

BERKELEY POLICE DEPARTMENT

DATE ISSUED: March 15, 2000

GENERAL ORDER C-52

SUBJECT: CRIME SCENE MANAGEMENT AND INVESTIGATION

PURPOSE

- 1 - The purpose of this General Order is to establish the responsibilities and procedures for crime scene processing.

POLICY

- 2 - The officer assigned to a crime or accident scene must assume control of the scene immediately upon arrival and must retain control until relieved or until the investigation is completed.

EMERGENCY ACTION

- 3 - The first responsibility of employees is to render medical assistance to injured persons, as needed.

Fire and paramedic services personnel will be assisted by police personnel in performing any lifesaving effort if injured persons are found at the scene. When these duties have been completed, the officer in control will again restrict of access to the scene to only those actively involved in the investigation. The names of all emergency personnel, including ambulance attendants, should be recorded.

PROCEDURES

- 4 - No one, except personnel involved in a lifesaving role, should be permitted within a crime scene unless their presence will further the investigation being conducted. All persons will report to the officer in control before entering the scene.
 - (a) All persons permitted within a crime scene should be listed in the police report. The details of their activity and function at the scene should be described. This may include, but not be limited to, evidence collected, photographs taken, measurements and diagrams drawn, and interviews conducted.
 - (b) If necessary, scenes involving establishments or parking lots open to the public should be closed if access to any portion of the establishment or parking lot interferes with the security of the scene.

IDENTIFICATION, PRESERVATION AND COLLECTION OF EVIDENCE

- 5 - No physical object will be moved or evidence collected for any reason, other than for safety reasons or for the prevention of the destruction of evidence, until so directed by the officer in control.

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- (a) The officer in control will document and collect all the physical evidence and arrange for latent prints and photographic processing of the scene, or he/she may delegate the duties to another who will work under his/her direction. Written documentation may be supplemented by sketching or video, as needed. Written documentation will also include all the tacks performed even if the results of the evidence search and processing proved negative.

PROCESSING PHYSICAL EVIDENCE IN THE FIELD

- 6 - Methods used by Officers/Identification Technicians processing physical evidence in the field are those that will preserve the condition of the evidence collected, prevent the introduction of foreign materials to it, and ensure as complete a sample as possible and practical
 - (a) Equipment for evidence processing is maintained in the **Crime Scene Unit*** for use by the Identification Technicians.
 - (b) The identification vehicle is equipped with fingerprinting camera and film, measuring equipment, ladder, clipboard, paper and writing tools for sketches, containers for collection and preservation of physical evidence, and portable lights.

CHAIN OF CUSTODY

- 7 - The chain of custody is the written record of all individuals who have maintained control of evidence. The chain of custody begins when an item of evidence is collected and is maintained until the final disposition is made. The chain of custody assures continual accountability. Each individual in the chain is responsible for evidence while under his/her control.
- 8 - Officers/Identification Technicians will collect physical evidence in accordance with procedures to insure a proper chain of evidence.
 - (a) The initial step is marking or labeling the item at the time it is collected.
 - (1) Items that can be marked shall be packaged or placed in an appropriate container and sealed.
 - (2) Items that cannot be marked shall be placed in appropriate containers, sealed and markings or labels -,hall be placed on the seal
 - (b) For all items of evidence, a list is prepared containing the following information:
 - (1) Description of the item (including make, model number and serial number, if any)

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- (2) The source (from whom or location obtained)
 - (3) Name of person collecting the item or items.
 - (4) Disposition of each item of evidence.
- (c) A report will be prepared by the person assigned to process the scene. The report will be done on the Berkeley Police Department Evidence and Photographic Report form and will include the following information:
- (1) Date and time of arrival at the scene.
 - (2) Location of the crime or accident.
 - (3) Name of the victim(s).
 - (4) Name of suspects, if known.
 - (5) Action taken at the scene, including the number of photographs taken, measurements taken (yes/no), and the items of physical evidence listed in Section (b).
 - (6) Case number.
 - (7) If an Identification Technician is assigned, the report should also include the date and time a request for service was received, the name of the investigating officer, the disposition of physical evidence, and of the exposed negatives.
 - (8) Copies of the report will be forwarded to the Detective Bureau and/or the investigating officer.
- 9 - The most effective use of laboratory and forensic resources can be realized only if the physical evidence is collected initially and preserved properly. When photographs are not taken, or where physical evidence is not recovered from the scene of a serious crime (including homicide, rape, robbery, major assault, burglary and arson), the investigating officer shall indicate in the narrative of the initial report the reasons why.

EVIDENCE REQUIRING SPECIAL HANDLING

- 10 - Stained garments or bed clothes should be air-dried and carefully packaged in individual paper bags so as not to alter stain locations. (DO NOT USE PLASTIC BAGS).
- (a) Blood stained objects or dried physiological materials shall be air-dried in a protected environment, individually packaged into paper bags or bundles, and appropriately marked for identification.

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- (b) Occasionally, Physiological materials such as human tissue may be collected as evidence and require specific unique handling to preserve its evidentiary value. In such cases, officers should contact the Identification Technician or the Homicide Detail or, if after hours, the on-call homicide investigator for details on proper handling.
 - (c) All physical evidence, requiring forensic laboratory tests, must be processed as described in this General Order and submitted to the laboratory immediately.
- 11- Physical evidence, such as liquid blood samples, must be placed in proper containers and delivered promptly to the laboratory, or placed in the Property Room refrigerator.
- (a) Physiological fluids should be frozen.
- 12 - Other items possibly supporting latent prints must be protected from any movement or action that might destroy or contaminate the prints.

SCENE ASSESSMENT AND COORDINATION

- 13 - The officer in control will assess the scene to determine if additional units are needed for security and if support from the Detective Bureau and/or the Identification Technician are needed. The decision will be based on the amount of evidence to be collected, the need of specialized photography, and if specialized techniques of latent prints development are needed.
- (a) The officer in control will be responsible for the delegation and direction of all personnel.
 - (b) When needed, the Identification Technician will be called immediately (within one hour).
 - (c) In the event an Identification Technician is not immediately available (within one hour), the officer in control will advise the crime victim of the expected duration of the delay and steps to protect the crime scene pending the Identification Technician's arrival.

IDENTIFICATION TECHNICIAN

- 14 - Identification personnel will report to the officer in control to insure knowledge of their presence for recording and to confer prior to the start of any activity. The officer in control will establish the scope of processing needed and will rely upon the expert knowledge of the Identification Technician for the most practical method to be used to complete the processing.
- (a) Identification Technicians shall be provided with training covering the following skills:

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- (1) Recovery of latent fingerprints and palm prints.
 - (2) Recovery of foot, tool, and tire impressions.
 - (3) Photographing crime or accident scenes.
 - (4) Preparing crime or accident scene sketches.
 - (5) Collecting, preserving, and transmitting physical evidence, including biological materials.
- (b) Identification Technicians shall be provided with available advanced and update training.

OUTSIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- 15 - Sheriffs Department Coroners, Criminalists, or Forensic Specialists, or other Specialists not employed by Berkeley Police Department, who are involved with the investigation, will work under the direction of the officer in control

CONTROL RELIEF PROCEDURES

- 16 - The first officer at the scene, who assumes control of the scene, may be relieved by a supervisor, another patrol officer, or a Detective Bureau Investigator. If any change in control takes place, all assisting personnel must be notified by the person last having control.

CRIME SCENE SKETCHES

- 17 - The investigating officer will be responsible for determining when a sketch of a crime scene will be done and, if he/she deems it necessary, he/she will be responsible for insuring that a sketch is completed. In the case of a major crime scene where the investigating officer has several functions to perform, he/she may delegate the sketch to another officer with the approval of a supervisor.
- (a) Each sketch of a crime scene must include:
- (1) An arrow or indicator of the direction of north.
 - (2) Geographical location, such as a street address or an intersection of streets.
 - (3) An indicator of the type of room if the sketch is inside a building, ie., living room, bedroom, etc.
 - (4) Date and time of preparation.
 - (5) Name(s) of the person(s) preparing the sketch.

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- (b) Each sketch of a crime scene may include, as appropriate:
 - (1) Dimensions and measurements.
 - (2) Location of significant features, i.e., vehicles, other buildings, victims, witnesses, suspects, etc.
 - (3) Locations of items of physical evidence recovered.

PHOTOGRAPHY OF EVIDENCE

18 - The investigating officer will determine when photographs of a crime scene is necessary. He/she will be responsible for ensuring that the Identification Technician is notified. Videotaping of crime scenes in major cases should be considered.

- (a) The identification camera uses 35mm film and is maintained by the Identification Technicians.
- (b) Polaroid film is available for instant photos.
- (c) The technician, using the 35mm camera, will fill out the photo log with case number, date, technician's name, and a brief description of the photograph taken.
- (d) If close-up photographs are taken, such as shoe prints, tire tracks, or physical injuries, a scale or ruler should be included in the photograph.
- (e) When evidentiary photographs are taken, the Identification Technician must submit a report on the Berkeley Police Department Evidence and Photographic Report form, which will include the following information:
 - (1) Date, time, and location.
 - (2) Case number and name of victim.
 - (3) Name and badge number of technician.
 - (4) Film roll number and frame number.
 - (5) Information about the photographs taken.
 - (6) Copies of the report shall be routed to the Detective Bureau and the officer requesting the photographs.

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LABORATORY EXAMINATION REQUESTS

- 19 - It shall be a Detective Bureau Division responsibility to take appropriate action to get physical evidence to the laboratory for examination. (All suspected drugs, narcotics, or controlled substances are processed for laboratory examination by the designated property officer in the Special Investigation Bureau).
- (a) Inspectors are required to evaluate each case assigned to their Detail, determine what actions will be necessary to complete the investigation, and make appropriate laboratory examination requests.
 - (b) Evidence submitted to the laboratory for examination must include a record of the following information:
 - (1) Name of the officer last having custody of the item.
 - (2) Date and time the evidence was delivered to the laboratory.
 - (3) Signature of the person in the laboratory receiving the evidence, including date and time of receipt
 - (4) Employees will request written results of laboratory analysis at the time a request for laboratory services is made.
 - (5) When the laboratory examinations are completed, the evidence will be picked up and returned to the Property Room Copies of the written results will be attached to the case.
- 20 - A significant degree of the value of laboratory examinations concerns the identification of substances and comparison of these with materials from known sources. This is found to be true especially in the case of the study of hairs, fibers, fabrics, paint, glass, wood, soil, and tool marks.
- (a) Whenever available, Inspectors, **Detective Sergeants and Crime Scene Personnel*** will insure that materials and substances be collected from a known source for submission to the laboratory for comparison with physical evidence collected.
- 21 - The Detective Bureau Commander or his designee will meet with the District Attorney and the judges of the Berkeley-Albany Municipal Court to coordinate investigative concerns, including the use of the crime lab to develop information for prosecution.
- (a) The meeting will occur as often as needed, at least every six months.
 - (b) The Detective Bureau Commander will share information pertaining to laboratory services with the Director of the Alameda County Crime Laboratory for the purpose of enhancing prosecutions.

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References: CALEA Standards
General Orders C-2,14, and P-65