

PALM BEACH GARDENS POLICE DEPARTMENT		
PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS BY INVESTIGATORS		
POLICY AND PROCEDURE 4.2.2.10		
Effective Date : 07/01/2015	Accreditation Standards: CALEA CFA	Review Date: 07/01/2016

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PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for conducting preliminary investigations by officers assigned to the Investigations Bureau.

SCOPE: This policy and procedure applies to all Investigators (Detectives/Agents) and officers.

REVIEW RESPONSIBILITY: Investigations Bureau Major

POLICY: This Department conducts preliminary investigations when the first police unit arrives at the scene and makes contact with the complainant or victim and continues until a postponement or transfer of the investigation. Transfer of the investigative responsibility should be made without jeopardizing the successful completion of the investigation. The preliminary investigation may be sufficient to bring the case to a satisfactory closure, thus eliminating the need for a follow-up investigation.

1. PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION RESPONSIBILITY

- a. The reduction of crime depends in part on the success of the criminal investigation process which should identify, cause the arrest and conviction of the suspect(s) of the crimes, and recover stolen property, if warranted.
- b. Investigators will be assigned to conduct the entire investigation of an unusually serious or complex incident. If an Investigator is assigned to complete the entire investigation but a patrol officer was originally assigned and responded, the patrol officer will be required to complete a report, documenting his/her involvement.
- c. The preliminary investigation by Investigators will include, but not be limited to:
 - i. Providing aid to the injured where applicable.
 - ii. Determining if an offense has actually been committed and if so, the exact nature of the offense, also effecting to communications descriptions, and other relative information concerning wanted person(s) or vehicles.
 - iii. Maintaining the crime scene and protecting evidence and arranging for the collection of evidence.
 - iv. Observing all conditions, events, and remarks.
 - v. Locating and identifying witnesses.
 - vi. Interviewing the complainant and the witnesses.
 - vii. Interrogating the suspect(s) and obtaining oral statements from the victims and witnesses.

- viii. Arranging for the collection of evidence.
- ix. Effecting the arrest of the criminal.
- x. Reporting the incident fully and accurately on the prescribed report form(s).
- d. The completion of a preliminary investigation will not preclude the investigating officer from being assigned to the follow-up investigation. This determination will be made by the officer's supervisor.

2. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. Except in those cases where the presence of a uniformed officer would obviously hinder a proper investigation or specific expertise is required, the preliminary investigation shall be conducted by a uniformed patrol officer assigned to the call. Exceptions may be special investigations generally dealing with vice or narcotic related crimes which require undercover tactics or expertise, and crimes which occur on school campuses which could be handled by resource officers and officers assigned to that particular school.
- b. The patrol officer assigned to conduct an investigation shall be responsible for initiating action to inform the Investigations Bureau of a serious crime or a crime requiring immediate on the scene follow-up investigation.
- c. Control over the preliminary investigation shall be maintained by the patrol officer that was assigned the call unless a request is made by the patrol supervisor to an investigative supervisor to relinquish that control or vice versa.
- d. Investigators may respond to any crime, especially to categories of crimes in which they have primary responsibility for the follow-up investigation to assist the responding officer. Any Investigators in the vicinity of, or available for, any in progress call should respond to the scene after notifying the emergency communications operators to offer the appropriate assistance.
- e. The assigned officer will accurately and completely record all pertinent information on a prescribed incident report form.

3. SUPERVISORS RESPONSIBILITY IN ASSIGNING PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS

- a. The role of the appropriate supervisor in this process is very important. The supervisor must be sure of the proper utilization of investigators by:
 - i. Assigning for investigation, criminal cases that have a potential for closure.
 - ii. Not assigning for investigation, criminal cases that have little potential for closure.
 - iii. Insuring that personnel assigned to conduct each investigation have the knowledge and abilities required for that assignment.
 - iv. Investigators must ensure mutual cooperation and understanding in the exchange of information between all bureaus/units.

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APPROVED:



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