

	<p style="text-align: center;">GROTON POLICE DEPARTMENT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">POLICY AND PROCEDURE GENERAL ORDER</p>	Distribution	General Order Number
		ALL PERSONNEL	6.07
		Original Issue Date	Reissue/Effective Date
		05/02/19	05/12/19
Order Title: SEXUAL ASSAULT INVESTIGATIONS	Accreditation Standard: POSTC: 1.7.12		Section 6
	Section Title INVESTIGATIVE FUNCTIONS		
Rescinds: 28.03		 Louis J. Fusaro, Jr., Chief of Police	

This General Order is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This General Order should not be construed as creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this General Order will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for members of the Groton Police Department when responding to and conducting sexual assault investigations.

II. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Groton Police Department (“Department”) to conduct thorough investigations into all reported sexual assaults taking into consideration the needs of the victim. It is sufficient that a victim alleges an assault to initiate an investigation. In no case shall the victim be discouraged from making a report.

III. PROCEDURE

An initial sexual assault investigation can generally be divided into four areas of responsibility. These areas include the initial dispatch responsibility, identification and preservation of the victim, and investigative steps that can be utilized to identify the responsible party, or a suspect who is in custody, and developing a case for successful prosecution.

A. Call Taker Responsibility

1. Confirm the location of the victim and determine whether he/she is injured and currently safe from the suspect.
2. Obtain a description of the suspect, whether the suspect has left the scene, and the direction of travel.
3. Determine if the suspect was/is armed.

4. Instruct the victim to not disturb the premises, to not wash, and to await the arrival of the police.

B. Assigned Officer's Responsibility at the Scene

1. Determine the location and condition of the victim.
2. Evaluate the scene for people, vehicles or objects involved as well as threats.
3. Determine if a crime has been committed. If a rape has not occurred it is possible an assault of another nature has occurred.
4. Secure the scene to ensure evidence is not lost, changed or contaminated.
5. Instruct the victim to refrain from washing or changing clothes prior to medical treatment.
6. If immediate medical attention is required, call for EMS (Emergency Medical Services).
7. Obtain updated information from the victim on the suspect, description, location, and direction of flight.
 - a. Coordinate search for the suspect with shift supervisor, where applicable.
8. Briefly discuss with the victim the events that occurred and where these events occurred.
9. Show understanding, patience and respect for the victim and attempt to establish trust and rapport.
10. Notify the Shift Supervisor of the circumstances.
11. Record observations of the crime scene including demeanor of the victim and suspect, if present. Document any injuries, disheveled clothing or other pertinent observations.
12. Contact a victim advocate to provide assistance as soon as possible.

C. Shift Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Assign officers to ensure the crime scene is protected and notify the Criminal Investigation Division Lieutenant or Sergeant.

2. If a suspect has been apprehended:
 - a. The suspect should initially be examined for any trauma that may have resulted from confrontation with the victim. As appropriate, the location of this physical trauma should be noted and photographed.
 - b. The clothing of the suspect should be removed and preserved as evidence.
 - c. Record any spontaneous statements or voluntary information from the suspect.
3. If a suspect is not in custody:
 - a. Attempt to ascertain a positive identification of the suspect.
 - b. Determine a place of residence.
 - c. Determine what vehicles the suspect owns/drives.

D. Investigator Responsibilities

1. In the preliminary investigation, the following information should be gathered to substantiate the allegation of sexual assault:
 - a. Re-interview the victim and all witnesses.
 - b. Identify all persons with possible knowledge of the incident.
 - c. Ensure the crime scene is documented (photos/video).
 - d. Transport the victim to hospital for examination.
2. Victim Interview
 - a. Determine the victim's activities prior to the time of the offense and any relationship with the suspect.
 - b. Obtain the victim's account of the offense, from the time the suspect was first observed until the suspect left the scene.
 - c. Obtain and note any distinctive statements made by the suspect.
 - d. Determine and document any oddities or unusual MOs/trademarks demonstrated by the suspect.

- e. Note and document the victim's condition. This should include a statement as to the victim's mental state, the evidence of torn or disheveled clothing, etc.
 - f. Obtain a complete description of the suspect.
3. Evidence: All evidence in support of the allegation of sexual assault should be gathered and preserved including:
- a. Photographs of victim, all injuries and crime scene;
 - b. Findings in a sexual assault medical examination;
 - c. Articles of clothing from the victim and the suspected offender;
 - d. Biological body fluids;
 - e. Bedding and/or other material used.
4. Suspect interview/interrogation: The suspect should be interviewed/interrogated using the following criteria as a guide:
- a. Advise suspect of his/her constitutional rights and the nature of the investigation when appropriate.
 - b. Consider, evaluate, and investigate all new information and alternative explanations provided by suspect.
 - c. Corroborate information already obtained through investigation.
 - d. Obtain incriminating statements including admissions and confessions. Audio/Video tape is best and must be in conformance with existing policies related to recording statements.

E. Victim Notification of Investigative Procedures:

1. If appropriate, the victim should be advised of the steps he/she will encounter during the preliminary investigation, to minimally include the following:
 - a. In-depth interviews (specific/personal questions).
 - b. Extensive medical examination protocol;
 - c. Follow-up investigation procedures (interviews: identify suspects);
 - d. Judicial process (courtroom testimony/procedures).

2. The victim should also be advised of the services available for support and accompaniment during the investigation and prosecution of the case. (See Appendix A for a list of available support services.)

F. Officer Considerations

Officers will:

1. Respect the fact that not all victims want to make a police report, talk to an officer, or go through the evidence collection process.
2. Be non-judgmental
3. Provide assistance without telling the victim what to do. It is important for victims to begin to gain control and their self-esteem.
4. Reassure victims that it is not their fault.
5. Try to make the process as comfortable as possible and allow victims to call someone for support if they wish.
6. Let victims explain in their own words what happened. Inconsistencies may be the result of trauma, not necessarily fabrication.
7. Attempt to determine if the suspect took something. Perpetrators often take an item as a memento.

G. Documentation:

1. The preliminary investigative report should contain the necessary documentation including:
 - a. Statements of victim, witnesses, and accused;
 - b. Observations; i.e., victim's physical/emotional condition, etc.;
 - c. Physical evidence noted and secured;
 - d. Actions taken by the investigating officer and others.
2. The assigned patrol officer shall complete the crime and/or arrest report and all appropriate supplementary reports.

H. Reporting Requirements

1. The final review and case summary completed by the assigned investigator should include:
 - a. Disposition of the victim;
 - b. Evidence identified and collected;
 - c. Statements (oral and written);
 - d. Disposition of the suspect;
 - e. Victim/Witness referrals provided;
 - f. Coordination and consultation with other involved agencies;
 - g. Need for confidentiality of case information and Victim identification per Connecticut General Statutes §54-86d and §54-86f.
 - h. Report of the case progress to appropriate parties to the offense.

Appendix A

VICTIM SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS/ CRISIS SERVICES – 24 HOUR HOTLINES

Domestic Violence: advocates, emergency shelter, counseling, and other services:

CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence: 888-774-2900 (statewide toll-free)

Ansonia	860-736-9944	Middletown	860-437-3044
Bridgeport	203-384-9559	New Britain	860-225-6357
Danbury	203-731-5206	New Haven	203-789-104
Danielson	860-774-8648	New London	860-301-0030
Enfield	860-763-4542	Norwalk	203-852-1980
Falls Village	860-824-1080	Stamford	203-357-8162
Greenwich	203-622-0003	Torrington	860-482-7133
Groton	860-527-0550	Waterbury	203-575-0036
Meriden	203-238-1501	Willimantic	860-456-9476

Sexual Assault: counseling, advocacy

English: 888-999-5545 / Spanish: 888-568-8332 (statewide toll-free)

Bridgeport	203-333-2233	New Haven	860-437-7766
Danbury	888-999-5545	New London	203-624-2273
Groton	860-522-6666	Stamford	203-329-2929
Meriden	203-235-4444	Torrington	860-482-7133
Middlesex	860-635-4424	Waterbury	203-753-3613
Milford	203-878-1212	Willimantic	860-456-2789
New Britain	860-223-1787		

Information and Support Services

INFO-LINE.....	211
Elder Abuse.....	888-385-4225
Child Abuse Care Line.....	800-842-2288
Connecticut Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities.....	800-842-7303
Mothers Against Drunk Driving – MADD.....	800-544-3690
Survivors of Homicide.....	888-833-4764

Office of the Victim Advocate 888-771-3126 / 860-550-6632

Protecting and promoting the rights of crime victims in CT

OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES: 800-822-8428

Information, advocacy, counseling, referral, notification, and victim compensation