

**CITY OF MADISON POLICE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

**Crime Scene Response**

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Eff. Date 01/31/2023

## **Purpose**

This document outlines the appropriate Madison Police Department (MPD) response to crime scenes and procedures for investigating major cases.

## **Procedure**

### **POLICE OFFICERS/INITIAL RESPONDERS**

- The first priority is to secure the scene and ensure that no suspects or others who may pose a threat to officers are present. Conduct a protective sweep, if appropriate.
- The first officer at the scene should take responsibility for making initial assignments to other responding officers until a supervisor arrives.
- Provide aid to any injured persons. Allow Madison Fire Department (MFD) personnel to provide treatment while minimizing disturbance to scene. Obtain the names of MFD personnel entering the scene after victim has been treated. If a victim is conveyed to a hospital, ensure that an officer rides in ambulance with injured person.
- If a victim is deceased, do not touch, move, or disturb body or surroundings unless necessary for safety reasons. Identify a safe or already traveled path to the victim to minimize contamination of scene. Escort the Medical Examiner to the victim.
- Once medical assistance has been provided and the scene is safe, one officer should maintain standing just inside the scene, if appropriate, and other personnel should exit the scene.
- Secure the scene using crime scene tape. Give careful consideration to how big the scene may be when taping the perimeter. It is easier to reduce that area once it is determined that area is not involved than it is to try to expand that area.
- One officer should be assigned to maintain a log documenting anyone who enters and exits the scene via an established, secure, and controlled access point. Other officers should be assigned to all other points of entry/exit to prevent anyone from entering or exiting a scene unbeknownst to the officers and detectives on scene.
- While securing the scene, minimize the extent to which the scene/evidence is disturbed. Do not unnecessarily touch or move anything. If something must be disturbed, be sure it is documented in a report and that responding detectives/investigators who will be processing the scene are informed.
- Identify witnesses at the scene and try to keep them separated.
- Brief the supervisor upon arrival and turn over responsibility for the scene to them.
- Complete a report prior to end of shift unless approved by a supervisor.

### **SERGEANTS**

- Obtain a briefing from officers on scene and assume responsibility for the scene.
- Determine the status of victim(s). Ensure that officers are assigned to any victims transported by ambulance. The officer should remain with the victim at all times, including surgery. If the victim is deceased, do not disturb victim and minimize medical personnel entry into scene.
- Ensure that the perimeter has been secured and access controlled. Tape off the scene if not already done. Establish a point of entry/exit and ensure that an officer is assigned to monitor access and complete a log. Establish a safe or already traveled path into crime scene.
- Make a preliminary evaluation of the incident and resources needed and notify the OIC. Evaluate the need for Detectives and Investigators special equipment (lighting, canopies, etc.) and additional officers. Consider talking directly to the on-call Detective Lieutenant to coordinate getting these resources after OIC has been notified.

- Assign officers to identify witness(s) and suspect(s). Suspects should be detained and secured. Obtain identification and preliminary statements from witnesses. Keep witnesses separated.
- Isolate family members from scene as soon as possible. Assign an officer to stay with family until a detective can assist.
- No evidence – including personal items from victim – should be turned over to Medical Examiner until scene has been processed by detectives/investigators (only exception is victim's ID).
- Request additional supervisors, if needed (to respond to hospital, etc.).
- Maintain overall management of scene. Coordinate relief for officers when appropriate.
- Complete a Field Supervisor Crime Scene Log.
- Refer any media requests to the Public Information Officer (PIO) or their designee.
- Once the detectives or FSU Sergeant arrive on scene, brief them and turn over responsibility for the scene to them. Assist as requested.

### **OFFICER IN CHARGE**

- Obtain a briefing from scene supervisor and make a preliminary determination of needed resources.
- Make notifications per the Notification of Commanding Officers SOP.
- Contact the On-Call Detective Lieutenant and/or appropriate Investigative Services Lieutenant to help call in additional detectives.
- Contact other command staff, as needed.
- Maintain oversight and responsibility of the investigation until a command post is established and the Detective Lieutenant takes over responsibility.
- Handle initial media inquiries until a command post is established.
- Monitor citywide workload and determine whether additional patrol resources are needed.

Original SOP: 03/01/2014

(Revised: 01/19/2017, 01/31/2023)

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