

 Cambridge Police Department	POLICY & PROCEDURES		No. 420
	Subject/Title: Preliminary Criminal Investigations		
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	Robert C. Haas Police Commissioner	Effective Date: September 1, 2010	Rescinds:
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I. PURPOSE:

To establish broad set of guidelines that officers of this department are expected to follow when conducting criminal investigations or other types of offense complaints. Although this policy is designed to provide a general overview of preliminary criminal investigative procedures, there are other policies which are designed to provide more detailed procedures for specific types of crimes or offenses.

II. POLICY:¹

All officers of this department are responsible for carrying out a thorough and complete investigation of all matters for which they have been assigned to investigate. Officers who have been assigned to conduct investigations are also responsible for completing a sufficiently detailed police investigation report.

III. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES:

The ultimate success or failure of police efforts in the identification, apprehension, and subsequent prosecution of criminal offenders is often based upon the immediate response and investigation. The preliminary investigation should never be handled routinely as it is not only a vital link in the criminal investigation process, but it can often be the means of uncovering information leading to the solution of other crimes or for initiating crime prevention procedures.

The preliminary investigation is generally the responsibility of officers assigned to patrol duty who are nearly always the first police officers on the scene of a reported crime.

¹ CALEA Std.: **42.1.4** – A written directive specifies accountability for conducting preliminary and follow-up criminal investigations.

It is the duty of the patrol officer initially to discover facts, to locate and identify witnesses and to preserve physical evidence that is relied upon by the police investigator during his/her subsequent search of the suspected criminal. It is for this reason that every effort should be made to maintain a cooperative relationship and good communications between the patrol force and the investigative unit of the department. A free flow of information is necessary in this regard so as to facilitate continuity of investigations, thereby enhancing the successful resolution of the investigation.

The courts often give greater weight to physical evidence than to the direct testimony of witnesses which may be subject to human defects. The evidentiary value of physical evidence, however, can be easily destroyed if it is not carefully handled and secured in accordance with departmental procedures. For evidence to be admissible, the prosecutor must be able to establish to clear “chain of custody” of that evidence from the moment it comes into the possession of the police at the crime scene to the time of the court trial. Every officer who handles this evidence must be prepared to establish how he/she received it, how he/she safeguarded it and how he/she relinquished it.

A written report of the incident should be as complete, accurate and concise as possible if it is to serve its intended purpose of communicating a good understanding of what happened to others who were not present, but who must subsequently read this report and act upon it for police or prosecution purposes. While most police departments utilize standardized forms designed to capture all necessary preliminary investigation data, a narrative type of report should be prepared and submitted for all serious incidents and major offenses.

IV. RESPONDING TO CRIME SCENES:²

- A. Assignment of Officers:** Officers should not proceed to a crime scene unless:
1. They are specifically directed to respond;
 2. The crime occurs or is discovered within their assigned areas of patrol; or
 3. It is their particular assignment to be generally responsible for conducting such investigations.

² CALEA Std. **42.2.1** – A written directive establishes steps to be followed in conducting preliminary investigations, to include:

- a. observing all conditions, events, and remarks;
- b. locating and identifying witnesses;
- c. maintaining and protecting the crime scene and arranging for the collection of evidence; and
- d. interviewing the complainant, witnesses, and suspects.

- B. Responsibility of Backup Officers:** All officers who have responded to the crime scene as a backup unit should remain on the perimeter of the reported crime scene ready to assist in the apprehension of the perpetrator or to perform such other duties as directed.
1. *Approaching the Crime Scene:* Officers proceeding to the crime scene should be vigilant and watchful in their approach for any signs of suspicious activity, especially for any evidence of a fleeing criminal or for persons acting suspiciously or furtively in the vicinity.
 2. *Recording Registration Numbers:* Responding officers should make note of any vehicles leaving or coming from the vicinity of the crime scene and make note of the registration numbers, general description of the vehicles and its occupants.
 3. *Monitoring the Police Radio:* The officers proceeding to the crime scene should be alert for any additional radio messages concerning the call on which they are responding. The communications officer should immediately furnish the responding officers with any supplementary information that would be of assistance to them, especially any available information that would indicate the possibility of a dangerous situation or the possible presence of an armed or dangerous suspect.
 4. *Incidents Requiring Multiple Officer Responses:* As calls for service are received by this agency, the personnel at the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) will assess whether the call is of an emergency or non-emergency nature. It is the responsibility of ECC personnel to elicit as much information as possible so that he/she can make that assessment. Based on the information obtained, one of the following courses of action will be taken (refer to departmental policy entitled, Response to Calls):
 - a. If the call for service is of an emergency nature involving the threat to life or property, the communications officer will alert the primary responding patrol unit and the sector sergeant. Based on the information given to the sector sergeant, it is his/her responsibility to determine what other units will respond.
 - b. If the call for service involved the need for other emergency units, such as, fires, fire related calls, medical emergencies, etc., then the communications officer will dispatch the appropriate units for those types of situations, in addition to the responding patrol units.
 - c. Most Routine types of service calls, where it does not appear any criminal activity is taking place, nor does there appear to be any threat to life or property, and the call does not appear to cause any concern for officer

safety, then the communications officer will assign the appropriate sector patrol unit.

- d. If an officer arrives upon a situation where he/she feels that additional assistance may be required, then the officer will immediately notify the communications officer, who will dispatch additional units.
- e. All incidents involving crimes in progress or offenses against persons will warrant a multiple patrol unit response, with the sector sergeant being advised of all such situations.
- f. All calls involving serious incidents, where additional manpower may be required, will warrant multiple patrol unit response, with the sector sergeant being advised of all such situations.

V. ASSIGNMENT OF PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS:

A. Types of Patrol Preliminary Investigations: As a general matter of course, patrol officers will be assigned to conduct all preliminary investigations, with limited exceptions, as may be noted within the department's policy manual. Exceptions to this rule would include the following:

1. Unusual serious or complex crimes which may be referred directly to the Criminal Investigations Section.
2. Investigations involving the gathering of intelligence, organized crime, vice, or internal investigations will normally be referred directly to the Criminal Investigations Section, unless directed otherwise by the Police Commissioner.
3. Serious motor vehicle accidents, or types or accidents may be referred to the patrol supervisor, or officers specially trained in accident investigation.
4. Incidents where other law enforcement agencies or social service agencies have already begun an investigation, and referred to the agency for further investigation.

B. General Guidelines Involving Criminal Investigations: When a report of any of the following incidents is received, the report is to be verified by a patrol officer and a preliminary investigation will be conducted:

1. All indictable crimes and other offenses.
2. Suspicious, unattended, or accidental deaths.

3. Bookmaking and other gambling offenses.
4. Frauds and bad checks.
5. Narcotics violations.

Exceptions: If a victim of any of the aforementioned incidents appears at the police station and a detective is working and available, a detective may be assigned the preliminary and follow-up investigation.

C. Command of Crime Scenes: At the scene of any crime, accident, or other police incident, the ranking officer present shall assume command and direction of police personnel to assure the most orderly and efficient accomplishment of the police task.

1. *Succession of Command at Crime Scenes:* The succession of command at a crime scene may also take on any of the following structures:
 - a. At the scene of any crime, normally investigated by the Criminal Investigations Section (CIS), the ranking uniformed officer may relinquish his/her command authority to a member of the CIS.
 - b. When two or more officers of the same rank are present and one of these is assigned to as the principal investigator, that officer will assume control of the crime scene until such time a ranking officer takes over command or the scene is turned over to CIS.
 - c. Prior to taking over command of a crime scene, it is incumbent upon the ranking officer assuming such control to become acquainted with the facts and insure that appropriate action is being taken or is initiated.
2. *Crime Scene Responsibilities:*³ The first officer to arrive at the scene of a crime or other police incident is responsible for the following actions as they may apply to the situation:
 - a. Making a determination if there is a need for medical assistance (M.G.L. Chapter 111, s. 201);
 - b. Prevent further injury or loss of life
 - c. Summon emergency medical service assistance.
 - d. Provide first aid as required.

³ CALEA Std. 42.2.1 (a) & (b)

- e. Arrest the violator(s) if sufficient probably cause exists.
 - f. Secure the crime scene, for the purpose of preserving evidence.
 - g. Notify the patrol supervisor on findings
 - h. Summon technical assistance as may be required.
 - i. Begin preliminary investigation proceedings:
 - j. Identify the victim(s) and/or witnesses
 - k. Identify potential evidential materials, which include its preservation and protection until it can be properly collected, packaged, and marked.
 - l. Determine all the facts surrounding the cause.
 - m. Attempt to learn the identity of, locate, and if possible, apprehend suspects.
 - n. Protect the constitutional rights of those involved.
 - o. Completion of the appropriate police report(s), detailing the findings of the officer, to include facts that were collected, persons identified, and a reconstruction of the incident.
3. *Releasing Crime Scene Information:* Unauthorized persons, including members of the press, shall be excluded from the crime scene. Information which will not hinder or nullify an investigation shall be given to the press by the officer in charge of the investigation (refer to the policy entitled, **#300 – Media Guidelines/Public Information**).

VI. OTHER PRELIMINARY AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- A. Pursuing the Perpetrator:**⁴ When it is determined that a crime has occurred that is an arrestable offense, the officer shall attempt to arrest the perpetrator if there is a reasonable likelihood that an apprehension can be made and there is sufficient probably cause to support the arrest. Some of the factors which should be considered in determining whether or not the officer should leave the scene for this purpose are as follows:
1. The physical condition of the victim;

⁴ CALEA Std. 42.2.1 (a)

2. The need to protect the victim from a renewed attack;
3. The nature of the crime committed;
4. The time and place of occurrence;
5. The lapse of time between the crime and the arrival of the police at the scene;
6. Whether the suspect is known to the officer or a good description of the offender is available; and
7. The availability of other officers to conduct the pursuit and to apprehend the offender.

B. Patrol Follow-Up Investigations:⁵ Unless directed otherwise by an existing policy/procedure, or by a supervisory officer, each and every patrol officer has a duty and responsibility to carry out every investigation to its logical conclusion, which means:

1. Officers are to uncover all information that is pertinent to the case
2. Keep the shift commander abreast on the status of the investigation.
3. Complete a comprehensive and complete police report.
4. Flag those cases which require follow-up investigation. Those cases that are to remain within the Patrol Operations Division should be followed-up by the initiating investigator, unless specific circumstances dictate otherwise.
5. The sector sergeant will routinely check for cases that require follow-up investigations, and assign them as may be appropriate, such as:
 - a. Traffic accident investigations requiring further investigation.
 - b. Non-criminal investigations that require additional investigation.
 - c. All other cases are continued by the appropriate specialists within the agency.
 - d. Cases which are to be referred to other units or sections in the department will be so marked, and forwarded to that unit or section.

⁵ CALEA Std. 42.1.4

6. Officers reviewing reports have a duty and responsibility to be cognizant of all cases that may require follow-up investigations, and to properly flag those cases for follow-up investigations.
7. Whenever an officer conducts any follow-up action on a case that officer shall complete a Supplemental Report outlining the actions he/she took, the findings of the investigation, and indicate the status of the investigation.
8. The officer is also responsible for determining whether follow-up investigations are still required, and indicate same.
9. Whenever possible, the officer initiating the continued investigation will be responsible for its subsequent follow-up, unless directed otherwise, circumstances are such to dictate otherwise, or if the investigation would be more appropriately handled by another component of the agency.
10. Reviewing officers are to be alert for the status on all follow-up investigations, and determine whether further investigation is warranted.
11. The Shift Commander is responsible for seeing that all continued investigations directed to patrol officers are routinely assigned, and handled in a timely manner.
12. Follow-up investigations forwarded to other agency components become the responsibility of that unit or section supervisor to make sure that follow-up action is taken.

- C. Preserving and Safeguarding Evidence:**⁶ It is the first officer at a crime scene who plays the most crucial role in preserving and safeguarding any evidence which may be critical to a criminal case. Every effort shall be made to protect the crime scene for the preservation of any physical evidence (see departmental policy entitled, Collection and Preservation of Evidence).

Insofar as possible, the crime scene shall be maintained in the same manner as it was left by the perpetrator, Generally, spectators and bystanders should be ordered away. Persons connected to the crime and persons associated with the property or premises involved in the crime should be ordered to remain present and available for questioning, but they shall be told not to alter or disturb any aspect of the crime scene. Unauthorized persons shall not be permitted to enter or disturb the crime scene (this includes any police personnel not necessary for the investigation). If necessary, the premises or area comprising the crime scene may be roped or cordoned off, locked or otherwise secured.

⁶ CALEA Std. 42.2.1 (c)

Officers shall look for any item of evidentiary value which may reveal how the crime was committed or anything which may connect a particular person to the scene. This would include, but is not limited to the following:

1. Weapons, shell casings, tools, clothing, shattered glass, stains, footprints, fingerprints, tool impressions, tire markings, etc.;
2. Ordinary objects or articles found in unexpected or unusual locations;
3. Ordinary objects or articles having individual peculiarities or markings;
4. Uncommon objects or articles not generally found at the location of the particular crime; and
5. Bits and pieces of evidence which may individually be of minor importance but when taken together can be of significant value to the investigation.
6. Physical evidence should never be moved or touched pending the arrival of evidence technicians unless it is absolutely necessary to assure its preservation.
7. If it is necessary to move or take custody of any physical evidence, a careful notation shall be made of its exact location and position at the scene.
8. If it is necessary to move any item of physical evidence, the item shall be handled in such a manner as to prevent any alteration of its condition or the accidental impression of fingerprints.

D. On-Scene Supervisory Presence:⁷ Normally it is the responsibility of the sector sergeant to check on the progress of those officers assigned under their command. Often this field inspection is done to assess officer performance, and to provide guidance or corrective action when necessary. However, there are certain situations when a supervisor is required to respond for the purpose of providing proper on-scene supervision.

1. The investigation of any serious crime or offense.
2. Those situations requiring a multiple officer response as outlined within this policy.
3. Motor vehicle accidents involving patrol vehicles.
4. Incidents involving injuries to officers.

⁷ CALEA Std. 42.1.4

5. Incidents involving any City employee.
6. Officers responding on calls who are still on probationary status.
7. In those situations where a supervisory presence is part of department policy and procedure.
8. Incidents of any serious nature, which may include emergencies such as first aid calls, crimes in progress, fire emergencies, etc.
9. The sector sergeants are responsible for monitoring all radio transmissions at all times, unless properly relieved by another supervisory officer.

VII. INTERVIEWING WITNESSES:⁸

- A. Searching for Witnesses:** Every effort should be made to locate, identify and interview reliable witnesses (see departmental policy on Interviewing Witnesses).
1. Witnesses should be interviewed as soon as possible and in a quiet area, if available.
 2. Witnesses should be interviewed separately to ensure independent statements.
 3. When interviewing witnesses (including victims), assess each witness' objectivity or possible bias; any relationship or connection the witness might have with the victim or owner of the property or premises involved in the crime; the overall credibility of the witness, his/her opportunity to make observations; and his/her ability to recall details as opposed to general impressions, etc.
 4. After all witnesses located at the scene have been interviewed, it may be advisable to canvas residences and businesses in the area in order to locate persons who did witness some aspect of the crime, but who are reluctant to come forward with that information.
 5. The purpose of these preliminary interviews is to obtain as much basic information as quickly as possible in order to identify and, if possible, apprehend the perpetrator and to establish the basis for the follow-up investigation.

⁸ CALEA Std. 42.2.1 (d). Also refer to department policy #421 – *Interviewing Witnesses and Victims* for additional information.

- B. Method for Interviewing Witnesses:** The conduct an effective preliminary interview of witnesses:
1. Be tactful and patient;
 2. Ask only one question at a time;
 3. Ask questions in plain, easily understood language;
 4. Avoid asking questions that imply a particular answer;
 5. Avoid interruptions, if possible.
 6. Before using any person at the scene as an interpreter, make sure the person chosen to serve as interpreter is reliable. If possible, take the precaution of asking a second person who knows the foreign language to listen to the interpreter and notify the officer if the interpreter fails to translate any question or answer accurately and completely.
- C. Interviewing Reporting Parties/Complainants:** A thorough interview of all complainants should likewise be conducted using the aforementioned guidelines. Whenever possible, the officer should advise the complainant of an incident as to her/her findings, particularly when the complainant was not a participant in the incident, and such information will not jeopardize or hamper investigative efforts.

VIII. OTHER PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIVE EFFORTS:

- A. Field Interviews:**⁹ All officers have a duty and responsibility to be vigilant for suspicious activity. Accordingly, investigative stops or detentions may only be conducted when an officer has an objective reasonable suspicion that criminal activity may be afoot (refer also to departmental policy entitled, Stop, Frisk, and Threshold Inquiries).
1. Officers are required to notify the communications officer whenever they engage in an investigative stop.
 2. Officers should always be cognizant of their safety needs at all times, especially when they select the location to engage individual(s), make their approach, actually engage in the detention, and then finally break-off an investigative stop.

⁹ Also refer to department policy #423 – *Field Interviews and Observations* for additional information.

3. The pat down search of individuals' outer garments that are being detained may be conducted only when the officer is in possession of additional specific and articulable facts from which he can reasonably infer that the individual he is confronting is armed and presently dangerous. (NOTE: the frisk must be strictly limited in scope, designed to discover hidden weapons).¹⁰
4. Officers are to be cognizant at all times while conducting an interview, when it is appropriate to provide individuals with their constitutional rights.
5. All established guidelines as they pertain to arrest, search and seizure will be observed by officers at all times.
6. Whenever an officer conducts an investigative detention, the officer is required to complete an investigative report on the circumstances of the detention, the information uncovered, the action taken by the officer, etc.
7. If the investigation requires a follow-up investigation, it will be carried out in a fashion as outlined in the aforementioned sections.
8. If the information uncovered during the field interview is of significance, where it should be referred to other components of the agency, the officer will ensure that a copy of the report is referred on to those other components.

B. Alternatives to On-Scene Responses: There are certain occasions when officers may not be required to respond to the scene of certain types of incidents, some of these situations may include the following:

1. When the Shift Commander authorizes that a complaint may be taken by telephone, due to extenuating circumstances.
2. Victim/witnesses/complainants do not wish an officer to respond to their location to file a police report.
3. The caller simply wishes to pass on information which is non-criminal in nature or investigative type information.
4. The individual is calling from a location where it would be impractical for them to respond and the individual is outside of our jurisdictional boundaries.
5. Whenever practical, any call or other form of communication that does not require police response, but merely can be effectively and more efficiently handled from the police station will be done so, with the authorization of the Shift Commander.

¹⁰ Also refer to department policy #424 – *Stop, Frisk, and Threshold Inquiries* for additional information.

6. In these types of situations, the Shift Commander may authorize the investigation to be conducted by telephone.
7. In those situations where the agency receives correspondence through the mail, the Shift Commander must determine if the correspondence is sufficient to satisfy the requirements of an investigation report. If it is determined that the correspondence does not constitute sufficient information or meet the requirements of that type of investigation, then an officer may be assigned to conduct further investigation.
8. In either event, a report will be initiated, and a police report will reflect what action was taken in regards to the matter.

IX. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:¹¹

- A. **Filing a Preliminary Investigation Report:** The officer conducting a preliminary investigation shall make an accurate and complete written report of the incident in accordance with departmental procedures. All additional reports and documentation which are normally associated with the investigation or part of the reporting process will also be completed by the initial investigating officer.
- B. **Contents of a Preliminary Investigation Report:**¹² An officer making a preliminary investigation should not rely on his/her memory, but should note all useful information and, at a minimum, should make a written record of the following data:
 1. Date and time of arrival at the scene;
 2. Weather conditions and visibility, including the location and distance from the nearest street light or artificial lighting and whether the lights were on;
 3. Approximate time of commission of the crime and by whom it was discovered;
 4. Identity of other police officers present;
 5. All necessary information concerning any physical evidence discovered;
 6. Name, address and telephone number (s) of victims and potential witnesses;

¹¹ Also refer to department policy #315 – *Incident Report Guidelines* for additional information.

¹² CALEA Std. 42.2.1 (a)

7. The identity or the best available description of the criminal suspect or suspects, particularly noting any unusual characteristics;
8. The best available description of any vehicle used by the suspect or suspects any important measurements made at the scene and a rough crime scene sketch; the name of any police photographer who took pictures, the name and affiliation of any media photographer who took pictures, the name and address of any private individual who took pictures;
9. The time and location of any interviews of the victim or witnesses and a brief statement as to what they heard or observed; and
10. Any other information that the officer believes may be useful for the apprehension of the criminal suspect and his/her subsequent prosecution.

Note: If any statement taken from a victim or witness is considered important to the investigation, the officer may wish to consider having that person make a formal statement (verbatim record). If a formal statement is to be taken at a later time, the investigating officer should still obtain sufficient information at the time of the preliminary investigation which summarizes the information a victim or witness is able to give.

C. Completion of Supplemental Investigative Reports:¹³ Particularly when more than one officer is involved in a crime scene, it becomes necessary for officers other than the designated investigator to file a report as to his/her involvement and investigative action.

1. When officers have participated in a criminal investigation where their actions are adjunct or supplementary to the initial investigating officer's actions, those officers are required to file their own investigative reports in the form of a Supplemental Report.
2. This procedure should also hold true for the supervisory officer who may be at the scene. Many times, the supervisory officer gets involved in the incident and takes action or witnesses something which is considered an important part of the investigation. In these situations, the supervisory officer should consider filing his/her own supplemental report or instruct other officers to incorporate that information into their investigative reports.

D. Crime Scene Notes: Field notes taken by an officer during the course of an investigation shall be utilized to serve as an extension of the officer's memory. Field notes are not considered permanent records and are used to index

¹³ CALEA Std. 42.1.4

information pertinent to the investigation and should be in the form of brief notations.

1. It is recommended that an officer rely solely on his/her completed investigation report as reference to any testimony or supplemental investigation from which he/she is required to draw facts pertaining to the incident in which he was involved.

X. Preliminary Investigation Checklist:¹⁴

The following checklist summarizes the duties of a police officer conducting a preliminary investigation at the scene of a crime.

- ✓ Care for any person who requires medical or first aid attention.
- ✓ Arrest the perpetrator of the crime, if possible.
- ✓ Arrange for the immediate pursuit of the perpetrator if his/her flight is recent and initiate his/her pursuit personally if the possibility of immediate capture is likely.
- ✓ Furnish to the communications officer the best possible description of the perpetrators giving a brief outline of the crime committed, the method and direction of the suspect's flight and whether he/she is considered armed and dangerous.
- ✓ Carefully secure the crime scene from disturbance or alteration, and carefully locate and preserve all physical evidence.
- ✓ Seek out potential witnesses and require that they remain at the scene until interviewed. Often it is best to keep witnesses separated, if at all possible, so that they do not contaminate each other's version of what they may have observed.
- ✓ Identify all persons present at the scene and record their names, addresses, and telephone numbers.
- ✓ Record the registration numbers of any motor vehicles at the immediate scene.
- ✓ Be curious and suspicious, do not take anything for granted and do not jump to conclusions.
- ✓ Listen for and make note of any unguarded or spontaneous remarks or comments relevant to the incident made by witnesses or others present at the scene.

¹⁴ CALEA Std. 42.2.3 – *The agency provides checklists to aid in criminal investigations.*

- ✓ Note any extreme nervousness, unusual behavior or conflicting statements made by witnesses or others present.
- ✓ Make Inquiry of neighbors or bystanders as to their knowledge of any suspicious persons or vehicles in the vicinity prior to the crime.
- ✓ Note and record conditions at the crime scene such as the time of incident, time of initial report of the incident, who made the report, the weather conditions, visibility, street lighting, description of any weapons used or injuries caused, description of any property stolen and all other pertinent information.
- ✓ Note and record as complete a description as possible of the suspect (refer to policy entitled, Interviewing Witnesses and Victims, as it relates to obtaining a good physical description).
- ✓ Upon the arrival of a supervisory officer or detective who will continue the investigation in more depth, inform them of the information already obtained, physical evidence located and the immediate steps that have been taken.
- ✓ Return to normal patrol duties as soon as practicable and make a written report of the incident and any action taken in accordance with standard department procedures and practices.

NOTE: Officers should be continually aware that any preliminary investigation is just that - - it is preliminary. No final conclusion should be reached if contrary possibilities or explanations are still unaccounted for. For example, it is not uncommon for perpetrators, caught shortly after the incident (and especially if the victim has fled) to claim that they are merely a witness and try to direct the police on a wild goose chase. A perpetrator may even pose as a victim (especially if he or she did receive some injury). Also, witnesses and victims may be carrying weapons or may flare up in unexpected anger or aggression toward others or even toward the police. Calling for sufficient backup and a healthy skepticism when questioning persons the officer does not know can be invaluable aids in any “preliminary” investigation.