



# MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

### 725 – CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATIONS

**GENERAL ORDER:** 2023-XX  
**ISSUED:** April 3, 2023

**EFFECTIVE:** April 3, 2023

**REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:**  
Assistant Chief Paul Formolo  
**DATE:** March 10, 2023

**ACTION:** Amends General Order 2020-11 (March 6, 2020)

**WILEAG STANDARD(S):** 6.3.3

#### ROLL CALL VERSION

**Contains only changes to current policy.  
For complete version of SOP, see SharePoint.**

#### 725.15 INITIAL RESPONSE (WILEAG 6.3.3)

##### A. PATROL OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

First responding officers shall initiate the preliminary investigation and perform tasks designated below until otherwise directed by a higher ranking officer, investigator or another member of the police force specifically assigned to conduct the criminal investigation.

3. Officers may “freeze the scene” for a brief period of time in order to determine whether those individuals present are involved and to identify any potential witnesses. Officers shall only detain individuals for a reasonable period of time necessary to determine whether the person is involved in the crime or a witness. Officers shall not detain a person if it is determined they are not a witness or suspect.
  - a. Reasonableness is determined, in part, by considering: (1) the seriousness of the crime witnessed, (2) the nature of the information the witness can reasonably be expected to provide, (3) the level of proof the witness can provide, and (4) whether there are less intrusive methods to obtain the same information.
  - b. Upon determining a person is a witness, the officer shall notify the primary officer or investigator in charge of the investigation, the incident commander, or a supervisor so the witness can be interviewed as soon as reasonably possible.
  - c. Officers may consult with the incident commander or a supervisor if there is any question whether or not to release a person from the scene if the scene is frozen.
  
11. Officers shall attempt to identify any witnesses who are present at the crime scene and shall separate witnesses to the extent possible, to avoid tainting their recollection of the event.
  - a. Every reasonable effort should be made to ensure that witnesses remain at the scene, to allow for a detailed interview by investigators or investigating officers. While officers and investigators may request a witness statement, the witness is

not required to answer any questions, cooperate with law enforcement, and are free to leave at any point. The only exception to a person being free to leave is when a member temporarily freezes the scene (see subsection 3 above).

- b. The success of our investigations is dependent upon the support, trust and cooperation of our witnesses. While it is critical to gather information in a timely manner, the circumstances of an investigation and the emotional state of a witness should be considered and may occasionally necessitate that an interview be delayed.  
(WILEAG 6.3.3.2)
13. A canvass of nearby buildings shall be conducted, in an effort to locate additional witnesses. Officers shall note all addresses within the established perimeter and shall document the identities of all persons present within the buildings. A canvass of vehicles within the established perimeter shall also be conducted and their location, description, and identifying information shall be noted, including registered ownership information.
  - a. Members conducting a canvass shall utilize the *Canvass Checklist*. Members shall leave a *Door Hang* on any building where a person does not answer the door.
  - b. A secondary canvass shall be conducted within 24-hours of all homicides and non-fatal shootings. The shift commander of the Homicide Division or Violent Crimes Division shall coordinate with the shift commander of the district where the incident occurred to determine if the secondary canvass will be conducted by the Criminal Investigation Bureau or Patrol Bureau.  
(WILEAG 6.3.3.2)

## **725.20 SCENE INVESTIGATION (WILEAG 6.3.3)**

### **A. INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

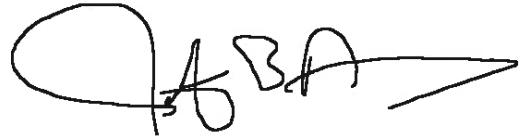
5. Investigators shall complete a ~~*Crime Scene Sketch (form PV-22)*~~ crime scene diagram (either electronically or sketched) for all fatal and non-fatal shootings, suspicious deaths, or any other major crime scenes where a supervisor deems a crime scene sketch diagram will assist in future investigative or prosecutorial action. Investigators shall ~~forward the original *Crime Scene Sketch* to the Open Records Division — Imaging for scanning and attachment of the crime scene sketch into Intellinetics~~ save the crime scene diagram in the case file.

### **B. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

6. If media personnel are on scene and request information, the incident commander, or designee, shall provide information consistent with department protocol, either directly or through an official department news release by the Public Information Office or night watch commander.

**725.25 EVIDENCE COLLECTION (WILEAG 6.3.3)**

- B. In the absence of an investigator, police officers investigating a crime scene shall be responsible for the same tasks.
6. The medical examiner's office shall be notified for all death investigations and will be provided with all relevant information. Papers and other items found on the body shall generally remain with the body and shall be collected by an investigator from the medical examiner's office. The investigator shall note any papers or other property found on a dead body. ~~and~~ Any items that may constitute evidence shall be taken and inventoried, with the knowledge of the medical examiner's office.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.B.N.' with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

JEFFREY B. NORMAN  
CHIEF OF POLICE

JBN:mfk