

San Jose Police Department



Robbery Unit Guidelines

Lt. Stewart Davies #3230
Unit Commander



Robbery Unit Guidelines

Robbery Unit Mission and Objectives

The Robbery Unit is comprised of investigators specializing in the identification and apprehension of criminal suspects involved in robberies, carjackings, extortions, grand thefts of purses, and kidnappings. The investigators complete this mission by conducting thorough follow up investigations subsequent to the initial field investigations conducted by Patrol. Robbery investigators coordinate their work with Patrol as well as allied agencies, in order to ensure timely and efficient responses to these crimes.

The Robbery Unit conducts all investigations with an emphasis on procedural justice, transparency, objectivity, thoroughness, compassion for the victims, and accountability for those responsible for these crimes.

Schedule

1. Robbery Detectives and Sergeants are expected to work either Monday through Thursday or Tuesday through Friday. Detectives and sergeants are expected to work 0730-1800 hours. Seniority in the unit and / or rank will be the determining factor in choosing their day off. If an investigator will be more than 15 minutes late for their assigned schedule, they are directed to notify a sergeant. If an investigator calls in sick, or needs to use emergency time off of any variety, the investigator's supervisor, or an alternate supervisor will be advised.
2. T.O. requests shall be channeled through the member's supervisor and posted on the Robbery Unit Outlook calendar. This calendar should also include all planned vacation, training and sick leave, etc. **Minimum staffing for the Unit will be one sergeant and two officers.** Any exception to this rule must be cleared by the Unit Commander.
3. Officers responding to the field will note on the status board their estimated time of return. If the officers anticipate being gone longer than 2 hours, they should apprise their supervisor of their itinerary. If their supervisor is unavailable, the officers will clear their activity through another Unit supervisor.
4. Unless prior arrangements with a supervisor have been made, all officers are expected to complete their 10-hour shift before leaving the office.

5. Each Sergeant will designate a team leader for his or her team. The team leader will be responsible for the day to day operations of the team or unit in the absence of their Sergeant or in the case both Sergeants are absent.

Overtime

1. Any pre-planned overtime to be worked **must be approved by a supervisor.**
2. To maximize the Unit's funding, members should only apply the overtime to Robbery related functions. Unit members working city-funded overtime assignments must apply the **VIS Code** that identifies the overtime fund from which the funds will be derived, then include the number on the applicable time sheet.

Unit Meetings

1. Unit meetings are an essential vehicle for the exchange of vital criminal intelligence and administrative information among unit members. Unit meetings are held on Wednesdays. It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure investigators attend. **Unit members must be prepared to discuss current cases.**
2. If an investigator absolutely cannot attend a meeting, his/her supervisor must be apprised. Weekly schedules must be arranged to accommodate the weekly meetings. Supervisors must advise any absent team member of the content of any missed meeting.

On Call Procedures

Responsibility for assisting patrol with robbery investigations after hours will belong to night detectives or the BOI on-call Detective.

Case Management

1. Cases received by the Unit will be reviewed and assigned by the Sergeant acting as the Case Coordinator. In doing so, the Case Coordinator will attempt to identify patterns and string cases, and will assign these cases to the same investigator.
2. In the event individual cases have been assigned to different investigator, and it is later determined that the cases are part of a string, the Case Coordinator shall re-assign the related cases to the primary (first in time) investigator handling the case. The Case Coordinator shall make the appropriate status changes in the computer files.

3. When a case is assigned, the Case Coordinator shall be responsible for entering it into Versadex. It will then be forwarded to the assigned Investigator.
4. The Case Coordinator when reviewing cases in Versadex will maintain an ongoing spreadsheet in the G drive, "Cases Assigned". This spreadsheet will provide a quick reference as to assigned detective, case number, date and time of crime, location of crime, summary of crime, suspect description, and suspect vehicle.
5. When a case is closed, **the assigned Investigator will submit it through Versadex in the Robbery Handle.** The case will be reviewed by the appropriate supervisor and accepted or rejected and returned to the investigator for further investigation.
6. Detectives will be responsible for managing their case load in Versadex. It is crucial that investigators check their assigned cases daily in order to ascertain if new cases have been received. A ninety day due date will be assigned to all cases in Versadex. Cases older than ninety days should be updated with notes as to why the case ins still open. Every effort should be made to close cases in a timely manner.
7. Case assignments should be prioritized by considering the following solvability factors:
 - Suspect in custody
 - Known suspect
 - High profile cases, media interest
 - Hate crimes
 - Crimes against the elderly
 - Serial cases
 - High dollar loss
 - High Tech commercial takeover robberies
 - Crimes involving serious injuries of violence
 - Home invasion robberies
 - Multi-jurisdictional serial cases, investigative task force operations
 - Case with poor or sketchy information
 - Possible suspect, partial name or moniker
 - Possible or partial license number
 - Victim did not see perpetrator or perpetrator was masked
 - Victim cannot or will not ID perpetrator
 - Uncooperative victim
 - Case is unfounded

8. When a case is closed, **the assigned detective will submit it through Versadex in the Robbery Handle.** The case will be reviewed by the appropriate supervisor and accepted or rejected and returned to the detective for further investigation.
9. Detectives will be responsible for managing their case load in Versadex. It is crucial that detectives check their assigned cases daily in order to ascertain if new cases have been received.
10. A 90 day due date will be assigned to all cases in Versadex. Cases older than ninety days should be updated with notes as to why the case is still open. The sergeant will then extend the case follow up due date an additional 60 days. Every effort should be made to close cases in a timely manner.
11. Detectives will regularly enter case notes into the Versadex system for each of their cases. This is important in the event that a question or development arises in the lead detective's absence.
12. Detectives should consider maintaining a personal log of assigned cases and their dispositions, for ease of reference on old cases and for furnishing of accurate statistics when needed.
13. The Robbery Unit maintains an internal database for cases older than July 2012, which is pre-Versadex. Supervisors may access this database for these cases, which provide the following information:
 - Case number
 - Date, day and time of occurrence
 - Victim's name (person or business)
 - Location of occurrence
 - Type of crime (armed robbery, strong-arm, bank, extortion)
 - Name and/or description of suspects (listed in detail)
 - Loss (type of property and amount taken)
 - Type of weapon (listed in detail)
 - Type of vehicle (description and license number)
 - Name and ID of information on arrestees (include PFN and CEN numbers)
 - Investigator assigned
 - Disposition

Investigation Guidelines

Case Notes: The case note section should include a detailed log of all investigative activities; i.e., contacts with victim(s) and witness(es), attempts to contact, interviews, supplemental written information, recorded information, and any other appropriate activity. This log will serve as a convenient reminder of work done and results, will assist supervisors or other investigators who may need to review or assist in the case, and provide a record for any administrative review. Upon completion of the case, detectives will ensure that all investigative steps taken are documented in the **follow-up section of the assigned GO** and attached to the case. This includes cases that are closed and not filed with the district attorney. Case information is critical in the event that further information is developed in the future and the case needs to be reopened by another detective. Case notes should be brief but include enough detail to be easily comprehensible. Telephone numbers needed for follow-up should be logged into the case note section.

Major Case Investigation.

1. Review Case: Detectives will clear up any discrepancies they find with the original report. Detectives may need to contact the on scene patrol officers and review Body Worn Camera Statements. Detectives will determine the status of all evidence in the case and ensure it is properly accounted for and booked into evidence.

The detective should highlight important facts for ease of reference. The detective should find the following important facts in the report:

- ID information of victim (name, address, telephone #)
- Language needs of victim
- Whether/not victim can ID perpetrator
- Suspect information (name, description, etc.)
- Vehicle description
- Weapon(s)
- Witnesses; whether/not they can ID perpetrator
- Physical evidence: latent prints, photographs, surveillance photographs, videos, location of evidence recovered

Property taken, serial numbers – be sure to enter into stolen property system and that all credit cards are canceled by the victim

2. Back Up Detective: On major robbery sting investigations, the primary detective assigned the case will select a back up detective. The back up detective will have a strong working knowledge of the investigation and will assist with the case. This will be beneficial during suspect interviews and

during the absence of the primary detective. The Case Coordinator sergeant will be advised of the backup detective.

3. Contact Victim: Detectives will contact the Victim(s) as soon as practical after being assigned the case. Detectives will arrange a follow-up interview with Victim(s). The follow-up interviews are best done in person and should be conducted in the Robbery Interview Rooms and recorded. If this is impossible, the detective should conduct the interview(s) by telephone as soon as possible. Can the Victim identify Suspect or provide other witnesses? Are they cooperative and willing to pursue this case? Do you need to photograph their injuries?

If there is no telephone number for the victim, the detective should send a letter to the victim or conduct an in-person visit to the address provided to patrol officers by the victim. The Unit secretary has a "Victim Letter" form in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. This letter introduces you as the assigned case detective, lists the case number and the Unit's address and phone number. It asks the victim to contact the detective as soon as possible. This letter is to be maintained in the case file and logged in the case notes.

After the initial follow-up interview(s), the detective should maintain contact with the victim(s), to keep them apprised of the status of the case. Remembering that victims appreciate courtesy and sensitivity, the detective should express concern and genuine interest in solving the case. If needed, the detective may refer the victim(s) to the Victim/Witness Assistance Program, or a mental health care agency or professional to help cope with the trauma of the crime.

The detective should leave his/her business card with the victim(s) so that the Investigator may be personally contacted in the future by the victim(s).

4. Contact Witnesses: Detectives should contact the Witness(es) as soon as possible. Detective will determine if they need to conduct a follow-up interview. These interviews should be conducted in person, as soon as practical and recorded.
5. Canvass: Detectives are encouraged to canvass the original crime scene for additional witnesses, evidence and/or video cameras. Occasionally field officers fail to locate and collect pertinent evidence.
6. Video Evidence: Detectives should view all video evidence and ensure it has been properly collected and submitted into DCS, Digital Crime Scene. If additional video evidence has been identified and needs to be collected, detectives will request the Video Technician, PICS Cars or Community Service Officers to recover this evidence.

All video evidence shall be uploaded into the DCS System. This permits detectives the ease of future use and reference. It alleviates numerous requests by the DA's Office for copies of video for upcoming trial cases.

7. Physical Evidence: Detectives will review all physical evidence collected in cases. All pertinent physical evidence will be taken to the Crime Lab without delay to process for any trace evidence.
8. Latent Prints: Detectives will obtain any latent fingerprints cards submitted into evidence. These cards will be taken to Central Identification Unit for analysis and comparisons.
9. Police Sketch Artist: Detectives should consider using one of the Police Sketch Artists for a rendering of the Suspect in a case. This is especially useful with good Victims/Witnesses where no video evidence was collected. The artist is able to develop details in description of the perpetrator that may not be present in the victim(s)' interview. After the sketch is completed, the detective should have it published in a Watch Bulletin Critical Reach flyer, other special bulletins, the media, etc.
10. Critical Reach Flyer: Detectives will create and distribute Critical Reach flyers for field officers and Allied Agencies through APB.Net. Detectives should create Critical Reach flyers as soon as possible so information about the crime can be shared with patrol units and other allied agencies. Critical Reach flyers should be uploaded to the Patrol MDT system as soon as possible. The entry should include a photograph or Police Artist sketch, and concise information necessary to alert field units. Always include this Robbery Disclaimer on All Critical Reach flyers: **"This information is for Law Enforcement Purposes Only"**.

Detectives are encouraged to attend Patrol briefings to discuss case, answer questions and distribute Critical Reach flyers.

11. Media for Assistance: Occasionally it is beneficial to seek the use of the media. The SJPD Public Information Officer (277-5339 or 277-5273; fax: 277-3775) can be of assistance in working with newspapers, radio and television. The detective may consider publicity through TV shows like "America's Most Wanted," "Unsolved Mysteries," etc. The detective should consider publishing information about the crime in SJ Mercury's "Crime Stoppers."

Press Releases will be created with general information of the incident. Detectives will retain specific facts of the case for investigative purposes. Many Press Releases are made with surveillance video or images of unidentified persons. Ensure that the Video Technician has put this media into proper format for the Press. All Press Releases must be approved by the

Unit Commander. Once approved, they are sent to the Media Relations Office for distribution.

Also consider Fugitive Watch and Crime Stoppers. Rewards can be offered for anonymous tips, through Crime Stoppers.

12. Records Checks and Databases: Detectives must have a strong working knowledge of the vast array of databases and information at their disposal. Detectives will run all associated parties, including Victims through appropriate systems for relevant information.

13. Photographic Line Ups: Photographic Line Ups will be presented in accordance with Duty Manual Section L4603 (Photographic Identifications) and current case law. Photographic Line Ups should be conducted in the Robbery Unit Interview rooms and recorded.

14. Cell Phone Evidence: All phones collected as evidence need to be searched for relevant information, pursuant to CalECPA and Duty Manual section L4206. Once the consent or a search warrant is obtained, the cell phone should be run through Cellbrite for data and images.

15. Vehicle Evidence: Vehicles should be processed for evidence, to include physical evidence, DNA, and latent fingerprints. Every effort will be made to have vehicles processed in the field. Vehicles towed to the warehouse will be processed as soon as possible, not to exceed **30 days**. All vehicles taken to a tow yard will be processed without undue delay and will be released immediately. All detectives are responsible to know the disposition of vehicles on cases they are working.

16. Social Media: Detectives will have a strong working knowledge of current social media sites and be aware of current case law regarding its use.

17. Share Information: Detectives should attend BFO briefings for patrol and Special Operations to share available information. Patrol units may often be the best resource in identifying suspects.

18. Recognizing Good Work: Detectives should report exceptional field work to the appropriate supervisor. The Unit has a form letter, which may be used to provide positive feedback. Deficiencies or problems in performance should also be addressed through the appropriate supervisor.

In cases worthy of commendation, the detective should contact the appropriate supervisor to initiate a notice of good police work to be routed

through the proper chain of command. An action such as this promotes good relationships among Department personnel and motivates further good work.

19. Additional Investigative Actions: Occasionally investigations become very complex and difficult to solve. Detectives are strongly encouraged to think outside the norm and be creative with their investigations. Some tactics that have been used successfully in the past include: Pretext Phone Calls, Informants, Surveillance, Pole/Vehicle Cameras, Cell Tower Dumps, Police Trackers, Bait Packs, Wiretaps and Varda Alarms.

Minimum Investigative Standard

1. Detectives will **review each case** and clear up any discrepancies they find within the report.
2. Detectives will **contact the Victim(s) as soon as practical**. If there is no telephone number for the victim, the detective should send a letter to the victim or perform an in-person visit to their listed address(es).
3. Detectives will **review all video evidence** in the case and ensure all video evidence was collected
4. Detectives will **review all physical evidence** and ensure all pertinent physical evidence is taken to the crime lab for analysis within one week of receiving case. Any latent prints should be taken to Central Identification Unit for comparison or analysis as soon as practical.
5. Detectives **will create a Critical Reach flyer** if appropriate. Critical Reach flyers will be distributed to BFO and other agencies through APB.Net and upload to the patrol MDT system. Always include Robbery Disclaimer on all Critical Reach flyers **“This information is for Law Enforcement Purposes Only”**. Cases largely dependant upon results of a Critical Reach Flyer response will be closed within a reasonable amount of time.
6. Cases pending lab results will be closed in Versadex using the code “P”. This closes the case pending the results of the crime lab. At which time, the case can be reopened and the investigation will continue.

Interviews and Interrogations

1. Current law allows police officers interrogating suspects to allude to incriminating evidence the officer does not actually have. However, officers do not have unlimited rein in the use of deception in such an interrogation, and the law does not permit an officer to use a technique likely to cause an innocent

person to confess to a crime he or she did not commit. Officers considering such deceptions will remain abreast of current law on the topic.

2. Detectives will not prepare or use any counterfeit document during an interrogation. Specifically, no other-than-authentic document which bears the name, logo, seal, letterhead, signature or any other insignia of any real organization or person will be used for any purpose during an interview or interrogation. Detectives will use great caution in confronting a suspect with any “prop” which the detective speciously asserts incriminates that person while pursuing a confession. The use of this type of deception during an interrogation will be pointed out as such and completely described in the officer’s report of the interrogation. Any “prop” will be marked as such and retained as evidence in the case.

Equipment

1. Vehicles:

- Vehicles will be shared by detectives who will be responsible to keep the vehicle clean and maintained in good condition.
- Vehicles that have been identified as “high-mileage” vehicles will not be taken out of town or used for “on-call” unless approved by the Unit Commander.
- Vehicle keys will be marked and hung on a hook inside the key lock box which is kept by the administrative sergeant. When the vehicle is in use, a business card will replace the keys on the hook until they are returned. Detectives are responsible for returning the keys to the appropriate hook when the vehicle is returned, or by the end of shift. Vehicles or keys will not be taken home without prior approval of a supervisor.
- When a vehicle assigned to the Robbery Unit is loaned to another unit, it must be approved by a supervisor. While the vehicle is out on loan, a note indicating the unit and the officer’s name and badge number shall be hung on the keys’ hook.

2. Cellular Phone:

- Cellular phones are assigned to the Lieutenant, Sergeants and Detectives.

3. Special Equipment:

- Hand pack radios are made available to Unit members. They will not be loaned out without the approval of a supervisor.

4. Field Equipment:

- It will be the responsibility of each Unit member not covered by the Exempt Officer MOU to maintain a complete uniform and all equipment. This equipment will be available to the member in the event the department should go on a tactical alert status. Each supervisor will ensure that members have the proper equipment in serviceable condition and will inspect this equipment periodically. This equipment as listed in the Duty Manual will include riot baton, helmet, face shield, gas mask and protective body armor.

Evidence

1. Evidence obtained during an investigation shall be booked into Central Supply as soon as practicable.
2. Property to be evaluated by the Homicide Crime Scene Unit for the collection of specific types of physical evidence may, with the approval of a CSU supervisor or a Robbery supervisor, be temporarily booked into the CSU Technical Evidence Room. When the CSU has completed its collection and evaluation, the detective will be notified. The detective will collect and re-book the evidence into the SJPD Property Room.
3. Evidence brought into the Unit for evaluation and/or photographing will remain under the direct control of the case detective. At no time will evidence be left unsecured in the Unit, in desks or vehicles. Evidence may be stored in the Robbery Unit evidence lockers for short periods prior to it being booked in at Central Supply.

Miscellaneous

1. Dress Standards:

- At all times, a detective shall maintain a neat and orderly appearance
- Standard business attire for a male detective shall be a suit or sport coat and tie
- A female detective will maintain comparable standard of business attire
- Detectives may “dress down” when an operation or training session requires.

2. Coffee/Water Fund:

- The Unit members will contribute voluntarily to a fund for coffee/water for the Unit, which shall be maintained by the secretary. Each fund is separate.
- Each Unit member is requested to contribute \$20 per month to cover the cost of coffee/water for members of the Unit and guests.

3. Press Releases:

- All Press Releases shall be approved by the Unit Commander prior to release
- A detective may be requested to draft a press release regarding his/her assigned case(s). A supervisor may provide technical assistance and direction
- In the absence of the Unit Commander, a Unit supervisor may review and approve the press release. The supervisor will check with the SJPD Media Relations Officer and a BOI Captain prior to issuance of the release
- A copy of any press release shall be distributed to the following persons:
 - Robbery Unit Commander
 - BOI Deputy Chief
 - BOI Captains
 - SJPD Media Relations Officer
 - Case file



SJPD Robbery Investigations ~Administrative Sergeant Duties~



The Robbery Unit's Administrative Sergeant is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the unit. The following list of responsibilities is not intended to be all inclusive, but merely a reference guide to the most common and typical duties performed.

Although responsibility for the below items lies with the administrative sergeant, it is highly recommended that he or she delegates responsibilities as necessary to ensure all tasks are adequately addressed. It is important that the administrative sergeant continue to see the 'big picture' for the robbery unit, and as such operational efficiency is paramount. Delegation will ensure that operational efficiency is maintained.

As the unit moves forward, many items may evolve or simply become obsolete. It is with this in mind that administration of the unit must be ever evolving as well. It is incumbent that the administrative duties be diligently carried out to ensure an efficient work environment. Efficiency will afford detectives the opportunity to work in a seamless environment and for cases to be resolved as expediently as possible.

Administrative Sgt. Duties:

- Roll phones over at 0700hrs (front desk – call forward button)
- Check Versadex for cases assigned to the Robbery Unit Handle.
- Assign in custody cases to Officer of the Day.
- Assign cases for investigation/non-worker/no manpower status.
- Monitor video requests from detectives.
- Ensure DA run is completed by 1000hrs (Officer of the Day).
- Ensure court run is completed by 1100hrs (Officer of the Day).
- Coordinate unit meeting every Wednesday.
- Maintain 'In Custody Officer' schedule (Calendar).
- Maintain the Robbery Unit Calendar (Events, staffing, T.O., Vacation, Training, etc.).
- Coordinate CPT training for all unit members.
- Coordinate range qualification for all unit members.
- Manage the Robbery Unit vehicle fleet.
- Coordinate unit buy-in/buy-outs (reserve venue, contact members/prior members/order plaques).
- Disseminate 'Intel' reports for detective review as deemed appropriate.

- Monitor cases for possible ‘strings’ and ensure appropriate detectives are assigned related cases.
- Maintain the ‘Ramey’ and ‘Arrest Warrant’ board.
- Maintain the ‘Parolee Release’ notification board.
- Maintain Robbery Unit assigned equipment (radio, raid vest, flashlight, etc.).
- Coordinate new detective mentorship program and schedule training.
- Review and sign off on closed cases.
- Maintain unit operational guidelines in both electronic and hard copy (extraditions/training/in-house, etc.)
- Evaluate and investigate all U-Visa requests related to robbery.



SJPD Robbery Investigations ~In-Custody Officer~



Historically the Robbery Unit has not had a designated 'Officer of the Day' or 'In-Custody Officer' position. While the Robbery Unit has not had an I.C.O., most other investigative units throughout the Bureau of Investigation utilize this position to ensure administrative functions, outside the duties and responsibilities of the administrative Sgt., are completed on a daily basis.

Recently we have become more and more dependent on the officers that fill the Exempt Officer (Article 39) positions to take care of numerous daily administrative duties. Unfortunately, the nature of the Exempt Officer lends itself to that officer working on a day-to-day basis without any consistency in their schedule. Because of this, we have had several occasions where functions Exempt Officers routinely perform have not been taken care of while they are away either on disability or vacation.

It has been determined that the Robbery Unit needs to implement an 'In-Custody Officer' position to ensure that administrative duties area seamlessly covered in the absence of personnel that regularly perform them. The following is a list of duties that will be performed by the I.C.O.:

- Prepare 'In-Custody' cases for submission to the District Attorney.
- Perform a 'JBLT' CJIC check for SJPD arrests related to robberies.
- Morning hours – conduct a D.A. run no later than 1000hrs. Ensure that all In-custody cases are signed off and placed in the court box. Take any cases directly to court from the DA's office that need to be filed immediately.
- Assist with answering phone calls and answering questions from the public.
- The 'In Custody Officer' will be assigned any 'in-progress' crimes that occur on their assigned day. If the 'In Custody Officer' is not available, the Administrative Sergeant will assign another detective investigative responsibility.

The administrative Sgt. will contact the Robbery Detectives on a monthly basis in order to determine their T.O. and Vacation plans. A monthly schedule will be distributed to the detectives and will be expected to be adhered to. If a detective is unable to staff his or her assigned shift, it will be their responsibility to ensure they coordinate with another detective to cover for them.

Please address any questions to the Robbery Administrative Sergeant.



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