

## **Crime and Disaster Scene Integrity**

### **406.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The protection and integrity of a crime scene is of the utmost importance for the successful apprehension of criminals and successful prosecution. The integrity of a disaster scene is equally as critical for the protection of life and property and investigation by proper authorities.

### **406.2 CRIME SCENE RESPONSIBILITIES**

The first officer at the scene of a crime or major incident is generally responsible for the preservation of the scene. Officers shall also consider officer safety and public safety issues, including rendering medical aid to any injured parties. Once an officer has assumed or been assigned to maintain the integrity of the crime/disaster scene, it shall be maintained until the officer is relieved by a supervisor.

#### **406.2.1 FIRST RESPONDER CONSIDERATIONS**

The following list generally describes the first responder's function at a crime or disaster scene. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive, is not necessarily in order and may be altered according to the demands of each situation:

- Ensure no suspects are still in the area.
- Broadcast emergency information including all requests for additional assistance.
- Provide first aid to injured parties if it can be done safely.
- Identify hazards or dangerous conditions to responding personnel.
- Secure the inner perimeter with crime scene tape.
- Protect items of apparent evidentiary value.
- Start a chronological log noting critical times and personnel allowed access.

#### **406.2.2 EXECUTION OF HEALTH ORDERS**

Any sworn member of this department is authorized to execute and enforce all orders of the local health officer issued for the purpose of preventing the spread of any contagious, infectious or communicable disease (ARS § 36-183.03).

### **406.3 SEARCHES AT CRIME OR DISASTER SCENES**

Officers arriving at crime or disaster scenes are often faced with the immediate need to search for and render aid to victims and to determine if suspects are present and pose a threat. Once officers are satisfied that no additional suspects are present and/or there are no injured persons to be treated, those exigent circumstances will likely no longer exist. Officers should thereafter secure the scene and conduct no further search until proper authority for the search is obtained.

#### **406.3.1 CONSENT**

Officers should seek consent to search from authorized individuals where possible. However, in the case of serious crimes or major investigations it may be prudent to obtain a search warrant. Consent may be sought even in cases where a search warrant has been granted.

# Peoria Police Department

## Policy Manual

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#### **406.4 SCENE CLEAN UP**

Scene clean up on public property will be requested through the fire department. Private property owners should be advised to contact their insurance carrier or the State's Crime Victim Compensation Program for submitting a claim for reimbursement for a crime scene clean up (AAC § R10-4-107(D)(6)(e)).