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# APPENDICES DOCUMENT

## 23-401 CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

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## Appendix A – Treatment and Rights of Victims

### **\*Victims' Rights:**

Law enforcement agencies shall provide written notification utilizing the Victims' Rights form. This is the form all officers should be distributing and completing. This form was developed by the PA Office of Victim Services to inform crime victims of their rights and the services. This form shall be given to the victim or their family within 24 hours of when law enforcement makes first contact with the victim.

In addition to general information on the Victims' Rights form, agencies can alter contact information and add their county/city-specific service information within the form. The notification shall include information specific to domestic violence/sexual assault victims; such as, information on safe shelters, domestic violence/sexual assault services available locally, hotline numbers, and information regarding Protection From Abuse orders and how to file them (at no cost to the victim). A written record signed by the victim or the victim's family will be attached to the police report and maintained by the law enforcement agency.

To get a copy of the Victims' Rights Form go to the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) website at <https://www.pccd.pa.gov/> and follow the menu path: Victim Services > Forms and Apps > Law Enforcement Victims' Rights Guide.

### **Additional Victims' Rights Resources:**

*Note: weblinks may be subject change*

PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) Victim Services:

<https://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Pages/default.aspx>

PA Office of Victim Services (OVS): <https://pcv.pccd.pa.gov/for-victims/Pages/default.aspx>

PA SAVIN: Pennsylvania's Automated Victim Notification Service:

<https://pcv.pccd.pa.gov/available-services/Pages/Register-for-Offender-Release-Notification.aspx>

Office for Victims of Crime (OVC): <https://ovc.ojp.gov/directory-crime-victim-services/>

## Trauma-Informed Victim Interview Methodology

The Trauma-Informed interviewing technique is broken down into three phases:

### 1. Set the tone - Explain:

- Police officers should always be aware of the major needs of the crime victim. Therefore, the first priority is safety and security. The victim should hear that you and your agency are concerned for his or her safety. You must recognize and demonstrate that the criminal event is one of the most significant events in the victim's life with long term implications. Take time to explain the victim's rights related to safety and security for the victim's unique situation, for example, protective orders for victims of domestic violence, in which case, you will need to provide the Victims' Rights form to the victim.
- At the very beginning of your interaction with victims, it's important to provide explanations. You need to understand that victims may have preconceived notions about police. Recognize that as a police officer you may be a "trigger" for victims because you may represent the crime and you may represent the victim's unfair treatment by the criminal justice system. Therefore, explaining your role and if present, the role of the advocate, will give you a good start. You also have to remember that you need to build rapport with the victim.
- Clarify the purpose of the interview, that you are gathering as much information as possible about what happened. Be aware that the victim may not have all of the information at first. Also, don't get frustrated if the victim's story changes, remember he or she just experienced a traumatic event.
- Mention that it's important for the victim to share everything and his or her input is important to you professionally and to the case. Let the victim know that you will have to ask some hard questions, and why it's necessary to ask a particularly hard question before-hand; and that it's ok for the victim to answer, "I don't know."

### 2. Victim Response:

- Listen to the victim! You are silent. Remember, use your ears, not your mouth. The time for you to ask questions will come later.
- Don't interrupt. Some information will just spill out from the victim, there might be a lot you don't need. It's your job to sift through all of it, and get the stuff you need.
- Have patience and empathize with what the victim is experiencing.
- When communicating with victims, there are things you should say and things you should not. Here are a few examples:
  - Do say:
    - "I'm glad you're talking with me now."
    - "I can't imagine how terrible this must have been."
    - "It wasn't your fault." (If there was no attributable blame to the victim.)
    - "I'm sorry it happened."

- “It must have been really upsetting to see (hear, feel, smell, touch) that.”
- Do NOT Say:
  - “Calm down and relax.”
  - “Don’t worry, it’s going to be all right.”
  - “I understand.”
  - “You’re lucky that…”
  - “Try to be strong for your children.”

### **3. Explain the Process:**

- Advise the victim how to get in touch with you and the advocate after the interview. Always leave your contact information should the victim wish to follow-up.
- If the situation allows, and if you have continued contact with the victim, before meeting explain where you are located and that it is a safe environment. Allow the victim to bring someone along with him or her. Advise them what they should bring related to their case. Let them know how long they should expect to meet. Be sure to clearly define the purpose of the meeting.
- Take the time to explain the criminal justice system if asked, and the estimated time the system takes. Always be realistic and don’t instill false hope or unreasonable expectations. Make no end-result promises - be honest but advise that you will try your best.
- Remember, the victim should walk-away feeling that he or she was listened to, validated, and believed. Your interaction with a victim is “critically important and helps a victim become a survivor.” (Boardman)

## Appendix B – Search Methods

### Commonly used:

- **Grid:**
  - Similar to the strip method, the searcher(s) walk to the perimeter of the scene, turn 180 degrees and walk to the opposite perimeter. Once the scene has been covered in a north to south direction, repeat the process east to west (much like mowing a lawn).
  - Pros: good method for covering an area twice.
  - Cons: very time consuming.
- **Strip or Line:**
  - Searchers walk in lanes (imagine the lines on a football field or lane markings in a swim meet) that are formed by natural boundaries or markers such as stakes, lines or traffic cones.
  - The search may be accomplished with only a few searchers who move from lane to lane until completion.
  - Searching without lanes is possible when the search team is large enough to walk shoulder to shoulder and cover the entire scene in one pass.
  - Each scene or lane should be covered twice, preferably by different searchers.
  - Pros: in the double strip version, the searchers walk north to south, then east to west.
  - This method is most effective for outside searches.
  - Pros: good method for covering long distances.
  - Cons: one disadvantage, it does not allow for the immediate retracing of steps to double check the area.
- **Zone or Quadrant:**
  - Divide the crime scene into manageable quadrants or squares.
  - Number the quadrants.
  - Quadrants are searched individually until completion
  - Pros: works well both inside and outside.
  - Pros: effective on large scenes because it is easy to divide and monitor tasks.
  - Pros: allows searchers to use different search methods within the sector.
  - Pros: Good for buried body recovery. Using stakes to create manageable quadrants.

### Other available methods:

- **Point-to-point:**
  - Searcher walks to a piece of evidence, notes it and has it collected.
  - Move to next piece of evidence and follows the same procedure until all evidence is recovered.
  - Often used as a preliminary method to evaluate the crime scene or for small areas.
  - Cons: can be often very disorganized, and easy to overlook evidence.
- **Spiral or Circular:**
  - The searcher(s) begins in the middle of the crime scene and moves outwards in a spiral pattern.
  - Search may begin at the outside of the circle and work inward.
  - Pros: good method for single searcher.
  - Cons: difficult to maintain distance between spirals and therefore easy to miss evidence.
- **Wheel or Radiate:**
  - Searchers meet in the center of the crime scene and walk to the outer perimeter.
  - Pros: this method covers a large area in a small amount of time (i.e., missing persons searches)
  - Cons: the spokes of the wheel tend to spread too quickly to cover an area in detail.

## **Appendix C – Available Resources/Seeking Assistance**

### **\*Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Violent Crime Apprehension Program (ViCAP)**

Established by the Department of Justice (DOJ) in 1985, the FBI's ViCAP serves law enforcement agencies across the nation by providing a free repository (helps find similarities in cases that may be serial in nature) for behavioral and investigative information related to the following solved and unsolved violent crimes:

- Homicides (and attempts) that are known or suspected to be part of a series and/or are apparently random, motiveless, or sexually oriented.
- Sexual Assaults that are known or suspected to be part of a series and/or are committed by a stranger.
- Missing Persons where the circumstances indicate a strong possibility of foul play and the victim is still missing.
- Unidentified Human Remains where the manner of death is known or suspected to be homicide. ViCAP actively encourages agencies to submit "resolved" criteria cases into ViCAP Web.

Entering a resolved case into ViCAP is important because the known offender in your case could be the unknown offender in another jurisdiction! Additionally, the ViCAP Automated Violent Incident Comparison System (AVICS) utilizes advanced algorithms to identify potential linkages between cases by comparing relevant similar attributes and generating a list of possible leads.

#### **ViCAP's Services:**

ViCAP's services include:

- Crime analysis
- Creation of maps, timelines, and matrices
- Information dissemination
- Facilitation and coordination of communication between agencies
- Task force assistance, and
- Development and maintenance of ViCAP Web

ViCAP's services and ViCAP Web access are provided at no cost to law enforcement agencies.

#### **ViCAP Web:**

ViCAP Web is a state-of-the-art behavior-based crime analysis tool structured to address the violent crime problems impacting law enforcement agencies today. It enables law enforcement agencies to collect, collate, enter, and analyze their own violent crime information on a local level, and facilitates the identification of similar cases on a regional, state, and national basis.

There are some established hub agencies available to assist local agencies with data entry and analysis on state and regional levels. Additionally, individual case submissions are analyzed by ViCAP Crime Analysts at a national level.

ViCAP Web is available to law enforcement agencies nationwide through the secure internet connectivity of the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division, Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (LEEP). Each user must maintain active access to LEEP in order to access ViCAP Web.

### **How to Gain Access to the ViCAP Web National Crime Database:**

1. Obtain access to LEEP (each user must do this) in one of two ways:
  - Through one of the participating Identity Provider (IdP) agencies to LEEP, or
  - Complete the online application ([www.cjjs.gov](http://www.cjjs.gov)) for a LeepID
2. Select a single agency point of contact to serve as the link between FBI ViCAP and the users within your agency. This individual will be referred to as the 'LEA Manager (LEAM).' \*Check the list of LEA Managers posted on the (LEEP) ViCAP SIG page to determine if your agency has a designated LEAM. If your agency has a designated LEAM, please contact him/her to request access rather than following the steps below. If your agency does not have a designated LEAM, continue with the steps below.
3. Complete a ViCAP LEA Manager Designation/ Replacement Form (signed by your agency head/ designee). The form is posted on the (LEEP) ViCAP SIG page. Fax it to 703-632-4239 or email it to [vicap@leo.gov](mailto:vicap@leo.gov).
4. ViCAP will monitor LEEP activations and process your agency's LEA Manager Form. An email will be sent to the LEAM with instructions on how to access the ViCAP Web National Crime Database and a referral to the (LEEP) ViCAP SIG page for helpful documents including one on how to add additional users.

### **Highway Serial Killings (HSK) Initiative:**

The FBI has undertaken an extensive effort to provide support to state and local law enforcement agencies investigating violent crimes that have a nexus to the nation's highways. This unprecedented support effort has been named the "Highway Serial Killings (HSK) Initiative."

ViCAP Crime Analysts have developed, and continue to develop, extensive timelines on suspects through the utilization of a variety of reliable sources of information. By comparing information in the victim matrix to suspect timelines, ViCAP Crime Analysts are able to assist in investigations by advising agencies who have contributed case information to the victim matrix about the identity of potential suspects. When a suspect is identified, or a group of cases are determined to be linked to a common offender, additional behavioral analytical services can be provided in furtherance of the investigation. Law enforcement agencies are requested to forward case information that meets any of the following criteria to ViCAP for possible inclusion into the HSK Initiative:

- Homicide victims whose remains were recovered along a highway, or at a location associated with a highway (rest stop, truck stop, gas station, and/or restaurant located along a major highway), to include truck drivers found murdered in their trucks



- Missing persons whose last known location was along a highway or location associated with a highway
- Victims of sexual assault in which there is a connection to a highway, or a location associated with a highway
- Truck drivers or other individuals who have been investigated or arrested for the murder, kidnapping, or sexual assault of one or more victims along a highway or at a location associated with a highway

\*Source: FBI Violent Criminal Apprehension Program (ViCAP) [ViCAP-Brochure.pdf](#) ([centerforimprovinginvestigations.org](#)). Retrieved online 01/31/2022.

## **\*PA State Police – Bureau of Forensics Services (BFS)**

The Pennsylvania State Police Bureau of Forensic Services operates a system of six regional forensic laboratories and one DNA laboratory strategically located throughout the Commonwealth. The primary mission of our Bureau is to serve the criminal justice community and the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania by providing the highest quality scientific, technical and investigative support to law enforcement agencies for the processing of crime-related evidence. The Bureau also provides training in Basic Crime Scene Investigation, Shoe and Tire Impression Evidence, and Crime Scene Photography.

Regional laboratories are located in Bethlehem, Erie, Greensburg, Harrisburg, Lima and Wyoming. The Forensic DNA Division is located in Greensburg. Regular business hours are: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Tours of the Pennsylvania State Police Labs are not available to the public.

The Bureau, Investigative and Operational Support Division, and Scientific Services Division administrative offices are located at Departmental Headquarters, and the Quality Management Division is located at 2900 Seminary Drive, Greensburg, PA 15601.

Testing services vary by laboratory. Please contact the laboratory for details. Within the Bureau, the following forensic disciplines are performed:

- Biology (Body Fluid Identification, Bloodstain Pattern Analysis, DNA)
- Drug Chemistry (Controlled Substances, Clandestine Laboratory Analysis, Alcohol Beverage Analysis)
- Firearms and Tool Marks (including Serial Number Restoration)
- Latent Prints (including Impression Evidence/Footwear & Tires)
- Questioned Documents
- Toxicology (Blood Alcohol, Blood-Drug Analysis)
- Trace Evidence (Paint, Fiber/Textiles, Gunshot Residue, Hair, Explosives, Fire Debris, General Physical and Chemical Analysis)

The vast majority of BFS testing services are accredited. Please contact the laboratory for details. Specific PA State Police Lab contact information can be found under the following section, **Pennsylvania Forensic Laboratory Services**. In addition, services currently accredited at each laboratory can be viewed on the accreditation scope document available on the accrediting body's website at <https://search.anab.org/>.

\*Source: PSP Bureau of Forensic Services <https://www.psp.pa.gov/contact/Pages/Bureau-of-Forensic-Services.aspx> Retrieved 01/31/2022.

# Pennsylvania Forensic Laboratory Services

This guide serves as a general reference for available services. Investigators must refer to your agency's directives and policies on how to collect and submit evidence to the laboratory that provides service to your jurisdiction. The following services are available in the respective forensic laboratory jurisdictions as indicated: the Allegheny County Office of Medical Examiner (**ACOME**), the Philadelphia Police Department (**PPD**) and the Pennsylvania State Police (**SP**). Forensic services provided by the District Attorney's Office in both Berks and Cumberland Counties are listed on page 4.

## Crime Scene

- Photographic Documentation – **ACOME, PPD, SP**
- Measurements and Electronic Sketches – **ACOME, PPD, SP**
- General Evidence Collection – **ACOME, PPD, SP**
- Trajectory Analysis (not including mathematic calculations) – **ACOME, PPD, SP\***
- Firearms Evidence Documentation and Collection – **ACOME, PPD, SP**
- Physiological Presumptive Testing and Collection (blood and semen) – **ACOME**
- Touch DNA Collection – **ACOME, PPD, SP**
- Gunshot Residue Evidence Collection – **ACOME, PPD, SP**
- Latent Print Processing (Powder only) – **ACOME, PPD, SP**
- Latent Print Processing (chemical, accu-trans) – **PPD, SP**
- Trace Evidence Collection (paint, fibers, hair, tape, etc..) – **ACOME, PPD, SP**
- Toolmark, Footwear, and Tire Impression Documentation and Collection – **ACOME, PPD, SP**
- Shallow Grave Site Evidence Documentation and Evidence Collection – **ACOME, PPD, SP**
- Fire and Explosion Scene Documentation and Evidence Collection – **ACOME, SP**
- Motor Vehicle Collision Documentation and Evidence Collection – **ACOME, SP**
- Bloodstain Pattern Analysis – **PPD, SP\***
- 3D scanning – **PPD, SP**

Note: PA State Police provide crime scene services through the Troops, not through the laboratory.

SP\* - Services provided by PSP lab.

## Drug Chemistry

- Chemical analysis (qualitative identification) of physical items suspected to contain controlled substances; includes powders, solids, liquids, pharmaceuticals (licit and illicit preparations), paper, and some plant or vegetable matter – **ACOME, PPD, SP**
- Determine total weight of materials containing controlled substances when required - **ACOME, PPD and SP**
- Suspected marijuana testing – **PPD, SP**
- Clandestine Laboratory Response Team – **PPD, SP**
- Beverage Alcohol testing for PA Liquor Code violations – **SP**
- Not applicable to biological fluids.
- Limitations:
  - A sampling plan may be used to test a selected number of items when large quantities of visually consistent items submitted.
  - Sentencing weight thresholds will be used to determine extent of testing.
  - Syringes which contain suspected blood will not be tested.
  - Residual matter on items will not be weighed but may be solvent rinsed for analysis.

# Firearms and Tool Mark

	Function Testing/ Operability	Trigger Pull Exam	Impact/ Drop Test	Caliber and Manufacturer Determination	Make/ Model Determination of FA from discharged bullet	Muzzle to target distance Determination	Tool mark Exam	Serial Number Restoration	Microscopic comparisons of fired ammunition and shot shell components	IBIS/NIBIN Entry of Fired Cartridge Casings
<b>ACOME</b>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>PPD</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>SP</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

## Forensic Biology

### Serology

	BODY FLUID (Detection/Identification)				Sex Assault Kit Exam	Hair Exam	Sample Prep for DNA	Touch DNA Collection
	Blood	Semen	Saliva	Urine / Feces				
<b>ACOME</b>	Yes (including animal ID)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<b>PPD</b>	Yes (including human ID)	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes (Suitability for DNA)	Yes	Yes
<b>SP</b>	Yes (including species ID)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (Suitability for DNA; human/animal origin)	Yes	Yes

### DNA

#### ACOME, PPD and SP:

- Develop DNA profiles from crime scene evidence
- Compare known profiles to crime scene evidence
- Upload/search DNA profiles from eligible crime scene evidence into CODIS (Combined DNA Index System) to generate investigative leads
- Assist with Genetic Genealogy investigations
- Access to Rapid DNA systems for specific applications – **PPD only**

Searchable DNA databases available in PA:

- CODIS (Primary/preferred DNA database)
  - National database consisting of local, state, and federal forensic DNA laboratories
  - The database contains DNA profiles from:
    - crime scenes
    - eligible offenders
    - missing persons
    - unidentified human remains
  - PSP is responsible for processing and maintaining the DNA profiles from PA state convicted offenders for entry into CODIS.
  - Associations made from CODIS may provide investigative leads at the local, state, and national level.
- Delaware Valley Investigative DNA Database (DVIDD)
  - Regional database maintained by the PPD and shared with regional counties.
  - The database contains DNA profiles developed by the PPD, profiles from Rapid DNA systems and accredited vendors that may not be in CODIS.
  - Associations made from DVIDD may provide investigative leads at the regional level.

## Latent Print and Impression Evidence

	Latent Print Development	Latent Print Examination (Fingers, Palms, & Foot prints)	AFIS Submissions (Fingers & Palms)	Tire Impression Examinations	Footwear Impression Examinations
<b>ACOME</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes – State/FBI	No	No
<b>PPD</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes -Local/State/FBI	No	No
<b>PSP</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes – State/FBI	Yes	Yes

## Toxicology

### **Human Performance Testing: Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol and/or Drugs – ACOME, PPD\*, SP**

Analyses are performed on whole blood specimens from living subjects to determine the presence of ethanol and/or other drugs which may modify human performance (i.e. the ability to operate a motor vehicle safely). When ethanol and/or other drugs are identified, the levels are quantitated, and the results are reported. The following types of toxicology examinations are available to submitting agencies.

### **Human Performance Testing: Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol and/or Drugs – ACOME, SP**

1. DUI-Alcohol Only: Only blood alcohol testing is performed on the specimen.
2. DUI-Drug Only: Only blood-drug testing is performed on the specimen.
3. DUI-Alcohol and Drug: Blood alcohol testing performed. Specimen tested for drugs only if alcohol less than threshold.

Note: **PPD\*** Toxicology services are provided through a contract service for Driving Under the Influence cases and other investigations as needed.

### **Postmortem Toxicology –**

**ACOME** - Biological fluids and tissues tested for alcohol, drugs and other toxic compounds to assist in the determination of the cause and manner of death.

Philadelphia - Postmortem samples are analyzed by the Philadelphia Medical Examiner's Office. Use contact information at end to obtain comprehensive list of drugs tested by each lab.

## Trace Evidence

Physical evidence is examined, identified and/or compared in an effort to make an association between the actors and the crime scene.

	Explosives	Fiber/ Textile	Fire Debris	Fracture Match	Hair	General Unknown	Glass	Paint	Primer Gunshot Residue	Tape	Vehicle Lamp On/Off Exam
<b>ACOME</b>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>PPD</b>	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
<b>SP</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note: **ACOME** and **PSP** do not accept GSR kits from the hands of an individual that has suffered a gunshot wound.

**PPD\*** - PPD will coordinates Trace forensic services not provided internally through an external provider.

## Questioned Documents

- Handwriting/Hand Printing/Signature Examinations – **PPD, SP**
- Examinations of/for Impressed/Indented Writings – **PPD, SP**
- Examinations of Obliterations, Alterations, or Eradications – **PPD, SP**
- Ink Comparisons and Paper Comparisons – **PPD, SP**
- Examinations of Charred, Water-Soaked, or Damaged Documents – **PPD, SP**
- Copier/Printer/Fax Examinations - Classification and Identification – **SP**
- Integral Parts Matching – **PPD, SP**
- Typewriter/Typewriting/Ribbon Examinations - Classification, Identification, Transcription – **SP**
- Latent Print Development on Paper Substrates – **PPD**
- Authentication of Identification Documents and Inspection Stickers – **PPD, SP**

The following services are available in the respective county jurisdictions as indicated: the Berks County District Attorney's Office Crime Laboratory (**BC**), and the Cumberland County District Attorney's Office Forensic Laboratory (**CC**):

	<b>Crime Scene/ Physical Evidence Processing</b>	<b>3D Crime Scene Scanning; Unmanned Aircraft Systems Operatios</b>	<b>Rapid DNA</b>	<b>Latent Print/AFIS Vacuum Metal Deposition</b>	<b>Firearms Examination / NIBIN</b>	<b>Serial Number Restoration</b>	<b>Digital Forensics</b>	<b>Drug Chemistry</b>	<b>Toxicology (BAC and Drug)</b>
<b>BC</b>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
<b>CC</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No*	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

\***CC** will coordinate Firearm services not provided internally through an external provider.

The forensic service providers in this document are accredited and provide most of the forensic analyses conducted in the Commonwealth. Accreditation is based on the technical qualifications and competence for conducting specific testing, calibration, and/or inspection activities within the scope of ISO/IEC 17025 or ISO/IEC 17020 and any relevant discipline-specific standards. Some services may not fall under the scope of accreditation; however, in these cases the laboratories operate under robust quality assurance programs, using best practices and scientifically accepted procedures. The PA forensic service providers are committed to providing reliable forensic analyses to enhance public safety throughout the Commonwealth.

## Contact Information:

<b>Allegheny Co Office of the Medical Examiner Forensic Laboratory</b>	(412) 350-4800	1520 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222
<b>Berks County District Attorney's Office Crime Laboratory</b>	(610) 898-1005	1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport, PA 19533
<b>Cumberland County District Attorney's Office Forensic Laboratory</b>	(717) 240-6526	1601 Ritner Highway, Carlisle, PA 17013
<b>Philadelphia Police Department Office of Forensic Science</b>	(215) 685-3100	843-849 N. 8 th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123
<b>PA State Police Bethlehem Regional Lab</b>	(610) 861-2103	2932 Airport Road, Bethlehem PA 18017
<b>PA State Police Forensic DNA Lab</b>	(724) 832-5423	80 N. Westmoreland Avenue, Greensburg, PA 15601
<b>PA State Police Erie Regional Lab</b>	(814) 899-8447	4310 Iroquois Avenue, Erie, PA 16511
<b>PA State Police Greensburg Regional Lab</b>	(724) 832-3299	425 Willow Crossing Road, Greensburg, PA 15601
<b>PA State Police Harrisburg Regional Lab</b>	(717) 783-5554	1800 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110
<b>PA State Police Lima Regional Lab</b>	(610) 891-6360	350 N. Middletown Road, Lima, PA 19063
<b>PA State Police Wyoming Regional Lab</b>	(570) 654-5921	1400 Sathers Road, Pittston, PA 18640

## Appendix D – Police Report Writing Standards

No matter what type of report you are completing, there are universal standards that should be followed to ensure you are writing a reliable and thorough report. The list below outlines best practices to be implemented when constructing a quality police report.

### 1. Accurate / Factual

- Report only factual information. Do **NOT** use opinion or reference.
- Only factual data as known to the officer at the time of the incident should be reported.
- Accuracy is the paramount characteristic of a police report.
- All data should be checked and verified before the police report is submitted.
- Names should be properly spelled, numbers double-checked and locations verified. Have an assisting officer or an officer unrelated to incident review for clarity.
- Reports shall be intently scrutinized prior to trial and before the inaccurate data becomes a source for attacks by the defense attorney and an embarrassment for the officer, the police department, and the prosecutor.
- Since courts accept police reports at face value, it is imperative that they not contain false or inaccurate information. An officer's written police report may be the basis for another police department filing criminal charges or proceeding with a police investigation.
- Officers submitting false reports can face internal administrative charges and criminal charges.
- Oral testimony that contradicts written reports can create serious problems at trial and could eventually "reasonable doubt" in the mind of a judge or jury.
- It is important for community members to have their involvement accurately reflected in a police report.

### 2. Concise

- Avoid wordiness - rambling narratives make understanding difficult. Keep it simple!
- Including only factual data helps eliminate unnecessary information.
- Reports should be brief and to the point without flowery comments, humor, or embellishment.
- Brevity should not be achieved at the expense of needed or required information.
- Use simple, uncomplicated sentences.
- **JUST THE FACTS!!** A fact is fact, something which is observable. Hearsay is just that information not heard first-hand by the witness.
- Officers need to be aware of any personal bias and prejudices, which may be expressed in the police report, no matter how subtle.



### 3. Complete

- All relevant details must be included in the report as it is not possible to predict what might be the essential linkage between suspect and crime, for example the clothing worn at the time of the arrest may be the clothing worn in another police department's criminal offense or incident.
- Complete reports should answer the basic questions and leave nothing to the reader's imagination. (Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How)
- Reports must include all the elements that substantiate the reported offense. Facts must support probable cause statement, the affidavit for a search warrant, and the elements of each offense. If the facts are not written in the report- it will be difficult to substantiate them at a later time.
- Completeness is not just one police report for a criminal incident and done, but multiple reports documenting court appearances, changes in the chain of custody of the evidence, and additional witnesses.

### 4. Clear

- Clarity can be achieved by using appropriate language and organization.

### 5. Organized and Logical Information

- Information should be organized logically, sequenced in the manner in which it was obtained, or the investigation proceeded by using a new supplemental police report page for a new date of information with a distinct heading title. (The reason for a new page with a new date is for when police reports are allowed to refresh a police officer's recollection during trial, but not wanting to have the entire report available from the witness stand.)

### 6. Bullet Points

- Bullet points can be used to make information stand out, such as a list items recovered, or statements made by a suspect or victim at the scene. For example:
  - Laboratory Technician Matthew Brady responded and photographed the scene.

#### **NOT**

- The scene was photographed by a laboratory technician.

### 7. Simple and Plain Language

- Simple and easily understood language should be used. Use words that you can explain easily.
- No jargon, slang or profanity (unless it is part of a necessary quote).
- Technical, scientific or medical terms should be avoided unless their inclusion is absolutely necessary.
- Write to inform, not to impress; you'll be more successful by informing only.

## 8. Legible

- With computers, it is hard to imagine submitting reports that are illegible. If you must hand write the police report - **Always Print, but do not use all capital letters.**
- Hand-written police reports, while acceptable by some police departments, must be easily read with a minimum number of corrections and use of correction tapes or liquids. Generous use of correcting fluid should prompt a report to be rewritten.
- Remember to use Spell Check, but always check to make sure the words being checked are the correct ones that you wanted.
- Police reports reflect the officer, who authored the police report and the police department and community they represent.

## 9. Objective

- Since reports are factual documents, they should be free of bias, opinions, conclusions, and judgments.
- A police report that is bias inhibits impartiality and casts suspicion on the criminal investigation.
- Readers should be able to draw their own inferences from the factual data reported by the officer.
- Citizens are entitled to objective, unbiased reporting of events, incidents and crimes.
- If an officer is compelled to include an opinion in any report, it must be clearly identified as such and include a significant reason for its inclusion in police report. Opinions are generally written by experts in their field such as a fingerprint expert, a crash reconstructionist, a use of force expert, or a forensic scientist.
- Opinions can be challenged, refuted, and shown to contain a bias or prejudice.

## 10. Basic Questions Answered (The “5 Ws” and How)

### Who

- Complainant(s), victim(s), suspect(s), and witnesses
- Involved officers and police personnel by title & name
- Officer creating the police report
- Located and Recovered evidence
- Present at the scene before and during the incident
- Known associates and relatives of suspect(s) who might provide investigative leads  
Include demographic information at the end of the report. This information should be bolded and include - Name, Address, Phone numbers, DOB and SSN.

## **What**

- Elements of the alleged criminal offense or incident
- Actions of victim(s), suspect(s), witness(es)
- Events that took place
- Actions of investigator, specialized officers, and assisting officers
- Type of evidence, for example, weapon, blood, and latent prints, etc.
- Injuries seen
- Property reported stolen or property damaged

## **When**

The consistent source of time, such as the dispatcher from the Communication Center or an officer on the scene is important for the accurate reporting of time sensitive events.

- Time incident occurred
- Time it was reported
- Time officer(s) arrived and cleared from scene
- Time suspect was arrested

## **Where**

Location of the crime committed is important to confirm the police department having jurisdiction.

- Evidence located
- Location of point of entry
- Location of wounds, injuries, marks, scars, tattoos
- Address of witnesses, suspects, or bystanders

## **How**

- Method(s) used to commit crime. The “MO” (modus operandi) is the specific way a suspect tends to commit their crime in successive crimes
- Suspect(s) left the crime scene or incident in a vehicle or on foot
- Police department is notified of an incident
- Route of escape which might reveal additional witnesses

## **Why**

- Intent of crime (motive)
- Witness’s reluctance to provide information

## Appendix E – Example Forms

**Note:** The following forms in this Appendix E section have been used with permission from Abington Township PD and Lancaster City Bureau of Police.

### Example Crime Scene Form from Abington Township PD



## ABINGTON TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

### CRIME SCENE COORDINATOR/ CRIME SCENE MANAGER'S LOG

**INCIDENT#:** \_\_\_\_\_

**INCIDENT TYPE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LOCATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

## REFERENCE NUMBERS AND CONTACT DETAILS

Reference Numbers		
Incident Number:		
Date and Location:		
DA - Major Crime Unit ref Number:		
Miscellaneous:		
Contact Details		
Name/ Location	Tel. No.	Mobile/Pager
Senior Investigator		
Assisting Investigator(s)		
Evidence Custodian		
Senior County Detective		
District Attorney		
Other (Specify)		
Crime Scene Co-ordinator		
Crime Scene Manager		
Crime Scene Manager		
Crime Scene Manager		
Crime Scene Manager		
CSI		
CSI		
CSI		
CSI		
CSI		
CSI		
CSI		
CSI		
Photographer		
Photographer		
Photographer		
Photographer		
Plan Drawers		
Fingerprints		
Specialist(s)		
Specify:		
Pathologist		
Coroners Officer		
Miscellaneous		

## HISTORY OF SCENE

Details of First Officers at scene

Cordon/ Security Review Details:

Scene Log in use? Yes/ No      Log commenced by:

Other emergency services personnel who entered scene.

Non-emergency persons who entered scene.

### SPECIALIST PERSONNEL ATTENDING SCENE

Coroner:

Time of Arrival:

Time Death Certified:

Pathologist:

Time of Arrival:

Comments:

Undertakers:

Time Body Removed:

Other Specialists: (e.g., entomologists, archaeologists, anthropologists, odontologists etc.)

## INITIAL SCENE OBSERVATIONS

Description of Premises/Location

Description of Surroundings/Weather

Common Approach Path/ Stepping Plates

Details of Disturbance

Forced Entry

Items Foreign to Scene

Furnishings/ Contents

**INITIAL SCENE OBSERVATIONS - MAIN SCENE**

Doors (Locked/ Keys)

Windows (Open/ Closed/ Locked)

Curtains/ Blinds (Open/ Closed)

Lighting Details

Switches

Sinks/ Traps/ Washing Machines/ Dishwashers

Heating System (On/ Off/ Type/ Timer Settings), Gas Supply (On/Off/ Type) Main Fuse Box



**INITIAL SCENE OBSERVATIONS - REMAINDER OF SCENE**

**Hallway**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Living Room**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Bathroom**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Kitchen**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Bedroom 1**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Bedroom 2**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Bedroom 3**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Bedroom 4**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Other Room 1**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Other Room 2**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Other Room 3**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Garage**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Outbuilding 1**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Outbuilding 2**

(Door/ Lights/ Windows/ Curtains/ Switches/ Furnishings/ Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**Gardens**

(Disturbance/ Foreign Items)

**VEHICLE DETAILS-      VEHICLE 1**

Make/Model/Color

Registration No.

Registration - State

Chassis/ Engine No.

Vehicle Identification No.

Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous

Odometer reading

Trip meter reading

Fuel level

Stolen: Date/location

Used: Date/location

Found: Date/location

Tire make/ size: FDS:                      FPS:  
RDS:                      RPS:                      Spare:

Damage

CSI Examining/ Report No.

Briefing

Other Info

**VEHICLE DETAILS-      VEHICLE 2**

Make/ Model/Color

Registration No.

Registration - State

Chassis/ Engine No.

Vehicle Identification No.

Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous

Odometer reading

Trip meter reading

Fuel level

Stolen: Date/location

Used: Date/location

Found: Date/location

Tire make/ size: FDS:                      FPS:  
RDS:                      RPS:                      Spare:

Damage

CSI Examining/ Report No.

Briefing

Other Info

**VEHICLE DETAILS-      VEHICLE 3**

Make/ Model/Color

Registration No.

Registration - State

Chassis/ Engine No.

Vehicle Identification No.

Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous

Odometer reading

Trip meter reading

Fuel level

Stolen: Date/location

Used: Date/location

Found: Date/location

Tire make/ size: FDS:                      FPS:  
RDS:                      RPS:                      Spare:

Damage

CSI Examining/ Report No.

Briefing

Other Info

**VEHICLE DETAILS-      VEHICLE 4**

Make/ Model/Color

Registration No.

Registration - State

Chassis / Engine No.

Vehicle Identification No.

Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous

Odometer reading

Trip meter reading

Fuel level

Stolen: Date/location

Used: Date/location

Found: Date/location

Tire make/ size: FDS:                      FPS:  
RDS:                      RPS:                      Spare:

Damage

CSI Examining/ Report No.

Briefing

Other Info



**DECEASED CHECKLIST - DECEASED NO. 1**

Name

Address

Date of Birth

Occupation

Position of Body

Visible Marks of Violence

Clothing

Jewelry

Body Tapings of Exposed Skin

**DECEASED CHECKLIST (Continued) - DECEASED NO. 1**

Body Temperature:	Time:
-------------------	-------

Air Temperature:	Time:
------------------	-------

15 Min. Intervals	1.	2.	3.	4.
-------------------	----	----	----	----

Details of Surrounding Vegetation

Details of Water

Details of Weapons

**Clothing Male**

Outer Garment		Gloves		Underpants	
Jacket		Tie		Socks	
Trousers		Shirt		Footwear	
Head-dress		Vest		Wallet/ Phone	

**Clothing Female**

Outer Garment		Head-dress		Bra	
Dress		Gloves		Panties	
Blouse		Vest		Tights	
Skirt		Underwear		Stockings	
Bag/Purse/ Phone		Footwear		Girdle	

**DECEASED CHECKLIST - DECEASED NO. 2**

Name

Address

Date of Birth

Occupation

Position of Body

Visible Marks of Violence

Clothing

Jewelry

Body Tapings of Exposed Skin

**DECEASED CHECKLIST (Continued) - DECEASED NO. 2**

Body Temperature:	Time:
-------------------	-------

Air Temperature:	Time:
------------------	-------

15 Min. Intervals	1.	2.	3.	4.
-------------------	----	----	----	----

Details of Surrounding Vegetation

Details of Water

Details of Weapons

**Clothing Male**

Outer Garment		Gloves		Underpants	
Jacket		Tie		Socks	
Trousers		Shirt		Footwear	
Head-dress		Vest		Wallet/ Phone	

**Clothing Female**

Outer Garment		Head-dress		Bra	
Dress		Gloves		Panties	
Blouse		Vest		Tights	
Skirt		Underwear		Stockings	
Bag/Purse/ Phone		Footwear		Girdle	

**DECEASED CHECKLIST - DECEASED NO. 3**

Name

Address

Date of Birth

Occupation

Position of Body

Visible Marks of Violence

Clothing

Jewelry

Body Tapings of Exposed Skin

**DECEASED CHECKLIST (Continued) - DECEASED NO. 3**

Body Temperature:	Time:
-------------------	-------

Air Temperature:	Time:
------------------	-------

15 Min. Intervals	1.	2.	3.	4.
-------------------	----	----	----	----

Details of Surrounding Vegetation
-----------------------------------

Details of Water
------------------

Details of Weapons
--------------------

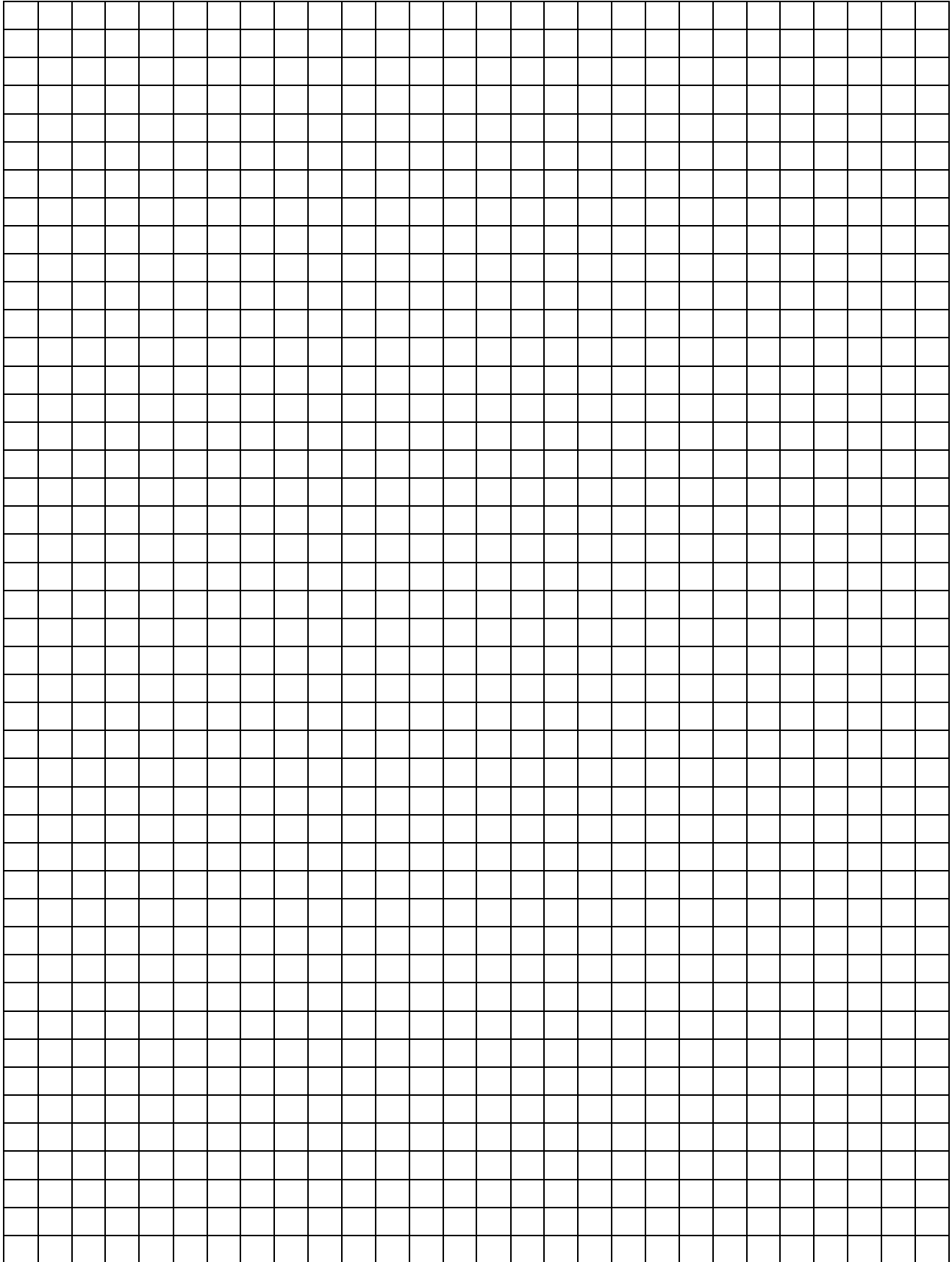
**Clothing Male**

Outer Garment	Gloves	Underpants
Jacket	Tie	Socks
Trousers	Shirt	Footwear
Head-dress	Vest	Wallet/ Phone

**Clothing Female**

Outer Garment	Head-dress	Bra
Dress	Gloves	Panties
Blouse	Vest	Tights
Skirt	Underwear	Stockings
Bag/Purse/ Phone	Footwear	Girdle

## SKETCH PLAN OF SCENE



## INFORMATION FROM FIRE OFFICERS

Security of Premises on Arrival

Forcible Entry by Fire Service

Location and Extent of Burning on Arrival

Effects of firefighting on fire spread and final burning pattern

Relevant Observations Disclosed (Persons on Scene etc.)

Video surveillance equipment fitted to Fire Unit?

Weather Conditions



### SCENE ATTENDANCE CROSS REFERENCE

	Scene/ Name	Scene/ Name	Scene/ Name	Scene/ Name	Scene/ Name	Comments
CSI Attending (This column)						

**SCENE ATTENDANCE CROSS REFERENCE**

	Scene/ Name		Scene/ Name	Scene/ Name	Scene/ Name	Scene/ Name	Comments
CSI Attending (This column)							

## SCENE ATTENDANCE CROSS REFERENCE

	Scene/ Name	Scene/ Name	Scene/ Name	Scene/ Name	Scene/ Name	Comments
CSI Attending (This column)						

## SCENE RECORD

Forensic Search Parameters

Health & Safety Considerations

### Scene Forensic Recovery Strategy

Date and Time	Officer Setting Strategy	Details of Forensic Recovery Strategy

### Scene Forensic Recovery Strategy (continued)


### Other Scene Observations:


## SCENE DECISIONS

<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Person Making Decision</b>	<b>Decision</b>

## SCENE DECISIONS

Date and Time	Person Making Decision	Decision

## SCENE DECISIONS

<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Person Making Decision</b>	<b>Decision</b>



# FINGERPRINT AND FORENSIC EXAMINATIONS

## Examination Type

Areas Examined	Visual	Light Source	Powder	Chemical	Other	Comments
Gardens						
Garage						
Outbuildings						
Hallway						
Dining Room						
Lounge						
Kitchen						
Bedrooms						
Landing						
Toilet						
Bathroom						
Other						

### Notes

# FINGERPRINT AND FORENSIC EXAMINATIONS

## Outside Agencies

Areas Examined	SIU	Bio	Firearms	Drugs	Contact Trace	Other
Gardens						
Garage						
Outbuildings						
Hallway						
Dining Room						
Lounge						
Kitchen						
Bedrooms						
Landing						
Toilet						
Bathroom						
Other						

### Notes

## SCENE IMAGING

### Photographic Stills

Scene	Photographer	Ref. No	Entered into Computer by	Major Crime File Updated

### Video

Scene	Photographer	Ref. No.	No. of Video Copies	Entered into evidence by	Major Crime File Updated

### Specialist Photography

Scene	Photographer	Ref. No.	Type of Mark	Identifying Ref.	Light Source	Entered into computer by	Major Crime File Updated

# POST-MORTEM EXHIBITS

(Copy to Pathologist)

## Deceased Details

Name

Male/ Female

D.O.B. or approx. age

Where found

When found

Miscellaneous

## Post-Mortem Details

Date/ Time/ Location

## Those Present

Pathologist  
Visited Scene Yes/No

Coroners Officer

Senior Investigator

County Detective

Photographer

CSI

DA

Others

## POST-MORTEM EXHIBITS - Continued

Deceased	
Identifying Mark	Exhibit Details
	Body Bag
	Head Bag
	Hand Bag Left/ Right
	Hand Bag Left/ Right
	Foot Bag Left/ Right
	Foot Bag Left/ Right
	Skin Swab
	Nasal Swabs X 2
	Oral Swabs X 2
	Head Hair (Combed)
	Head Hair (Plucked)
	Pubic Hairs (Combed)
	Pubic Hairs (Plucked)
	Chest Hair (Combed)
	Chest Hair (Plucked)
	Fingernail clippings/ scrapings (left)
	Fingernail clippings/ scrapings (right)

## POST-MORTEM EXHIBITS - Continued

Deceased	
	Tape lifts (hands)
	Tape lifts (hair)
	Tape lifts (neck)
	Vaginal swabs - External x 2
	Vaginal swabs - Low internal x 2
	Vaginal swabs - High internal x 2
	Perineal swab - x2
	Anal swabs - External x 2
	Anal swabs - Low internal x 2
	Anal swabs - High internal x 2
	Penile swabs - External x 2
	Penile swabs - Coronal x 2
	Oral swabs x 2
	Blood (Preserved)
	Blood (EDTA)
	Blood (Unpreserved)
	Urine (Preserved)
	Urine (Unpreserved)
	Stomach contents

## POST-MORTEM EXHIBITS - Continued

Deceased	
	Liver
	Deep muscle tissue
	Bone marrow
	Lungs
	Vitreous humour

**Notes**

## INFORMAL CONTACT/ MEETINGS

DATE	VENUE	NOTES



### INFORMAL CONTACT/ MEETINGS

DATE	VENUE	NOTES

### FORENSIC MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

DATE	VENUE	PRESENT	FORENSIC SUBMISSIONS STRATGEY

**Meeting Notes**

DATE	VENUE	PRESENT	FORENSIC SUBMISSIONS STRATGEY

**Meeting Notes**

### FORENSIC MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

DATE	VENUE	PRESENT	FORENSIC SUBMISSIONS STRATGEY

**Meeting Notes**

DATE	VENUE	PRESENT	FORENSIC SUBMISSIONS STRATGEY

**Meeting Notes**

### FORENSIC MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

DATE	VENUE	PRESENT	FORENSIC SUBMISSIONS STRATGEY

**Meeting Notes**

DATE	VENUE	PRESENT	FORENSIC SUBMISSIONS STRATGEY

**Meeting Notes**

### FORENSIC MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

DATE	VENUE	PRESENT	FORENSIC SUBMISSIONS STRATGEY

**Meeting Notes**

DATE	VENUE	PRESENT	FORENSIC SUBMISSIONS STRATGEY

**Meeting Notes**

### FORENSIC MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

DATE	VENUE	PRESENT	FORENSIC SUBMISSIONS STRATGEY

**Meeting Notes**

DATE	VENUE	PRESENT	FORENSIC SUBMISSIONS STRATGEY

**Meeting Notes**

### MAJOR INCIDENT ROOM BRIEFINGS

Date	Notes	Information Passed on	Reason for Absence

Date	Notes	Information Passed on	Reason for Absence

## MAJOR INCIDENT ROOM BRIEFINGS

Date	Notes	Information Passed on	Reason for Absence

Date	Notes	Information Passed on	Reason for Absence



### MAJOR INCIDENT ROOM BRIEFINGS

Date	Notes	Information Passed on	Reason for Absence

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### MAJOR INCIDENT ROOM BRIEFINGS

Date	Notes	Information Passed on	Reason for Absence

Date	Notes	Information Passed on	Reason for Absence

### MAJOR INCIDENT ROOM BRIEFINGS

Date	Notes	Information Passed on	Reason for Absence

Date	Notes	Information Passed on	Reason for Absence



## CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT TEAM BRIEFINGS AND DEBRIEFINGS

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

## CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT TEAM BRIEFINGS AND DEBRIEFINGS

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

## CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT TEAM BRIEFINGS AND DEBRIEFINGS

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

## CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT TEAM BRIEFINGS AND DEBRIEFINGS

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

## CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT TEAM BRIEFINGS AND DEBRIEFINGS

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

## CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT TEAM BRIEFINGS AND DEBRIEFINGS

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

## CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT TEAM BRIEFINGS AND DEBRIEFINGS

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

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## CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT TEAM BRIEFINGS AND DEBRIEFINGS

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## CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT TEAM BRIEFINGS AND DEBRIEFINGS

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**Meeting Notes**

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

## CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT TEAM BRIEFINGS AND DEBRIEFINGS

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

Date	Venue	Present

**Meeting Notes**

# AIDE MEMOIRE

## General

1. Scene Manager/ Scene Co-ordinator to be appointed
2. Scene Manager to receive comprehensive briefing by Officer/ S.I.O. at the scene. Ensure logs have been commenced
3. Review scene preservation methods/cordons. Establish rendezvous point and car parking area.
4. Ensure full protective clothing, suits/ overshoes worn by all personnel entering the scene and that they have a valid reason for doing so. Brief scene entry-logist on the requirements/ restrictions on entry to scene.
5. Establish common approach path and consider stepping plates. Consider alternative routes. Consider tents, screens, sheeting, and lighting etc.
6. Consider closing the scene until daylight.
7. Commence initial scene video/ still photography. Consider aerial photography.
8. Scene manager to decide on and arrange attendance of pathologist, forensic scientist, and any other specialists.
9. Forensic Medical Examiner/ Pathologist to certify death.
10. Air/ room temperatures, Met. Office data, heating settings etc.
11. Check all electrical switches/ sockets and appliances are working.
12. Check all gas appliances/ pipes in working order.
13. Consider ½ hour rectal temperatures (Not in sexual offences) and air temperatures if the body is to remain in situ for a prolonged period.
14. Scene Manager to liaise with Plan Drawer(s) regarding scene requirements.
15. ALL firearms found to be made safe by authorised officers. Consider the attendance of a ballistics specialist.
16. Consider preservation of insect life on body – especially in cases of advanced decomposition or if the body may have been moved.
17. Consider the use of an entomologist, biologist, and anthropologist.
18. Complete relevant examination of the body prior to removal. Tape lift as appropriate. In cases of burning, tape lift all exposed areas of skin as it is prone to break away from body.
19. Bag head, hands and feet before removal. If possibility cocaine use involved paper bag on head.
20. Obtain samples from underneath the body. (For example: soil, carpet etc.)
21. Ascertain identities of all persons entering the scene prior to introduction of control measures and obtain elimination fingerprints/ footwear. Consider seizing their clothing.

22. Arrange removal of deceased.
23. Recover "fragile" evidence from entry point (for example fibres etc.) Tape lift contact areas on common approach paths.
24. Latent footwear impressions in dust. ESLA as soon as possible and always before further examinations undertaken.
25. Consider chemical enhancement of footwear marks in blood.
26. Tool/ Tire/ footwear impressions – photograph and cast.
27. Blood distribution – mark and photograph. Consider attendance of scientist. Agree plan of action E.g., swab or removal of wallpaper, flooring etc.
28. Fingerprint examination - agree parameters with SIO. Consider use of Quasar/ chemical treatment.
29. Arrange for extended search by Operations Support Unit.
30. Consider seizure of CCTV video tapes.
31. Even if not apparently involved, vehicles of victims and suspects.

# MORTUARIES

## CONSIDER HEALTH AND SAFETY AT ALL TIMES

1. X-ray body prior to examination in all gunshot cases.
2. Ensure pre-transfusion blood samples in appropriate cases.
3. Consider odontology.
4. Swab all bite marks for saliva.
5. Assess best method of obtaining deceased's finger and palm prints after the post-mortem.
6. Consider removal of wounds for use by laboratory.
7. Examine body 24 and 48 hours after for bruising and footwear impression. Consider UV/ Infra-red photography.

## SEARCH AREAS

Brief all search teams regarding what has and has not been searched.

Remember the following items and areas when conducting searches.

1. Under carpets and floorboards.
2. Behind and underside of furniture.
3. Behind bath panel.
4. Inside cupboards and drawers.
5. Gardens.
6. Garages/ sheds.
7. Cisterns/ traps under sinks, manholes/ drains.
8. Fires, stoves, chimneys.
9. Telephone answering machine/ memory.
10. Floor cloths/ buckets.
11. Indented writing on notepads/ typewriters/ email/ IT/ disks.
12. Toilet roll last sheets.
13. Mail in/ under letterbox. N.B. Note order on floor.
14. Milk bottles.
15. Electrical fittings
16. Freezer/ fridge.
17. Beds/ linens.
18. Clothes/ wash baskets.
19. Fire ashes.
20. Newspapers.
21. Litter bins.
22. Washing machine/ dishwasher.

# Memo

Date: [Month/Day/Year]  
To: Neighborhood residents of \_\_\_\_\_  
From: Criminal Investigation Division  
RE: Shooting Investigation at \_\_\_\_\_

---

The Lancaster City Bureau of Police is investigating a shooting incident that occurred in the area of \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ at approx. \_\_\_\_\_. We are actively seeking any information that you may have. We are in the process of conducting a neighborhood canvas of the area to assist with gathering information regarding this incident.

We appreciate any information you may be able to provide. If you are in receipt of this memo, we were at your home to ask if you may have heard or seen anything unusual or out of place at or near \_\_\_\_\_. Unfortunately, you were not at home at the below listed time and date.

Please contact Lancaster Bureau of Police Criminal Investigation Division or Detective \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lancaster City Bureau of Police at 717-\_\_\_\_\_ to make any necessary arrangements for an investigator to speak with you.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

---

Address

---

Date / Time of canvass

LANCASTER BUREAU OF POLICE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION					
CRIME SCENE LOGIN					
LCWC AN#:				LOGIN OFFICER: (1)	
					NAME
DATE:					TIME
LOCATION:				:(2)	NAME
CRIME SCENE OIC:					TIME
OFFENSE:				:(3)	NAME
VICTIM:					TIME
PROSECUTER:					
LOG IN EVERY PERSON WHO ENTERS THE CRIME SCENE, THE TIME ENTERED, THE TIME LEFT, THE REASON THE PERSON ENTERED AND WHO AUTHORIZED THE PERSON TO ENTER THE CRIME SCENE.					
NAME	TIME IN	TIME OUT	REASON FOR ENTRY	AUTHORIZATION	
1)					
2)					
3)					
4)					
5)					
6)					
7)					
8)					
9)					
10)					
11)					
12)					
13)					
14)					
15)					
16)					
17)					





**LANCASTER BUREAU OF POLICE**  
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

<b>SUBJECT:</b> Preliminary Death Investigations: Patrol Considerations Guide		<b>NO.</b> 410/01(a)
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	<b>REVIEW DATE:</b>	
<b>REFERENCES:</b>		

**DEATH INVESTIGATION**  
**Patrol Considerations**

**Initial Call**

- Document time of call
- Determine reporting person, locate, and interview whenever possible

**Arrival**

- Document arrival time
- Determine whether the victim is dead or alive
- Ensure the scene is safe
- Arrest the suspect if present
- Request EMS when necessary- initiate first aid as needed
- When EMS arrived first, speak with personnel to confirm death
- Determine names/ addresses, phone numbers of all EMS personnel on scene
- Determine which EMS personnel entered scene
- Determine whether EMS, or others, altered scene or victim- record details
- Determine purpose for altering or disturbing scene
- Identify, detain, and separate witnesses
- Identify victim

**Protection of Scene**

- Assess crime scene
- Establish inner and outer perimeter
- Record names, addresses, phone number of all persons present at scene
- Remove unauthorized persons from the scene- record their information
- Request additional officers as needed to secure scene
- Establish a single path into scene for other investigators
- Preserve and protect the scene
- Do not touch or alter weapons unless absolutely necessary for officer safety

**Notifications**

- Update dispatch on victim's condition
- Notify a Street Sergeant and/or OIC
- Ensure that CID and Coroner's Office are notified for all deaths
- Record time/date of notifications
- Broadcast pertinent information as it develops, i.e., suspect's description, etc.

**Preliminary Investigation**

- Initiate a crime scene log
- Do not touch, move, alter, or disturb anything within the scene
- If you must disturb anything, record what and why it was disturbed
- Prohibit use of tobacco (chew and smoking)
- Do not use toilet or sink
- Inform responding supervisor and investigators upon their arrival
- Obtain preliminary photographs of scene, overview and close-ups, if so instructed
- In detail, note and document condition and location of body
- In detail, note and document visible injuries

**Describe condition of the scene**

- Doors and windows secure?
- Signs of struggle
- Obvious items missing or disturbed
- Existence or lack of valuables on victim or within scene
- Lighting
- Weather
- Medications- document information from label when practical
- Document the presence, details, and locations of weapons
- Consider drawing a rough sketch to document scene

**Canvass**

- Initiate a neighborhood canvass to locate and identify potential witnesses
- Record vehicle information within and near crime scene

**Valuables**

- In coroner cases, the coroner must safeguard valuables
- Use common sense in securing valuables

**Suspect in Custody**

- Preserve and protect evidence on body of suspect
- Note and document injuries
- Record spontaneous statements
- Keep separated from witnesses and other suspects

**Suicides**

- Determine existence of notes, medications, weapons
- Do not cut body down, preserve knot
- Obtain background information on victim's mental state
- Obtain drug and alcohol history
- Speak with family and friends to determine victim's state of mind

**Natural Deaths**

- Verify that victim was under the on-going care of a physician
- Contact that physician and determine when victim was last treated
- Confirm victim's disease, infirmity, or disability
- Determine condition prior to death
- Determine victim's medications
- Record all types and quantity of medications present
- Treating physician must certify and rule death
- Rule out foul play, accident, or suicide
- Coordinate contact with treating physician and the coroner
- Speak with next of kin to choose funeral home for disposition of body

**Authorization of Body Removal**

- Natural deaths- treating physician/ coroner
- Criminal/suspicious- CID/Coroner
- Accident/Suicide- Coroner

**REMEMBER ADAPT:**

- A**rrest the suspect if possible
- D**etain and identify witnesses and suspects
- A**ccess the scene
- P**rotect the scene
- T**ake notes