletins, investigative updates and intelligence whenever prevalent information becomes known.
1. The Detective Sergeant and patrol detective should solicit information from patrol and the communication center on a regular basis, as well as be available to answer questions on on-going investigation and investigative techniques.
 2. When appropriate, the detective sergeant should conduct roll call training on report writing, securing and collecting evidence, and other relevant investigative topics.

IACLEA 13.1.7

II. Conducting Preliminary Investigations

- A. All officers assigned to conduct a preliminary investigation shall make every effort to obtain as much information as possible during this stage of the investigation. It will often be possible to bring the investigation to a satisfactory conclusion at this point, negating the need for a follow up investigation.
- B. The first officer assigned to a preliminary investigation shall:
1. Proceed to the scene promptly and safely;
 2. Maintain and protect the crime scene and evidence.
 - a. If a minor crime or offense is involved, responding officers may collect any available and pertinent evidence. (See G.O. 4.1 EVIDENCE COLLECTION)
 - b. If a serious offense occurs, arrange for the collection of evidence (See G.O. 4.1 EVIDENCE COLLECTION)
 3. Render assistance to any injured parties;
 4. Locate and identify witnesses;
 5. Requesting assistance from other officers through the communications system, with descriptions, method, and direction of flight, and other relevant information concerning wanted persons or vehicles;
 6. Determine if an offense has actually been committed and, if so, the exact nature of the offense;
 7. Ascertain if the suspect is still in the area and the level of danger if any posed by the suspect;
 8. Determine the identity of the suspect or suspects and effecting an arrest based on probable cause if it can be accomplished either at the scene, through immediate pursuit, and if arrest is determined to be the best resolution;

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9. Interview the suspect, complainant, and/or witnesses to determine what is known. This may include taking a formal statement from these parties or arranging transportation so a statement may be given at the department;
10. Interrogate the suspect if one is identified;
11. Report the incident fully and accurately as outlined in General Order 16.1 Reports and Records;
12. Coordinate with the shift supervisor, or OIC, for any additional follow up.

NOTE: Officers should be mindful of when relevant information is known that may require a "Timely Warning or Crime Alert" as required by the Clery Act; in those cases the shift supervisor or OIC shall notified the on-call lieutenant

IACLEA 13.1.3

III. Follow-up Investigations

- A. Follow-up investigations may be the result of the report review process. The criteria used to determine whether or not a follow up investigation is needed includes, but is not limited to:
 1. The nature and seriousness of the crime or offense;
 2. Solvability factors;
 3. The amount of information that was able to be gathered during the initial investigation;
- B. The following procedures should be used as a guide when conducting follow-up investigations. Officers conducting these investigations should use as many of the following steps as possible, however all steps may not be needed in every instance:
 1. Review and analyze all previous reports prepared in the preliminary investigation phase;
 2. Conduct additional interviews with victims, witnesses, reporting parties, and preliminary investigating officer(s);
 3. Determine in detail the exact circumstances of the offense;
 4. Conduct interviews and interrogations of suspects;
 5. Review departmental records for similar incidents for the purpose of developing a suspect;
 6. Review results from laboratory examinations;
 7. Work in conjunction with the Massachusetts State Police Crime Scene Unit or Fitchburg Police Detective Unit to plan, organize, and conduct crime scene searches for the purpose of gathering other physical evidence;
 8. Seek additional information from informants, or from officers in this department or other police or criminal justice agencies;

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9. Check the criminal records of potential suspects;
10. Identify and apprehend suspects;
11. Recover stolen property;
12. Determining the involvement of the suspects in other crimes;
13. Arrange for the dissemination of information to other relevant criminal justice agencies;
14. Assist department prosecutors or Assistant District Attorney's in preparing the case(s) for court presentation;
15. Assist in the prosecution of cases in court or judicial hearings;
16. Analyzing electronic access logs and electronic media; and
17. Reviewing publicly accessible information on social media sites

NOTE: Maintaining contact with principals in any investigation is valuable in building confidence in the agency as well as indicating that officer(s) are genuinely concerned about the welfare of the victim and other community members associated with the case.

IACLEA 13.1.4

IV. Closing out investigations and Case File Management

- A. The investigating officer and/or their supervisor may recommend that a case should be closed out after the case has been thoroughly evaluated. During the evaluation phase, several factors should be examined. These include but are not limited to:
 1. Absence of further leads or solvability factors;
 2. Interviews with victims/witnesses;
 3. Inconclusive physical evidence found at the scene of the crime/incident;
 4. The exhaustion of all other information sources; and
 5. The degree of seriousness of the offense/incident;
- B. The Chief of Police or designee will make the final determination as to when a case may be closed. He may also make a determination at a future date and time to reopen a case based upon new information or solvability factors.
- C. Every investigation will be documented in the department's record management system. The status of each case will be updated with a disposition such as "open" or "closed." It will also be documented who the initial and subsequent investigatory officers assigned to the case. Access for each case is restricted to the investigating officer(s) and supervisory personnel. Case files will be kept secured by the investigating officer until the case is submitted for review and then securely stored in central records.

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- D. At no time should investigatory information and notes be kept in a manner that the public may have access or able to view.

IACLEA 13.1.6

Approval:



Chief of Police

11/23/2020
Date