

TITLE: CRIME SCENE UNIT

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to provide policy and procedure for the Santa Fe Police Crime Scene Unit.

DISCUSSION

Crime scene investigation is an essential function utilized in solving the crime. The resolution of criminal activity is heavily based on the identification, collection, and processing of physical evidence. Crime scene investigation begins with a response to the scene where an incident of criminal activity is reported and terminates at the final disposition of a criminal case by a court. Policy and standard operating procedures are essential to crime scene investigations.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Department to maintain and utilize a crime scene unit to conduct crime scene investigation procedures on all types of criminal activity and to provide this support to all the divisions within the department. The Crime Scene Unit is assigned to the Criminal Investigations Division and works under the direction of a Criminal Division Commander(s) or designee.

PROCEDURE

69.5.01 Duties and Responsibility

The following is a comprehensive list of duties performed by crime scene personnel of the Santa Fe Police Department Crime Scene Unit. These duties apply to both civilian and sworn CSU personnel. Efficient and complete processing is crucial to proper case disposition.

Many of these duties are performed for different types of incidents. No matter what type of crime, CSU personnel process these scenes in the same general standardized manner as set forth by industry standards. Some duties will be of a specific, specialized process unique to a specific type of incident, such as trajectory analysis for shooting incidents and blood pattern analysis for bloodletting incidents.

69.5.02 Primary Duties- Major Scene Operations

A. Major Assignments

1. Crime Scene Manager
2. Photographer / Photograph Log Recorder
3. Diagram Preparer
4. Evidence Recorder / Evidence Recovery Personnel
5. Specialist (Trajectory, BPA, etc.)

B. Duties

1. Assume control of the scene (ensure minimal contamination).
2. Crime Scene Manager will assign tasks to Crime Scene Team members.
3. Crime Scene Manager may work in the capacity of the photographer, diagramer, evidence recorder, and/or specialist.
4. Perform Scene Survey (Walk Through).
5. Document observations and prepare a team strategy for the scene.
6. Perform still photography of the scene and satellite scenes.

7. Complete a photograph log.
8. Perform Videography as needed.
9. Prepare a diagram of the scene. Methods include but are not limited to hand measurements drawing and computerized scanning and plotting.
10. Diagram Mapping (SOFTWARE) will be conducted if necessary later in the investigation by a trained Crime Scene Technician(s).
11. Identify record and mark items of evidentiary value.
12. Recover items of evidentiary value for submittal.
13. Prepare Chain of Custody documentation.
14. Disseminate items of evidence as required. Coordinate with Case Agent, DPS Crime Lab, District Attorney's Office, Evidence Custodian, Office of the Medical Investigator, etc. regarding evidence handling procedures, such as submittal, transport, follow up processing, retrieval, etc.
15. Perform specialized duties such as Trajectory Analysis, and/or Blood Pattern Analysis, as well as specialized photography such as laser trajectory photography, painting with light and low light photography.
16. Perform peer review of specialized processes. This requires two (2) similarly trained and experienced technicians. Peer review is an important aspect of forensic analysis and is a fundamental part of science. When data is collected in a crime scene investigation for any form of crime scene analysis, such as BPA, Trajectory analysis, crime scene reconstruction, a minimum of two (2) crime scene technicians, trained in that discipline, shall be used so the work of one (1) technician can be checked by another. This is a crucial element to courtroom testimony.
17. When the Crime Scene Technician/Crime Scene Manager is handling a crime scene, it is the responsibility of the Crime Scene Manager, based on his/her training and experience, together with input from the case agent and supervisor, to determine what tasks need to be completed. The Crime Scene Manager is ultimately responsible, based on his/her training and experience, for determining how the scene will be investigated.
18. Prepare comprehensive reports, to include follow up supplemental reports as needed during the progression of the case.
19. Process Search Warrants on vehicles, structures, curtilages and persons as deemed necessary by the case agent, during the progression of the case.
20. Prepare and coordinate evidence with Case Agent, DPS Crime Lab, District Attorney's Office, Evidence Custodian, and Office of the Medical Investigator, etc. for court room testimony.
21. Perform follow up processing, such as chemical and or controlled environment processing and photography, processing and documentation of victims as well as suspects and persons of interest involved in numerous categories of incidents, to include but not limited to Homicides, Suicides, Domestic Violence, Robbery, Burglary, Larceny, Identity Theft, Counterfeiting, Fraud, Sexual Assault, Child Abuse, Elderly Abuse, Missing Persons and Computer Crimes. Processing includes photography, a collection of clothing, footwear, headwear, items in possession and standards such as major case prints, DNA, and trace evidence (hairs and fibers).
22. Process any satellite scenes associated with the primary scene.

69.5.03 All Other Scene Operations

- A. As a general rule, crime scenes (incidents in need of processing) come in two categories, MAJOR SCENES, and ALL OTHER SCENES. The differentiating factor between the two is the

complexity of the scene, which directly translates into the number of resources, time and personnel that are required to effectively process a scene to industry standards. Major scenes are not necessarily limited to incidents such as Homicide. Property crimes or white collar crimes can also be categorized as major scenes, depending on their complexity.

- B.** These fewer complex scenes do not require the deployment of a Major Crime Scene Team. A Major Crime Scene Team which should be a minimum of two (2) personnel, when resources are available and staffing permits. Additional resources for a Major Crime Scene Team may be contacted if deemed necessary by the crime scene manager and supervisor. When these less complex scenes occur, the supervisor will then notify additional resources to assist as needed.
- C.** Secondary Duties- In addition to the primary duties listed above, Crime Scene personnel are also responsible for other duties required to ensure the efficiency and preparedness of the crime scene unit, as well as improve the efficiency of the department as a whole in areas relating to crime scene functions. These duties include:
1. Transport, submittal, and retrieval of evidence to and from the DPS Crime Lab, excluding drug evidence.
 2. Retrieval, transport, and submittal of Sexual Assault Evidence kits from the SANE Unit to the DPS Crime Lab.
 3. Conduct periodic training of other sworn personnel and technicians in proper crime scene procedures and evidence handling/packaging.
 4. Inspection of submitted evidence for proper packaging and documentation.
 5. Inspection of DPS Crime Lab Evidence Submittal forms for completeness as per Crime Lab policy.
 6. Maintenance of equipment and restocking of supplies for the Evidence Processing Lab.
 7. Maintenance and restocking of supplies for the Mobile Crime Lab.
 8. Inventory and re-ordering of crime scene supplies including personal protective equipment.
 9. Support all divisions of the department with crime scene related tasks.
 10. Perform after-hours On Call duties as required.
 11. Perform case research as requested by DPS Crime Lab.
 12. Perform Adjunct Instructor duties for local public schools, NM Law Enforcement Academy, Citizens Academy, etc.
 13. Attend advanced training courses to maintain Crime Scene Investigator Certification as required by City of Santa Fe policy.
 14. Crime Scene Unit Technicians may submit training requests (s) to attend available advance training(s) from outside schools/agencies. All training requests will be submitted through their appropriate chain of command for review.
 15. Crime Scene personnel shall complete the 120-day training and evaluation period and will also begin the process of attaining crime scene certification through a certified and accredited schools consistent with current industry standards. Study materials and

testing fees will be provided by the Santa Fe Police Department

16. Maintain Chain of Custody of all evidence disseminated through the Crime Scene Unit.

69.5.04 Auxiliary Crime Scene Unit

The Santa Fe Police Department operates and maintains an auxiliary crime scene unit designed to augment the CSU in performing crime scene duties. The Auxiliary Crime Scene Unit consists of sworn police personnel from the Santa Fe Police Department primarily assigned to other divisions within the department. Auxiliary members may be tasked to perform any of the duties described under “SFPD CSU DUTIES” as needed.

If, during the course of the auxiliary member’s normal work hours, he/she is tasked by his/her supervisor, to perform crime scene related duties, the auxiliary member should inform the CSU supervisor via cell phone call, text message or e-mail, as to the tasking for accountability purposes. If it is deemed by the Auxiliary Member that the tasking is beyond his/hers ability, the auxiliary member shall contact the CSU supervisor for distribution of further resources. If the CSU Commander is unavailable, the auxiliary member shall contact the investigations supervisor or the on-call investigations supervisor, if after normal working hours for distribution of further resources. Because Auxiliary members are subject to “on call” duty, the Auxiliary CSU will be assigned a departmental cell phone for official crime scene use only. The selection and placement process for Auxiliary Crime Scene Members is as follows:

A. Minimum Requirements- Potential members of the Santa Fe Police Department Auxiliary CSU must possess the following minimum requirements:

1. Must be a sworn member of the Santa Fe Police Department;
2. Must possess current Basic Police Officer Certification from the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy;
3. Must not be on probationary status with the Santa Fe Police Department;
4. Must not have any relevant disciplinary actions on file;
5. Must demonstrate a strong desire for crime scene processing;
6. Must be willing to commit to the auxiliary CSU for a minimum period of two (2) years.

B. Selection Process- Members of the Santa Fe Police Auxiliary CSU will be selected according to the following guidelines:

1. Interested members of the Santa Fe Police Department who meet the minimum requirements, will submit a Memorandum of Interest to the Criminal Investigations commander
2. Must undergo an interview.
3. Must complete a 120-day training and evaluation period.
 - a. During the training and evaluation period, potential members will be required to complete a series of in-house training sessions and, depending on scheduling, training with outside agencies.
 - b. Potential members will be required to respond as a part of a crime scene unit during major scene call outs. This is for training and evaluation. Overtime will be authorized.
 - c. Potential members who fail to respond to major scene call outs on three (3) separate

occasions, without just cause, may be terminated from the auxiliary CSU.

4. Personnel who complete the 120 day training and evaluation period as well as Blood Pattern Analysis 1, Shooting Scene Reconstruction 1, and Crime Scene Reconstruction 1 will be placed on the CSU internal on-call schedule, maintained by the Criminal Investigations Division, where they will collect on-call pay as per the SFPOA Union Contract, as well as any overtime, worked during the on-call period.
5. Upon completion of a major crime scene(s), auxiliary personnel will be assigned to the Investigations Division while processing a crime scene and/or conducting follow-up investigation(s) to include but not limited to evidence packaging, coordinating with Case Agent, submitting and transporting of evidence for laboratory analysis, report writing, diagraming, and/or any subsequent search warrants related to the case, etc.

69.5.05 Crime Scene Technicians/ Evidence- Crime Scene

- A. Crime Scene Technicians will process and document the crime scene.
 1. They will assist with the preservation of the scene.
 2. They will document the scene using a combination of digital photography, videography, and modern diagraming techniques.
 3. They will identify, mark, document, collect, process and preserve physical evidence utilizing recognized techniques.
 4. For evidence collection procedures, refer to directive entitled "Collection and Preservation of Evidence."
- B. The Crime Scene Unit vehicle fleet consists of the following:
 1. Normal, daily usage units

2. Mobile Crime Lab (if needed)
3. Both categories maintain equipment necessary to:
 - a. Develop and recover latent fingerprints and DNA evidence.
 - b. Cast tire, foot, and tool mark impressions
 - c. Photograph
 - d. Diagram the scene
 - e. Collect, process, discriminate and preserve physical evidence
4. The crime scene response units can carry additional equipment, to include:
 - a. ladder
 - b. generator
 - c. lighting system
 - d. additional, specialized equipment

C. A detailed, comprehensive written report, to include any supplemental reports, will be completed by the Crime Scene Technician and submitted in a timely fashion

Following the completion of processing and documentation of the scene, every effort will be made to obtain standards for comparison and elimination of trace, DNA and Latent / Patent Print evidence collected.

- D. When completing a crime scene sketch, the following elements must be included:
 1. Dimensions
 2. Relationship of the crime scene to other buildings, geographical features or roads.
 3. Address, floor or room numbers as appropriate.
 4. Location of significant features of the scene, including the victim.
 5. Date and time of preparation.
 6. Name of the person(s) preparing the sketch.
 7. The direction of the north.

8. Location of items of physical evidence recovered.
- E. Photographs will be taken of the crime scene before the collection of any physical evidence, any disturbance of the scene or any processing procedures, to include: latent fingerprints, trace evidence, or casting procedures. Once overall photographs have been taken of the scene, specific items identified as evidence, and or latent fingerprints located or developed, will then be photographed in detail utilizing established, recognized techniques.
1. Overall photographs depicting the relationship of the crime scene to the surrounding area.
 2. Mid-range photographs depicting items of evidence and their location within the crime scene.
 3. Close-up photographs depicting a detailed view of the single piece of evidence.
 4. Evidence photographs depicting a detailed view of the single piece of evidence with a scale included.
- F. It is recommended Crime Scene Technicians coordinate with Officers/Detectives to submit and request laboratory examinations on physical evidence needing forensic analysis. The Investigation's Case Agent will coordinate with Crime Scene Technician(s) to submit and request laboratory examinations on other evidence, as circumstances dictate.
- G. All evidence will be documented, from its origin (location it was first collected) to its final destination, utilizing a proper, unbroken Chain of Custody, such as a departmental evidence tag, laboratory Evidence Submittal Form or other agency Chain of Custody document, and will include the following information:
1. A detailed description of the item (including make, model number, and serial number, if any);
 2. Source (from whom or location which obtained); and
 3. Name of the person collecting the item or items.
- H. The Crime Scene Technician(s) responsible for processing a scene will prepare a written report. This report will provide an accurate record of the technician's activities at the scene, in the event of a trial. The report will contain the following information:
1. Date and time request for service was received;
 2. The investigating patrol officer or case agent;
 3. Case file reference number;
 4. Date and time of arrival at the scene;
 5. Location of the crime;
 6. Name of the victim, if known;
 7. Name of the suspect, if known;
 8. Action taken at the scene including any processing such as walkthrough, still photographs, videography, diagraming and any evidence identified and collected.
 9. Dissemination of physical evidence, photographs, and/or video.
 - a. When evidentiary photographs and/or video are taken at a scene, the following information will be included in a report:
 - b. date,
 - c. time,
 - d. location,
 - e. case number,
 - f. name of the photographer,
- I. Whenever a transfer of physical evidence is made, a written record in the form of a Chain of Custody document, such as; department evidence tag, laboratory Evidence Submittal Form or other agency Chain of Custody document, will be completed to include:
1. date and time of transfer,
 2. releasing and receiving person's or entity's name
 3. releasing and receiving person's or entity's name

J. Latent fingerprints will be submitted for examination to the AFIS [Automated Fingerprint Identification System], at the New Mexico Crime Laboratory. The latent fingerprints will be reviewed by Crime Scene Technicians for quality, before submission to the laboratory. Chain of custody documentation will be filed upon submission, to include:

1. Name of individual last having custody of the item,
2. Date and time of submission or mailing and method used for transmission,
3. Date and time of receipt in the laboratory,
4. Name and signature of the person in the laboratory receiving the evidence.

K. When a determination has been made by the on-scene commander that a Crime Scene Technician is required, the on-scene commander will notify any auxiliary crime scene technicians who may be on duty to assist in the process and collection of evidence. If no auxiliary technicians are in service. The on-duty commander will then notify the on-call Investigations supervisor, who will then notify appropriate CSU personnel. The Crime Scene Technicians / Auxiliary will follow the Criminal Investigations Section internal on-call schedule. After normal working hours, Technicians can only be called out under the direction of the on-call Investigations supervisor.

During normal working hours, if a Crime Scene Technician is requested by divisions other than CID, said supervisor will contact the CSU Supervisor for needed assistance. If CSU Supervisor is unavailable, then said supervisor will contact the CID chain of command.

L. The primary function of the Crime Scene Technician at a crime scene is to process and document the scene. Scene security is not the responsibility of the CSU.

M. In non-major cases, in which no case agent arrives to assume overall responsibility or no detective is assigned, the first responding patrol officer will secure the scene and protect known physical evidence. Upon arrival of the crime scene

technician, the patrol officer will brief the technician as to the known circumstances.

N. The patrol officer will provide primary security of the scene, while the technician assumes responsibility for the scene and processes, documents, collects, preserves, and submits any physical evidence.

O. In major crime scenes in which a case agent has been designated as “in-charge of”, the Crime Scene Team will proceed according to the dictates of the case agent in conjunction with either the CSU commander or the on-call Investigations supervisor.

P. This will also pertain to the operations of a technician when a patrol supervisor is present at a non-major crime(s) scene, or at a major crime(s) scene with an investigations supervisor present. For a non-major crime scene, particularly property crimes, the first arriving patrol officer will make a determination if a crime scene technician is required. The patrol officer will request the presence of a technician, through the communications section of the Police Department. The CSU Commander or a patrol supervisor/commander may also request that a technician respond.

Q. For a major crime(s) scene, a supervisor will contact the CSU Commander who will dispatch the Major Scene Team. If the CSU Commander is unavailable, a supervisor will contact an investigations supervisor who will then dispatch the Major Scene Team.

69.5.07 Crime Scene Vehicles

A. Departmental vehicles are assigned to the Crime Scene Unit as regular use vehicles, less lights and siren for civilian technicians. This will assure availability for immediate response to crime scenes.

1. The Santa Fe Police Department CSU is assigned a Mobile Crime Lab vehicle and is supplied, equipped and available for major crime scenes.

B. Vehicles assigned to civilian technicians are not authorized for emergency response nor are they suitably equipped and therefore only respond to process crime scenes after the fact.

- C. Each technician from the Crime Scene Unit is responsible for maintaining daily use vehicle condition and scheduled service. The CSU Commander is responsible for maintaining the Mobile Crime Lab vehicle.
- D. The daily use vehicles may carry the following items:
 - 1. Fingerprint kit(s) for field development of latent fingerprints and inked elimination fingerprint kits.
 - 2. Digital Crime Scene camera kits, including tripod and 1:1 adapter.
 - 3. Plaster or similar substance casting kits for foot, tire tracks.
 - 4. Evidence collection containers: bags - plastic and paper; hard-sided evidence containers of various sizes.
 - 5. Protective clothing: one piece coveralls, cloth and disposable paper; rubber gloves to include protection from body fluid; foot gear, dust mask.
 - 6. Rechargeable flashlight units.
 - 7. Portable flood lamp unit.
 - 8. Temperature sensitive items and equipment requiring battery charges are not kept in daily use vehicles. These items are maintained in locked areas at police department, with access restricted to crime scene technicians.
 - 9. The daily use vehicles are equipped with spare tire, and jack.
 - 10. Radio communications is accomplished by utilizing hand-held radios only.
- E. Persons authorized to operate the crime scene vehicles are:
 - 1. Crime Scene Technicians having valid class D driver's license.


69.5.08 Crime Scene Equipment

A. In order to allow for the complete and accurate investigation of crime scenes, the Santa Fe Police Department maintains specialized equipment and processes that can be utilized during the course of the investigation, both at the scene or in the CSU Evidence Processing Lab.

Below is a list of items readily available within the Santa Fe Police Department for use at Crime Scene Investigations and is not intended to indicate when an investigator must use a specific piece of equipment and/or process. Equipment should be considered during the investigation of a crime scene, however, not all equipment must always be used as each and every crime

B. The CSU lab is equipped with ventilation system, eye wash station, non-porous floor and work surfaces, for personnel safety as well as to minimize cross contamination of evidence.

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APPROVED: 

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