



Edina Police Operations Manual

Policy Number
640.00

Subject:
DEATH INVESTIGATIONS (SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES)

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06/01/1993

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03/04/2020

Page 1 of 3

PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines for officers responding to a scene where a death has taken place involving suspicious circumstances and/or criminal involvement is suspected.

640.01 OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

Subd. 1 Upon arriving at the scene where a death has occurred and the officer's observations indicate that the conditions surrounding the scene are suspicious or criminal involvement is suspected, the first officer on the scene becomes the initial investigating officer and should:

- a) Initiate measures to secure and protect the scene.
- b) Notify the on-duty supervisor of the situation.
- c) Begin a timeline logging all pertinent information including:
 - Time of call and time of arrival.
 - Person(s) who have or had entered the scene.
 - Persons present (including police officers).
 - Observations upon arrival.
 - Weather conditions.
- d) All law enforcement personnel who enter the scene should complete a supplement report, which includes their purpose for being at the scene, responsibilities, actions, and observations.
- e) Access to the scene should be limited and personal protective equipment should be utilized to limit contamination of the scene.

Subd. 2 The scene should be secured and a perimeter established as soon as possible using yellow "Police Line" tape.

Subd. 3 The initial officer on the scene shall complete an offense report.

640.02 UNIFORMED SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Subd. 1 Upon arrival at the scene, the uniformed supervisor shall evaluate and ensure scene security. If additional personnel are needed to secure the area the supervisor may consider using non-sworn personnel (CSO, Police Reserve, etc.) to secure the perimeter.

Subd. 2 In addition, the uniformed supervisor should:

- a) Evaluate the need to seal off the scene and obtain a search warrant for continued investigation.
- b) Direct the assignments of uniformed personnel.
- c) Ensure witness identification, detainment, and separation.
- d) Ensure the preservation of evidence.
- e) Evaluate and coordinate the need for any special equipment, which may assist in the investigation.
- f) Evaluate the need for investigative personnel.
- g) Notify the investigative supervisor and the chief of police.
- h) Ensure that necessary notifications, such as Crime Lab and Medical Examiner, are made.

640.03 PRIMARY DETECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Subd. 1 The primary detective shall be assigned by the investigative supervisor or in their absence the patrol supervisor.

Subd. 2 The primary detective shall coordinate the investigation with all police personnel.

Subd. 3 Other responsibilities include:

- a) Ensure that all evidence has been located, identified, and collected from the scene.
- b) Coordinate necessary on-scene briefings.
- c) Coordinate the preparing and execution of search warrants.

640.04 INVESTIGATIVE SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Subd. 1 The investigative supervisor shall ensure that an adequate number of investigative personnel are on the scene. Evaluate investigative assignments and direct personnel as necessary.

Subd. 2 The investigative supervisor shall ensure that:

- a) A canvas of the area for additional witnesses, possible suspects, or additional evidence has been completed.
- b) The coordination of area searches, if appropriate.
- c) Appropriate notifications have been made.
- d) Potential suspect information has been disseminated to appropriate agencies.
- e) Appropriate information is provided to the Public Information Officer for press releases.

640.05 EVIDENCE

All evidence should be collected and processed either by the Hennepin County Sheriff's Crime Lab, the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office, or the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.