



# SAN ANTONIO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL MANUAL



## Procedure 701 – Crime Scene Duties

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### **.01 INTRODUCTION**

- A. This procedure outlines the duties of members who respond to the scene of a crime or assist in the initial investigation of a crime.
- B. This procedure is intended to provide guidelines to help preserve the integrity of the crime scene itself and all physical evidence at or near the scene.
- C. This procedure does not prescribe the procedures or methods to be used in the highly specialized area of collection of physical evidence by UEDIs/Crime Scene Unit Investigators, nor does it prescribe follow-up investigation procedures.

### **.02 TERMINOLOGY** (For specific use within this procedure, see Glossary)

Digital Evidence	Digital Storage Device	Handheld Digital Device	Life Threatening Incident
Major Crime	Master Video Recording	Physical Evidence	Video Recording Origin

### **.03 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE**

- A. The scene of any crime is physical evidence in itself. However, the best physical evidence is normally found at or near the site of the most critical action taken by the criminal against the property or victim.
- B. In order for physical evidence to be effectively used by the Investigator and the prosecutor, its presence must be recognized by the officers at or near the crime scene.
- C. Physical evidence must be properly preserved, recorded, and collected for it to be of use in discovering the facts of a crime.
- D. The first officer to arrive at the scene of a crime automatically assumes the responsibility of securing the crime scene area from unauthorized intrusions to protect any physical evidence.

### **.04 DIMENSIONS OF A CRIME SCENE**

- A. No set of definite rules can be applied to defining the dimensions of the scene of a crime.
- B. While it is entirely possible the dimensions of a crime scene will be large, there are usually priority areas readily apparent to the trained officer/UEDI or Crime Scene Unit Investigator which should be given immediate protection.

### **.05 COMMAND / SUPERVISORY OFFICERS' CRIME SCENE RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Command Officers
  1. While the ranking command officer at the scene of any call is in overall charge, he may delegate supervision to the assigned sergeant and acts as an overseer. He intervenes only when he observes serious breaches of established procedure.
  2. Make periodic checks of major crime scenes to ensure proper procedures are being followed.



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3. Exceptions are calls which involve an officer of this department in any major incident. Under such circumstances the ranking command officer shall be in charge of the scene.

### B. Supervisory Officers

1. Patrol Division supervisory officers are in charge of supervising all lower ranking officers at any major crime scene, including follow-up detectives and Crime Scene Unit Investigators in the absence of an Investigations Division supervisory officer. If the scene involves a major crime, evidence processing shall be handled in accordance with section .06, B., 1., c.
2. When an Investigations Division supervisory officer is present at a crime scene, he supervises the activities of the follow-up detectives, UEDIs, and Crime Scene Unit Investigators assigned to the case.
3. In the absence of an Investigations Division supervisory officer, the Crime Scene Unit Supervisor is in charge of the UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigators.
4. Patrol Division supervisory officers proceed to any major crime scene or any crime scene where supervisory presence is requested and assess the crime scene to determine:
  - a. Whether there are sufficient officers at the scene. Request additional officers, if necessary;
  - b. The dimensions of the crime scene and the best method of protecting the scene;
  - c. Whether the proper quadrant has been established and the officers assigned are working it properly;
  - d. Whether the proper information regarding the actor has been broadcast to officers working the quadrant;
  - e. Whether the dispatcher has notified the Bexar County Medical Examiner's Office in cases involving deaths; and
  - f. Whether the Investigations Division detectives are needed at the scene, and if so, ensures proper adherence to GM Procedure 708, *Follow-Up Units*, is followed.
5. Assign officers to specific duties required to correctly protect and process the crime scene.
6. Provide for the transportation of complainants and witnesses, if necessary.
7. Determine when and/or if the news media may be briefed and admitted to the scene in accordance with GM Procedure 307, *Public and Media Information*.
8. Remain at the scene as long as necessary to ensure proper protection of the scene and supervises subordinates in the performance of their assigned functions.
9. Ensure all officers prepare the necessary reports.
10. Prepare a supplemental report describing any actions taken and the names and assigned duties of officers present at the crime scene.

### **.06 OFFICERS/ UEDIs' GENERAL CRIME SCENE DUTIES**

#### A. Officer(s) Assigned to Crime Scene

1. Proceed to the crime scene and observe all conditions and events on the way to and on arrival at the crime scene.



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2. Note any remarks made by the complainant, witness, or actor upon arrival at the crime scene.
3. Pursue and apprehend the actor if the actor is still at the scene, visibly fleeing the scene, or in the general area of the scene.
  - a. Interview and/or interrogate the actor or suspect; or
  - b. If the crime will be investigated by a follow-up unit, the follow-up unit personnel will interview and/or interrogate the actor or suspect.
4. Use caution when entering the crime scene so as not to destroy physical evidence.
5. Request EMS for any injured or sick persons.
6. Ascertain the actual type of crime committed.
  - a. If an emergency exists, the amount of time lapse involved and whether additional officers are needed to aid the injured and secure the scene; or
  - b. If an emergency does not exist, advise responding officers to slow down in responding to the scene of the crime.
7. If possible, obtain a description of the actor, the means, and direction of flight, and whether or not the actor is armed. This information is relayed to the dispatcher.
8. Secure and protect the crime scene and any physical evidence by preventing unauthorized persons from entering the crime scene area. Officers should pay particular attention to items which may contain DNA evidence.
9. Request a UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator to process the crime scene for physical evidence.
10. Locate, identify, and interview the complainant and witnesses:
  - a. Officers should utilize SAPD Form #2010, *Neighborhood Canvas Form*, on any preliminary criminal investigation where witnesses are likely to be present, or at the direction of a supervisor or follow-up unit personnel.
  - b. All SAPD Forms #2010 are forwarded to the appropriate follow-up unit.
  - c. If the crime will be investigated by a follow-up unit, contact the follow-up unit personnel to see if they need to also interview the complainant and witnesses.
11. Prepare the proper reports which describe the offense, including:
  - a. Any vehicles, persons, or suspicious activities possibly related to the offense which was observed on the way to the scene;
  - b. Time of arrival at the scene of the crime;
  - c. The name of all officers present, should supervisory officers not make the scene; and
  - d. Initial observations by the officer, including any *res gestae* statements made by the actor or dying declarations made by the complainant.
12. Continue protection of the crime scene and all physical evidence to maintain its integrity. Avoid handling items of physical evidence unless it is absolutely necessary to prevent its loss, destruction, or contamination.



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13. When an officer must handle evidence to protect it from loss, destruction, contamination, or for the victim to receive proper medical treatment, the officer takes custody of the evidence, and:
    - a. Handles the item in the least intrusive manner to avoid destroying the item, fingerprints, or other trace evidence that may be on the item;
    - b. Marks the exact location where the evidence was found and points this out to the UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator;
    - c. Protects the item from loss or unnecessary handling; and
    - d. Marks the item for later identification and turns it over to the UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator, if one is assigned to the call, or places the item in the Property Room as evidence. Care must be exercised to avoid destruction of latent fingerprints or trace evidence on the item when marking it.
  14. When an officer must handle a firearm as evidence at a crime scene either prior to the arrival of UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigators or because they are not available, the officer:
    - a. Assumes custody of the firearm when it is obvious the firearm must be removed to protect it from loss, destruction, or contamination;
    - b. Handles the firearm in the least intrusive manner to avoid destroying the item, fingerprints, or other trace evidence that may be on the firearm (i.e., does not rotate the cylinder, does not unload firearm);
    - c. As soon as practical, secures the firearm by placing it in the locked trunk of the officer's police vehicle;
    - d. Records the exact location of recovery, condition of the firearm, and marks it with his initials;
    - e. Places the firearm in the Property Room in accordance with GM Procedure 606, *Impounding Property*, or turns the firearm over to UEDIs/Crime Scene Unit Investigators upon their arrival and relates the location where it was found; and
    - f. Details his possession of the evidence in a written report.
  15. All officers assigned to, dispatched to, or assisting at or near any crime scene where a felony apprehension has been made will prepare the necessary supplemental reports documenting the reason for responding and actions taken in regard to the call. A copy of the report will be forwarded to the respective follow-up unit.
- B. UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator Assigned to Crime Scene:**
1. Upon arrival, immediately surveys the crime scene to determine:
    - a. The type of crime committed;
    - b. Whether additional equipment or personnel are needed to assist in processing the crime scene and request same from the dispatcher; and
    - c. At a major crime scene, UEDIs must receive approval and direction from the Crime Scene Unit Supervisor or the follow up unit investigator assigned to the crime scene prior to processing the scene.
  2. Establishes the perimeter of the crime using crime scene barrier tape, if necessary;
  3. Processes the crime scene for evidence (i.e., collects latent fingerprints, photographs, sketches, DNA evidence, etc.);



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4. Collects and preserves all physical evidence at the crime scene and places the physical evidence in the Property Room;
  5. Prepares the necessary supplemental reports of all actions taken, including the names of any officers who assisted.
- C. Follow-Up Unit Detective Assigned to Crime Scene:
1. Proceeds to the crime scene when notified to do so;
  2. Obtains initial information from the officer responsible for preparing the offense report;
  3. Assesses the crime scene to determine if their presence in the crime scene area is necessary and:
    - a. When it is necessary to enter, uses caution to avoid contamination of the crime scene area; and
    - b. Avoids handling, contaminating, or altering the crime scene. When it becomes necessary to move any objects before the UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator arrives, the follow-up unit detective records the exact location and condition in the detective's report, properly marks the item, and turns it over to the UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator for processing upon arrival.
  4. Identifies and interviews witnesses outside the immediate crime scene area;
  5. Makes arrangements for witnesses to give their statements and advises a Patrol Division Sergeant when transportation is necessary.
  6. Prepares the proper supplemental report describing the detective's actions.

### ***.07 OFFICERS/UEDIs SPECIFIC CRIME SCENE RESPONSIBILITIES***

- A. Homicide and/or violent crime scenes
1. In every instance, officers/UEDIs call for emergency medical assistance.
  2. Personnel authorized to enter a homicide or violent crime scene includes:
    - a. First officer/UEDI to arrive;
    - b. Emergency medical personnel;
    - c. Assigned Patrol Division Sergeant;
    - d. Additional officers/UEDIs necessary to secure and protect the crime scene;
    - e. Assigned Crime Scene Unit Investigator(s), including the Crime Scene Unit supervisor;
    - f. Assigned follow-up unit personnel; and
    - g. Investigators from the Bexar County Medical Examiner's Office.
  3. A Patrol Division Supervisor will assign a Patrol Officer to complete SAPD Form 4130, "Crime Scene Personnel Log," to document all personnel entering the crime scene. SAPD Form 4130 will be forwarded to the Homicide Unit prior to the end of the assigned Patrol Officer's tour of duty. Upon receiving SAPD Form 4130, Homicide Unit personnel will ensure that it is included in the investigative file.



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4. Once the crime scene has been deemed secure:
    - a. Any personnel entering an indoor crime scene will wear protective shoe coverings and gloves;
    - b. Any personnel entering an outdoor crime scene will wear gloves. The use of any additional equipment, such as shoe covers, will be determined by an Investigations Division Supervisor.
  5. The Follow-Up Unit Supervisor or his designee, will be responsible for the direction and coordination of the investigation.
  6. When the victim is obviously dead, the body may not be moved without authorization from the Bexar County Medical Examiner or a Medical Examiner Investigator, except:
    - a. In emergency circumstances; or
    - b. In cases of unreasonable delay after repeated attempts to contact Medical Examiner's Office personnel have failed.
  7. Before moving the victim's body, the officers/UEDIs shall:
    - a. Make note of the original position of the victim; and
    - b. Request the Crime Scene Unit Investigator photograph and take necessary measurements of the crime scene.
  8. Upon discovery of a "mysterious" homicide or one in which no witnesses or suspects are apparent, or where it appears a solution to the crime may rest heavily on the development of physical evidence to identify a criminal actor or actors, the only officers authorized to enter a crime scene are those specifically charged with processing the area for physical evidence. After the scene has been processed, other officers may be allowed to enter.
  9. Officers make note of any physical evidence—which may be accidentally moved by medical personnel and ensure medical personnel do not contaminate the crime scene by discarding any of their supplies or equipment in the area.
  10. Officers/UEDIs relate to the Crime Scene Unit Investigator, the follow-up unit detective, and any supervisory personnel, the following:
    - a. Any changes in the victim's position; and
    - b. Any physical evidence the officer found necessary to pick up, the location where it was found, and any other alterations of the crime scene area.
- B. Crime Scenes Where Video Recordings Are Made:**
1. VHS Recording Devices and Digital Recording Devices
    - a. Officers(s) Assigned
      - (1) Locate the video recording origin and take custody of the VHS tape and pull the tab on the side of the VHS tape so the tape cannot be recorded over. If the origin is a digital recording device officers should have some form of digital video copy (CD, DVD, Floppy Disk, Flash drive, etc.) made by the employees, manager, or owner. This digital video copy becomes the master video recording.
      - (2) If the video recording origin is locked, or a digital video copy cannot be made, contact the person in charge of the location.



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- (i) If entry into the video recording origin is refused, a supervisor is notified.
  - (ii) If a digital video copy cannot be made, the officer will have the person in charge of the location contact the company where the digital video equipment was purchased or whoever they have the service/security contract with and have them respond to make a copy.
  - (iii) A reasonable amount of time should be allowed as long as the investigation is not prolonged or hindered.
  - (iv) If the officer is refused custody of the VHS tape a supervisor is notified.
  - (v) If a digital video copy cannot be made, the officer will document the name and phone numbers of the company and/or the name and phone numbers of the company that services the DVR equipment. A supervisor then is notified.
  - (vi) The officers shall document in their report all supervisors and follow-up unit detective's names contacted and the decisions made.
- (3) Officers/UEDEs should not view or make copies of the master video recording without approval from the follow-up unit investigator or supervisor. Viewing of a master video recording should only be conducted by the follow-up unit personnel assigned to the crime or personnel from the Technical Investigations Detail unless viewing of the master video recording is needed for immediate information on the crime and can be done in a manner which does not present a risk to the master video recording value as evidence, with approval from the follow-up unit.
- (4) Maintains custody and control of the master video recording, unless the master video recording is released to a Crime Scene Unit Investigator or Technical Investigations Detail detective at a life-threatening incident or is requested by a member of the follow-up unit. Officers will document in their report the disposition of the video evidence.
- (5) Upon completion of his crime scene duties, the officer delivers the master video recording and a copy of his report to the video tape receptacle located in the Headquarters Building Central Mail Room. If the master video recording was released to a Crime Scene Investigator or a member of the follow-up unit, the officer shall attach a copy of his report to the master video recording before releasing the master video recording.
- b. Crime Scene Unit Investigator Assigned
- (1) Takes custody of the master video recording if the crime is a life-threatening incident;
  - (2) Releases the master video recording to a member of the follow-up unit, if requested; or
  - (3) Returns the master video recording along with a copy of his report and the officer's report to the video tape receptacle located in the Headquarters Building Central Mail Room.
  - (4) If the digital video copy cannot be made, the Crime Scene Unit Investigator shall take custody of all digital video equipment including the monitor when requested by a supervisor and place it in the Property Room. They shall also route a copy of their report to the follow-up unit and Technical Investigations Detail supervisors.
- c. Follow-Up Unit Detective(s) Assigned
- (1) Views or takes custody of a master video recording of a crime involving a life threatening incident.



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- (2) The follow-up unit detective should view the master video recording to verify the incident was properly recorded. If the master video recording is made from a digital recording device the video should be viewed on another computer if available to verify the incident was properly recorded and downloaded. If the follow-up unit detective views the master video recording, he should document the camera number(s) and six (6) digit time (hours: minutes: seconds) of the incident.
  - (3) If the follow-up unit detective takes custody of a master video recording, he delivers the master video recording, with copies of reports from the assigned officer/UEDI and Crime Scene Unit Investigator, along with a copy of his report, to the video tape receptacle located in the Headquarters Building Central Mail Room
  - (4) If a digital video copy cannot be made by those at the location, the detective assigned will obtain and document the name and phone numbers of the company where the equipment was purchased along with the company which services the equipment and contact them for assistance in downloading the video evidence.
  - (5) If a copy of the digital video evidence cannot be made **after** the detective assigned has contacted the company where the equipment was purchased along with the company which services the equipment, the detective assigned will contact the Technical Investigations Detail during normal business hours with the names and phone numbers of those individuals the detective has contacted along with the results of their efforts. If a copy of the digital video evidence cannot be made regarding a high profile or life threatening incident or where there is a risk the video evidence will be lost the detective assigned will obtain and document the name and phone numbers of the company where the equipment was purchased and the company which services the equipment and contact them to have them **come out and download the video evidence**. If these efforts fail then the detective assigned shall contact a supervisor.
- d. Supervisory Officer Assigned
- (1) Some video recording origins are locked to prevent suspects and employees from tampering with the video recording. When requested, the supervisor determines whether forced entry into the video recording origin is necessary to recover a master video recording.
  - (2) When custody of the video evidence is refused, the supervisor will notify the follow-up unit to let them determine if they want to do an immediate search warrant or wait to obtain the video evidence at a later date.
  - (3) When advised a master video recording cannot be made the supervisor determines if the offense is severe enough to notify the Technical Investigations Detail Detectives, after business hours, to respond to the scene and make a digital video. Examples of this would be a Police involved shooting or Capital Murder investigation where video holds a key role in the investigation. The supervisor will have the Communication Unit call the Technical Investigations Detail Detectives so they can respond and attempt to make a digital video copy of the incident.
- C. Robbery of Business Crime Scenes:
1. Officers/UEDI dispatched on robbery calls approach the location of the call as if the suspect is still at the scene. In the event the actor has fled, obtain and provide the dispatcher a description of the suspect, means and direction of flight, weapon used, time lapse, and any other pertinent information.
  2. Protect the crime scene by:
    - a. Safeguarding all entrances and exits possibly used by the actor and allow no unauthorized person near areas where the robbery may have been; and



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- b. Isolating the areas where the actual robbery took place (i.e., teller's window in a bank or a check-out counter in a convenience store.)
  3. Show the UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator areas on the premises where the actor was observed and may have touched something.
- D. Burglary Crime Scenes:
1. A UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator is dispatched on all confirmed burglary calls.
  2. It is the responsibility of the investigating officer to request a UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator or if a call turns out to be a burglary after being dispatched as some other offense.
  3. The owner or authorized representative should be present and give effective consent for the processing of the burglary scene.
    - a. In the event the owner or authorized representative is not available to give consent, the UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator should conduct a latent print investigation following these guidelines:
      - (1) Point of entry; and
      - (2) Point of exit.
    - b. When the owner or authorized representative cannot be located, a supervisory officer may authorize the processing of the burglary scene when the need exists.
  4. A UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator is canceled under the following circumstances:
    - a. The investigating officer at the scene determines the offense of burglary has not been committed and a UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator is not required for any other purpose;
    - b. A supervisor at the scene determines it is impossible to lift prints or obtain other evidence; or
    - c. The owner, after being told of the purpose of the UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator, advises the investigating officer he does not wish for the premises to be printed.
  5. All instances in which a UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator is canceled are documented by the investigating officer in the text of his report.
  6. When the UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator is needed and requested, the assigned officer sees the scene is safeguarded by:
    - a. Informing the complainant he should not handle any object or printable surface the perpetrator may have touched until such time as the UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator can examine it; and
    - b. Protecting objects or surfaces which may contain fingerprints from the weather or conditions which may destroy the fingerprints before the UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator arrives.
  7. When a safe has been entered, the officer secures the immediate area surrounding the safe, the entry, and the exit point of the perpetrator, and notifies the appropriate follow-up investigators, as they may need to come to the scene.
- E. Burglary of Vehicle Crime Scenes:
1. Burglarized vehicles are processed for latent fingerprints when:



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- a. An arrest has been made;
  - b. There is a suspect in the case and a possibility exists for developing latent prints in the interior of the vehicle;
  - c. The theft involves the loss of objects of great monetary value; or
  - d. The complainant requests the vehicle to be printed.
2. The owner or authorized representative should be present to give effective consent for the processing of the vehicle.
    - a. The owner or authorized representative may refuse to allow the vehicle to be fingerprinted.
    - b. When the owner or authorized representative cannot be located, a supervisory officer may authorize the processing of the vehicle when the need exists.
  3. A UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator is not sent on cases reported to an expediter unless the owner of the vehicle requests fingerprints to be taken.
- F. Recovered Stolen Vehicle Scenes:
1. A UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator is dispatched to print recovered stolen vehicles at the scene, unless the owner of the vehicle specifically requests the vehicle not be printed.
  2. If a UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator is unavailable to be dispatched prior to the vehicle being impounded, a UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator, when available, is dispatched to the Vehicle Storage Unit to print the vehicle.
  3. The UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator makes every effort to conduct the processing of the vehicle at the scene of recovery, unless the following prohibitive circumstances exist:
    - a. Inclement weather;
    - b. Inadequate lighting; or
    - c. The seriousness of the offense requires the Crime Scene Unit Investigator to move the vehicle to the evidence stall for a thorough processing of the vehicle.
- G. Forged Check Scenes:
1. Officers are dispatched and shall handle forgeries in progress (i.e., actor at scene, possibility of apprehension, or in custody, etc.) as follows:
    - a. Officer makes the scene and takes appropriate action;
    - b. Notifies the Forgery Detail;
    - c. Handles the report; and
    - d. If the Forgery Detail is closed or the Night CID Unit is not available, the officer handles the arrest and any necessary reports.



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2. When a call for service is received by the Communications Unit for a forgery not in progress, the Communications Unit personnel shall inform the complainant of the following:
  - a. Obtain SAPD Form #45-F9, *Forged Check*, at the Headquarters Building, any police substation, or at [www.sanantonio.gov/sapd](http://www.sanantonio.gov/sapd) ;
  - b. A separate SAPD Form #45-F9 must be completed and attached to each check submitted; and
  - c. Either mail in or return the forged check and attached SAPD Form #45-F9 to the Forgery Detail.
3. This subsection only pertains to forged checks and not credit card abuse, counterfeits, money orders, hot checks, etc.

### H. Preservation of Firearms Evidence/Reporting Stolen Firearms:

1. When a firearm is recovered, found, or confiscated as evidence, the proper handling of the weapon is a priority to preserve any evidentiary value. This type of recovery, finding, or confiscation would include, but not be limited to, the following examples:
  - a. A firearm is used or suspected of being used in any assault type of offense and is found at or near the scene of the offense or found on a suspect;
  - b. A firearm is found hidden in a vehicle, not in the possession of an individual, during a legal search of the vehicle; and
  - c. A firearm is found in a location which would tend to indicate it has been dumped, discarded, or lost by a suspect involved in any assault offense.
2. When a firearm comes into the custody and control of an officer and the possibility exists the weapon has been used in any type of violent offense or criminal activity, the officer immediately notifies his supervisor of the circumstances of the recovery.
  - a. If the supervisor determines the firearm is to be processed as evidence, a UEDI/Crime Scene Unit Investigator is to respond to the scene to take immediate charge of the evidence.
  - b. If the supervisor determines the firearm is of no evidentiary value or the evidentiary value has been lost, for whatever reason, this decision shall be included in the text of the officer's report of the incident.
3. Whenever an officer recovers, finds, or confiscates a firearm as evidence, the firearm will be processed in accordance with Subsection .06A14 of this procedure.
4. Whenever a firearm is reported stolen, an officer, in addition to completing the required report, shall immediately report the stolen firearm(s) to the appropriate service area Service Agent by telephone for entry into NCIC/TCIC. The report is submitted at the end of the tour of duty with the words "CALLED-IN" written at the top of the report.

### I. Preservation of Digital Evidence

1. If it is anticipated digital evidence will be present at a crime scene and time permits (i.e. search warrant), a Technical Investigations Detail Detective should be contacted prior to entry. A Technical Investigations Detail Detective should be present during the execution of search warrants where digital storage devices are anticipated (with prior approval from the Technical Investigations Detail Supervisor).
2. Officers encountering digital storage devices should use caution so as not to damage or destroy the digital evidence. Officers should not manipulate switches, buttons, keyboards or any other input devices on digital



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storage devices unless instructed to do so by a computer forensic detective. If switches, buttons, keyboards or other input devices are manipulated, this shall be documented in a written report. A copy of this report should accompany the computer to the property room or computer forensic lab.

3. If a digital storage device is located and it is determined to be related to a criminal offense, the Technical Investigations Detail should be contacted. The Technical Investigations Detail Supervisor will determine if a Detective should respond to the scene.
4. If a Technical Investigations Detail Detective does not respond, a Crime Scene Investigator will collect the digital storage device(s). A Technical Investigations Detail Detective may direct an officer or follow-up detective to collect the digital storage device. The digital storage device(s) may be placed in the property room or taken to the computer forensic lab for forensic analysis.