

**SENECA FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT
GENERAL ORDER**

General Order: 401	Rescinds: 07/01/13
Subject: Investigative Function	NYS Accreditation: 40.1, 50.1
Effective Date: 07/09/14 By Order Of: Stuart W. Peenstra, Chief of Police	

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for the proper investigation of incidents, offenses, and crimes reported to the Seneca Falls Police Department. This includes:

- A. Defining a preliminary investigation and establishing responsibility and accountability for that process.
- B. Defining a "follow-up" investigation and establishing responsibility and accountability for that process.
- C. Defining the case management system and responsibilities of the Investigative Coordinator.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Preliminary Investigation - the aggregate of specific and documented activities performed by Seneca Falls Police Department immediately after a crime is brought to their attention. During this initial phase, the majority of case information is developed and qualified so that solvability can be determined. The quality of the preliminary investigative efforts and the accurate reporting of that effort directly affect the investigative outcome.
- B. Follow-up Investigation – the continuation of a preliminary investigation for the purpose of either successfully solving a case or exhausting all investigative leads.

III. POLICY

- A. Supervisors within both the Patrol Division and Criminal Investigation Section shall be held accountable for the conduct and the results of any investigation assigned to their respective subordinates.
- B. Unless otherwise directed, patrol officers are responsible for conducting preliminary investigations for all incidents and offenses reported to the Seneca Falls Police Department.
- C. With supervisory approval, patrol officers may proceed with both preliminary and follow-up investigations as determined by the amount of time required to conduct such investigations and the immediate demand for performance of other police services.
- D. Pursuant to NYS Executive Law 221B, the Central Investigation Section or Data Entry Clerks shall submit a report on specific cases to the NYS Violent Crime Analysis Program (VICAP) within 30 days of the event. Such cases are as follows:
 - 1. Homicides: all homicides and attempts, solved or unsolved.
 - 2. Missing Persons: where the circumstances indicate a strong possibility of foul play and the victim is still missing.
 - 3. Unidentified: where the manner of death is known or suspected to be a homicide.
 - 4. Sexual Assaults: all sexually related assaults, attempted abductions and "nuisance"

offenses where the offender has any potential for being responsible for past or future crimes.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Patrol personnel shall:

1. Proceed to the reported scene immediately but cautiously, being alert for possible suspect(s) or suspect vehicle(s).
2. Upon arrival at the scene, aid and comfort the victim, and secure the scene to protect physical evidence.
3. Transmit to other police units information of immediate relevance directed at intercepting the suspect or suspect vehicle.
4. Direct investigative efforts towards the search for solvability factors as outlined by Section V of this order.
5. Obtain and record a complete description of the crime and property taken if applicable.
 - a. Members shall utilize the Spillman to document preliminary investigative efforts.
 - b. Members will list all statements from suspects, victims and/or witnesses.
 - c. Members shall utilize the Stolen Vehicle Supporting Deposition while conducting a preliminary investigation for all stolen vehicles.
6. Continue the preliminary investigation until:
 - a. All useful information has been obtained from victim(s), witness(es), neighbors, or other people present in the area.
 - b. All useful evidence has been identified and preserved at the scene and in the immediate area.
7. At the conclusion of the preliminary investigation:
 - a. Advise and explain to the victim the current case status and leave the victim with the report number (CR#). Members shall also provide crime victims with information that explains the availability of victim compensation and other services pursuant to the NYS Executive Law, Article 22.
 - b. Enter a recommendation (for supervisory review and possible turn over to the Investigation Unit) to either close or continue investigating the case by either patrol or investigative personnel.
8. Conduct follow-up investigations as assigned by competent authority.

B. Patrol Supervisors shall:

1. Ensure that patrol officers conduct thorough and complete preliminary and follow-up investigations on assigned cases.
2. Ensure that patrol officers devote a suitable amount of time to ensure the quality of investigations consistent with the need to maintain other police services.
3. Provide leadership to subordinates to ensure that investigations undertaken by patrol officers are satisfactory.
4. Review preliminary and follow-up investigation reports as soon as possible to:
 - a. Determine investigatory completeness in the search for solvability factors and the justification of same. If incomplete, reports shall be returned for completion.
 - b. Dependent upon urgency, either immediately assign the case to the Criminal Investigation Section or Patrol Division for follow-up.

C. Investigators shall:

1. Thoroughly review all cases assigned to them.
2. Investigate assigned cases until all solvability factors have been exhausted, an arrest is made, or an administrative clearance is permitted.
3. Coordinate investigative activities with both uniformed and plain clothes personnel as needed.
4. Coordinate investigative activities with other agencies as needed.

D. Staff Inspection

The responsibilities of staff personnel will include monitoring the quality of preliminary and follow-up investigations. Any noted deficiencies shall be addressed at the appropriate level of command.

V. INVESTIGATION STATUS GUIDELINES

For the purpose of this order, a solvability factor will be deemed to be present if any of the following factors are apparent at the end of the preliminary investigation process.

- A.** The suspect or accomplice has been named (e.g. full names, partial names, nicknames, or aliases).
- B.** A full description or a distinctive partial description of the suspect or accomplice is available.
- C.** Significant data is available about the suspect or accomplice, such as address or locations frequented.
- D.** A victim or witness could possibly identify the suspect or accomplice from the photo file or line-up.
- E.** Any property associated with the crime is traceable.
- F.** The suspect or accomplice's vehicle license number is known completely or sufficiently known to be traceable.
- G.** A good description of the vehicle is known. Or, a distinctive description of part of the vehicle or its contents is known and traceable.
- H.** A suspect's fingerprint is obtained.
- I.** Significant physical evidence (either traceable or uniquely distinctive) is developed.
- J.** An unusual, distinctive, or significant modus operandi pattern is identified.
- K.** There was a definite limited opportunity for anyone except the suspect to have committed the crime.
- L.** Any other significant reason exists in the judgment of the police officer or supervisor to believe that the crime may be solved with a reasonable amount of investigative effort (e.g. the crime may arouse significant public interest giving rise to the possibility of the public supplying useful information on the case).

VI. INVESTIGATIVE COORDINATORS

- A.** Investigative Coordinators shall be responsible for administering a case management system that ensures all investigations are completed in an accurate and timely manner.
- B.** Investigative Coordinators will be police supervisors specializing in the management of the criminal investigation process, strategies of crime prevention, and crime deterrence. (Revised 07/09/14)
- C.** Investigative Coordinators will be:
 1. Designated by the Chief of Police, with one supervisor assigned to oversee CID

investigations and a separate supervisor to oversee Road Patrol investigations.(Revised 07/09/14)

2. Delegated that line authority as deemed appropriate by the Chief to fulfill the duties and responsibilities herein delineated and the goals and objectives of the Seneca Falls Police Department.
- D. The duties of the Investigative Coordinator can be described as those of an investigative manager; one who functions as a communicator, quality control agent, and crime analyst. As such, the Investigative Coordinator is responsible for:
1. The supervision and administration of the case management system utilizing either the CID or ROAD PATROL Open Investigations tracking char.(Revised 07/09/14)
 2. Enhancing communication of crime information by:
 - a. Coordinating the efforts of preliminary and follow- up investigators through email, bulletins, etc.
 - b. Holding periodic meetings with supervisors and investigators to discuss the status of current investigations.
 - c. Liaison and coordinate investigative activities with other agencies.
 - d. Actively seeking input of all Seneca Falls Police Department personnel in problem identification and the development and planning of solution or deterrence strategies.
 3. The identification of crime patterns and trends and recommending strategies for addressing those crime problems (e.g., patrol strategies, Investigative Section deployment, stake-out, etc.).
 4. Assist first and second-line supervisors in their evaluation of the performance of Seneca Falls Police Department personnel, especially in the criminal investigation process.
 5. A continuous review of the Seneca Falls Police Department's total effort in the criminal investigation process as a quality control, and the communication of identified problems to the Chief of Police.
 6. Other duties as described by departmental directive or as ordered by the Chief of Police.

VII. INVESTIGATIVE CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A. Case Selection Options

1. Follow-up of all properly completed preliminary investigations in which one or more of the solvability factors are present.
2. Follow-up of selected preliminary investigations without solvability factors. The criteria for selection are to be determined by supervisory personnel.
3. Follow-up selection decisions may also vary according to crime classification at the discretion of the Seneca Falls Police Department supervisory personnel and Seneca Falls Police Department caseload.

B. Case Assignment Options

The Investigative Coordinator shall assign follow-up investigation responsibility to either Patrol Division or Investigation Section personnel as follows:

1. Assign specific tasks associated with the investigation to plainclothes investigators or uniform officers.
2. Assign follow-up investigations to an investigator.
3. Assign follow-up investigations to uniformed officers.
4. Vary the assignment strategies among personnel and crime by classification.

*NOTE: Nothing contained in this directive shall relieve sergeants from the responsibility for the supervision, review and approval of preliminary and follow-up investigations, or from the responsibility for immediately assigning or referring urgent cases requiring prompt police action.

C. Case Control

1. Investigations selected for follow-up shall be assigned as indicated herein, and returned to the Investigative Coordinator by assigned personnel through the chain of command no more than ten (10) days after assignment.
2. Upon review of the investigation, the coordinator shall approve requests to *field* the case for additional investigation, *close* the case (no further action required), or *clear* the case using criteria set forth below. Cases not approved shall be returned through the chain of command for completion as indicated by the coordinator.
3. Continuances shall be granted by the coordinator and reviewed at the end of each continuance period until the case is successfully closed or its suspension approved.

D. Case Clearance Options

Patrol division and investigation section supervisors shall be responsible for the integrity of the case clearance methodology. Supervisors shall utilize the following to determine whether a case can be cleared:

1. ARREST-ADULT: At least one person (16 yrs or older) is arrested and charged with the offense and turned over to the court for prosecution (whether by arraignment, summons, or appearance ticket).
2. ARREST-JUVENILE: When the offender under 17 years of age is cited to appear in juvenile court or before other juvenile authorities.
3. PROSECUTION DECLINED: For other than lack of probable cause; Examples:
 - a. The case is cleared by the confession of an offender already in jail.
 - b. The prosecutor's office includes the case in a plea agreement prior to an arrest being made by Seneca Falls Police Department, even though sufficient evidence exists that would justify an arrest.
 - c. Offender is being prosecuted in another jurisdiction and the other jurisdiction will not release him.
4. DEATH OF OFFENDER: Offender died through any cause.
5. VICTIM REFUSED TO COOPERATE: Victim fails to cooperate in the prosecution of the suspect.
6. JUVENILE-NO COURT: When a juvenile suspect is either orally reprimanded or has written notice sent to his parents or legal guardian in instances involving minor offenses, and no referral is made to juvenile court.
7. EXTRADITION DENIED: When authorities of another state or country refuse to remand the suspect to the custody of the Seneca Falls Police Department.
8. CLOSED BY INVESTIGATION: No criminal act ever occurred.