

# Germantown Police Department

## Policies and Procedures

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**Number:** 3-1  
**Effective Date:** January 1, 2003  
**Subject:** Investigations - General  
**Previous Revisions:**

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### **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the general conduct of preliminary and follow-up investigations.

### **II. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Germantown Police Department for all officers responding to the scene of any criminal activity to act in a manner that consistent with established protocols, including rendering aid to any injured parties, preserving the condition of the scene and any potential evidence, and documenting all pertinent information.

### **III. PROCEDURE - PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS**

- A. The preliminary investigation begins when the first unit arrives at the scene of a crime (or a citizen or employee requests assistance).
- B. A preliminary investigation consists of, but it not limited to, the following:
  - 1. Provide aid to the injured.
  - 2. Protect the crime scene.
  - 3. Decide if an offense has been committed.
  - 4. Attempt to determine suspect's identity and appropriately affect arrest(s).
  - 5. Furnish relevant information to other field units (i.e., descriptions, direction of travel, etc.).
  - 6. Obtain complete identification of all witnesses.
  - 7. Determine accurate details of offense.

8. Arrange for collection of evidence.
9. Obtain written statements from witnesses and suspects.
10. Decide the necessity and degree of surveillance.
11. Accurately record all pertinent information in appropriate reports.

C. Supervisory Responsibilities:

The supervisor or senior officer shall ensure that a complete investigation has been made and shall review, approve, and sign crime reports.

D. Crime Scene Control:

Officers shall limit access to crime scenes to those persons immediately connected with the investigation. Investigating officers shall apply this rule to other officers of the Department, other agencies, or the community, regardless of rank or position.

E. Case Status:

An investigator will indicate on the report whether the case should be closed. The reviewing supervisor shall approve (or disapprove) the recommendation. Such a recommendation shall be based on the following:

1. Witness availability
2. Suspect's name
3. Suspect's location
4. Suspect's description
5. Suspect's identity
6. Vehicle description
7. Traceable property
8. Modus operandi information
9. Physical evidence information
10. Presence of relevant physical evidence

11. Judgment of investigating officer based on available information, that case is solvable.
12. Likelihood that suspect(s) committed the crime.

### **III. PROCEDURE - FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATIONS**

- A. Occasionally additional information will be required at the end of the tour of duty of the assigned officer. In such cases, the assigned officer's immediate supervisor will decide whether the investigation should be discontinued until the assigned officer's next tour of duty, continued by the assigned officer, or reassigned to a relieving officer.
- B. The investigating officer shall ensure that each officer who works the case prepares a supplemental report. A computer file of these reports shall be maintained by the investigating officer.
- C. In serious cases, supervisors shall ensure that each patrol officer who responds submits a supplemental report detailing what he/she saw or heard.
- D. A follow-up investigation consists of, but is not limited to, the following:
  1. Non-Criminal Cases:
    - a. Interview complainants and witnesses
    - b. Decide if information or suspicious activity relates to criminal activity
    - c. Distribute information to proper persons and/or agencies
    - d. Locate lost property and return same to owner
    - e. Make necessary notifications; conduct necessary inspections, etc.
    - f. Record information
  2. Criminal Cases:
    - a. Review and analyze reports of preliminary investigations
    - b. Record information obtained during follow-up investigation
    - c. Review departmental records for investigative leads

- d. Seek additional information (from other officers, informants, contacts in the community, other agencies/ investigators, etc.)
- e. Interview victims and witnesses
- f. Interrogate suspects
- g. Arrange for appropriate dissemination of information
- h. Plan, organize, and conduct searches
- i. Collect physical evidence
- j. Recover stolen property
- k. Arrange for analysis of evidence
- l. Review laboratory examination results
- m. Identify and apprehend the offender
- n. Check suspect's criminal history
- o. Determine if the suspect has committed other crimes
- p. Testify in court
- q. Plan, organize, obtain warrants, conduct searches
- r. Arrange for necessary polygraph examinations

**IV. ORGANIZED CRIMES/VICE ACTIVITIES AND POLICE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION AND COMPLAINTS**

- A. Officers may receive information on or complaints regarding organized crime, vice activities, or other matters of law enforcement intelligence requiring investigation. Organized crime and vice activities and areas of police intelligence interest may include any of the following:
  - 1. Corruption, extortion, bribery
  - 2. Illegal sale and distribution of liquor, tobacco, firearms, or controlled substances

3. Prostitution, pornography
  4. Gambling
  5. Theft/fencing rings
  6. Loan sharking or labor racketeering
  7. Terrorism, subversive activities, civil disorders
- B. Officers receiving such information will prepare an incident/information report, which should include the following information:
1. Type of illegal/suspected activity, location, names and addresses of suspects involved, and information concerning the activities
  2. Complainant name, address, and telephone number
- C. Initially the reporting officer will conduct no preliminary or follow-up investigation, but will personally contact the supervisor concerning the reported information.

The officer or supervisor will confer on the case with appropriate state, federal, or local law enforcement agencies.

**V. DISPOSITION OF CASES**

- A. The investigator shall maintain all necessary information regarding all cases assigned to him or her.
- B. When the investigation is complete, the investigator shall close the case.

**VI. REVIEW PROCESS**

An annual review of this policy will be conducted to determine if it should be revised, canceled or continued in its present form.

This order shall remain in effect until revoked or superseded by competent authority.