



Training Bulletin

SANTA BARBARA POLICE DEPARTMENT



LORI LUHNOW, Chief of Police

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Investigative Checklist

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DISCUSSION POINTS

In order to improve investigative follow-up customer service to the community and improve the quality of our Department's investigations, we have developed an Investigative Checklist. The checklist is a guide to assist responding Officers with a process to follow when conducting initial investigations. The checklist will also assist Investigators with their follow-up once the investigation is forwarded to Criminal Investigations. Thoroughness is what solves crimes, secures convictions, and limits liability. Please be thorough in your documentation.

Documentation:

Entities

- Document all relevant parties present. Enter all parties as entities, including children and vehicles. When possible, relate the vehicles to an involved party.
- Before selecting "Pre-fill" update / confirm previous information captured in Versadex. It is critical to update phone numbers and addresses. Email addresses can be very useful.
- If translation will be necessary, document the language spoken.

Narrative

- Include details on evidence that is not present but searched for, such as an area canvassed for video surveillance.
- Describe environment: Lighting, weather, noise, special events in area, etc.
- Corpus: Cover all elements, even if probable cause is currently lacking.
- Enhancements – Gang, Special Circumstances.
- Avoid opinions.
- Avoid vague descriptions.
- Use quotes:
 - i.e. instead of "fits the description" explain how suspect fit the description in detail.
 - i.e. instead of "assaulted" explain specific details of assault and actions by suspect.

Interviews:

- Summary of all statements included in narrative.
- Describe demeanor of entity interviewed.
- Explain why interview was not conducted and/or what attempts were made to interview/locate.

Evidence:

- What items were seized? Which areas were canvassed? What investigative tools were used and/or considered?
- Obtain passwords, combinations for evidence seized.
- Digitally book all photos prior to EOW to the lab drive so they can be accessed.
- Phones/Computers/Electronic Devices: If consent is granted take the opportunity.
- If video can't be downloaded, digitally record the video and book into evidence.
- DNA: Obtain a reference swab from involved parties when possible if DNA is potential evidence in the case.
- Checks and bank statements: Scan into case and book originals into property.
- Credit Cards: Obtain the numbers or last 4 digits, date, time and location of alleged fraudulent transactions.
- Burglary/Theft: Document serial numbers, value, photos of item by owner, and any unique identifiers for stolen property.

Additional Details:

- Do not request a specific investigator be "assigned."
- You may request a specific investigator be "notified."
- Record all interviews in major investigations.