



# Financial Crimes Unit

## 2019 Unit Guidelines



**FINANCIAL CRIMES UNIT  
2019  
UNIT GUIDELINES**

**INTRODUCTION**

No one document or even a collection of documents can possibly outline every conceivable event that may confront a Financial Crimes Investigator. However, in order to gain the compliance for specific requirements and an appreciation for general necessities, this Unit Manual exists.

This manual is supplemented by appropriate federal, state and local regulations as well as Department orders and procedures. Together, these and verbal communications constitute the nucleus for the operation and conduct of the Financial Crimes Unit.

**WORK SCHEDULES**

1. The standard work shift in the Bureau of Investigations (BOI) is a 10½-hour workday inclusive of a half-hour lunch break. Daily schedules of Investigators may vary, according to personal preference, as long as the needs of the Unit are met. Unit seniority will be the deciding factor in the event of a conflict of choice. To accommodate the alternate work schedule, Unit personnel will strive to flex their weekly work schedules to minimize overtime. Unless otherwise approved by a supervisor, a regular daily work schedule shall be observed. Unit personnel will schedule their work shift between the hours of 5:30 AM and 6:00 PM. If an Investigator varies from their assigned schedule, the Investigator's supervisor, or an alternate Unit supervisor will be advised.

If an Investigator will be more than 15 minutes late for their assigned start time, they are directed to notify a Unit sergeant. If an Investigator calls in sick, or needs to use emergency time off of any reason, the Investigator will notify their supervisor, or an alternate, if their supervisor is not available.

2. Time off (T.O.) requests will be routed through the employee's supervisor, and posted on the sergeant's time off calendar located in their office. This calendar will also include all planned vacation, training, sick leave, etc. The minimum staffing level for the Unit will be one sergeant (either from CLU or FCU) and one officer from each Detail. The Unit Commander must approve any exception to this staffing level.
3. Officers responding to the field will note on the status board their estimated time of return. If the Investigator is unable to return at that time, they will telephone the office and advise a supervisor of their revised ETA. If an Investigator anticipates being gone from the office longer than two hours, the Investigator should advise their supervisor of their itinerary. If the supervisor is unavailable, the Investigator will clear their activity through another Unit supervisor.
4. Unless prior arrangements are made with a supervisor, all officers are expected to complete their shift before leaving the office for the day.

## **OVERTIME**

1. Any preplanned overtime to be worked **must be approved by a supervisor**. In the event an Investigator's accumulated compensatory time exceeds 240 hours, the Unit Commander will be notified, and a reduction plan may be requested. Regardless, all Unit members will abide by the current Memorandum of Agreement and comply with all overtime reduction as specified in MOA section 13.6.5.
2. All overtime shall be approved by the Unit Commander. In order to protect the Unit's allocation of overtime, all paid overtime worked outside of the **Financial Crimes Unit** function will be charged to the appropriate cost center. When a Unit member works a City funded overtime for pay assignment outside of the Unit, the member shall obtain the appropriate cost center number for the overtime assignment and ensure the cost center number appears on the member's time sheet.

## **UNIT MEETINGS**

1. Unit staff meetings are an essential component for the exchange of vital criminal intelligence and administrative information among Unit members. Unit staff meetings are held on an *as needed basis* on Wednesday mornings at 9 AM (or at another time determined by the Unit commander). It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure their assigned investigators attend the Unit meetings. Unit members should be prepared to discuss current cases as well as other issues as appropriate.
2. If an investigator absolutely cannot attend a Unit meeting, the member's supervisor will be notified. Weekly schedules must be arranged to accommodate the weekly staff meetings. Supervisors must advise any absent team member of the content of any missed meeting.
3. The FCU Sergeant is expected to hold weekly team meetings to discuss and disseminate timely and vital information to team members.

## **AREA MEETINGS**

Area (Regional) meetings attended by Financial Crimes investigators from outside allied agencies are held on a regular basis in the local area. Unit members are expected to attend these meetings whenever possible (workload permitting), and be prepared to share information on active cases. This exchange of information is often very valuable in solving multiple cases or "strings" where one or more of the same suspects may be committing crimes in multiple adjacent jurisdictions.

## **ON-CALL PROCEDURES**

The Financial Crimes Unit does not have an official on-call status. However, the Unit supplies a contact Lieutenant and Sergeant to assist field units in events related to the mission of the FCU.

## **CASE MANAGEMENT**

The Sergeant assigned to the Unit is the Case Coordinator, and is responsible for the Units' Case Management. Cases received by the Unit will be reviewed and assigned by the Sergeant, or their designee, during an absence.

## **Fraud**

The following cases will be assigned to an investigator:

- Elder financial abuse cases that have a substantial impact on the victim's standard of living or quality of life. The knowledge and experience of the supervisor is heavily relied upon to make these decisions.
- Identity theft cases which result in the victim falsely acquiring a criminal history or criminal penalty.
- In-custody theft, embezzlement, credit card fraud, check fraud, identity theft and other fraud and theft related cases.

Cases that do not meet this criterion will be closed due to a lack of investigative resources (K). When appropriate, the victims will be advised of alternative resolutions such as the possibility of seeking civil remedies.

## **Burglary**

- In-custody burglary, possession of stolen property, possession of burglary tools and other burglary related cases.
- Cases in which the Central ID Unit has identified a latent fingerprint lifted from the scene of a burglary.
- Cases in which the county crime lab has identified DNA recovered from the scene of a burglary

Cases that do not meet this criterion will be closed due to a lack of investigative resources (K).

1. When reviewing incoming cases, the Case Coordinator Sergeant will attempt to identify patterns and string cases, and will assign any identified similar cases to the same investigator. In the event individual cases have been assigned to different investigators, and it is later determined that a case is part of a string, the Case Coordinator shall reassign the case(s) to the primary (first in time) investigator handling the case. Cases that are NOT assigned to an Investigator (typically those cases that are classified as unassigned "K" – Lack of Investigative Resources, and "N" – Non-Worker), will be marked as such by the Case Coordinator in Versadex.
2. When reviewing cases, case assignment should be prioritized by considering the following "solvability factors:"
  - Suspect in custody
  - Known suspect
  - High profile cases – media interest (notify Unit Commander)
  - Crimes against the elderly
  - Serial cases
  - High dollar loss
  - 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 the suspect or the suspect was masked
  - Victim cannot or will not identify the suspect
  - Uncooperative victim
  - Case unfounded
3. When a case is assigned, the Case Coordinator shall be responsible for seeing that the case is updated appropriately. An assigned case will be sent to the assigned Investigator's Versadex handle.
  4. When a case is completed, the Investigator will close the case in Versadex using the appropriate disposition. The case will then appear in the Case Coordinator's Versadex handle where they will then review, and approve it, if the investigation is complete. If it is determined that the Case needs further investigation or other additional work, it will be returned to the initial Investigator's handle for additional work.
  5. The Case Coordinator or other Unit member that encounters any "high profile" or similar cases will notify of the Unit Commander.

### **INVESTIGATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES**

All personnel assigned to the Financial Crimes Unit as an investigator are expected to:

- Accept cases assigned and conduct complete investigations. This includes the arrest of suspects, the serving of search warrants, release of property and the presentation of completed investigations to the DA for review.
- Prepare cases for court
- Testify in court
- Assist other Unit's and agencies when assigned
- Keep informed of policy changes that affect the Unit, Bureau and Departmental operations
- Close out assigned cases when complete
- Maintain an understanding of Criminal verses Civil and Contractual law
- Conduct all investigations as directed by the Unit commander or higher authority

### **GENERAL INVESTIGATION GUIDELINES**

The following suggestions may assist the Investigator in organizing their case files and prioritizing investigative activities.

1. When a crime report is received in the Burglary or Fraud Versadex handle, it will be reviewed by the Case Coordinator / Unit Supervisor. When a pattern or string case is identified, the Unit Commander will be advised. Any "high profile" or similar cases coming to the attention of the Case Coordinator or other Unit member will also require the notification of the Unit Commander.
2. The Versadex/RMS system contains information relative to a specific case and can be useful in identifying patterns or other information specific to a particular case. This information includes:
  - Case number
  - Date, day and time of occurrence
  - Location of occurrence

- Victim name (person or business)
  - Type of crime
  - Name and/or description of suspect(s)
  - Loss
  - Vehicle description
  - Assigned investigator
  - Case disposition / status
3. The Case Coordinator will assign a case to an Investigator and send it to his Versadex handle. The investigator will check his handle through out the workday to ensure that any time critical cases are not missed and to keep track of the cases he has been assigned.
  4. Upon receipt of the case, the assigned Investigator will complete all updates to the case with in Versadex. This should include the case notes.
  5. Case notes should be documented in Versadex attached to the assigned case. Case notes should be brief, but include sufficient summary of all investigative activities performed; i.e., contacts with victim(s), attempts to contact, interviews, supplemental written information, recorded information, telephone numbers, and any other appropriate activity. Notes serve as a convenient reminder of work performed and will assist Supervisors or other Investigators who may need to review or assist in the case, as well as provide a record for any administrative review. These notes are particularly useful should the assigned Investigator be unavailable.
  6. Investigators will update progress on their cases in Versadex. Supervisors will be able to review the investigators handle to track the status of assigned cases .This will allow the Unit Supervisor the ability to review a particular Investigators caseload for Case Management and assignment purposes.
  7. Upon receipt of an assigned case, the Investigator should review the report as well as associated documents and highlight important facts for ease of reference. The Investigator should seek these important facts in the report.
    - Identification information of the victim (name, address and phone number).
    - Victim's language
    - Suspect information
    - Whether the victim can identify the suspect
    - Suspect information
    - Vehicle description(s)
    - Witnesses, can they identify the suspect
    - Physical evidence – latent prints, photographs, surveillance photos, videos, location of physical evidence
    - Property taken, serial numbers – be certain that stolen property, is entered into the stolen property system and that credit cards and appropriate bank accounts are cancelled by the victim
  8. The Investigator should research the background of BOTH the suspect and victim, looking for applicable criminal history, prior reports and/or cases, DMV identifiers / status, FBI, CII, and probation and/or parole status.
  9. The Investigator should contact and re-interview the victim(s) and witnesses, to confirm that the crime is valid and that all information in the initial report is accurate. Any discrepancies between

information given in the initial report and subsequent follow-up interviews should be noted and resolved or explained.

10. Follow-up interviews are best done in person whenever possible. When a personal interview is not possible, the Investigator should conduct the interview by telephone as soon as possible. During this contact, the identifying and other important information pertaining to the interviewee should be verified and updated if necessary. Interviews should be recorded unless there are extenuating circumstances or when the victim refuses to allow it.
11. If it is not possible to make personal or telephone contact with the victim(s) or other parties involved, the Investigator should send a letter asking to be contacted as soon as possible. The Unit has applicable "form" letters available in English and other languages. This letter introduces the assigned Case Investigator and provides the case number as well as other contact information. The letter asks the victim to contact the Investigator as soon as possible. If a letter is sent to establish contact, this will be noted in the case notes.
12. After the initial follow-up contacts with the victim(s), the Investigator should maintain contact with the victim, and keep them apprised of the status of their case. Investigators should not give the victim unrealistic expectations. When appropriate, the Investigator should refer the victim to the Victim / Witness Assistance program, a mental health care agency, or other professionals to assist them in coping with the trauma of the crime.
13. When contacting a victim or other party regarding a case, the Investigator should provide a contact name and telephone number. This will usually be accomplished by leaving a business card with the person contacted.
14. The collateral Police Artist is an available resource that should be used when appropriate. The artist can possibly develop details in the description of a suspect that cannot be characterized with an interview or verbal description. When a sketch is complete, it can be used in the Watch Bulletin, TRAK flyer, Fugitive Watch, Crime Stoppers, news media or other special notices if appropriate.
15. The news media should be used when possible and appropriate to the investigation. The Department's Public Information Officer (PIO) should be called upon, and can be of assistance when working with the media (newspapers, radio, and television).
16. When appropriate to an investigation, the Investigator should make use of the Watch Bulletin, Critical Reach Flyers, or other forms of notification as soon as possible, so that information about the crime can be shared with BFO patrol units in the field, and other allied agencies. The entry should include a photograph or sketch as well as information necessary to alert field Units.
17. The Investigator should attend local and area investigator's meetings to share and exchange information on active cases, trends and other crime activity relative to Financial Crimes.
18. Investigators should review teletypes received by the Unit for similar cases, current trends, and monitor the Watch Bulletins, Watch Commander log, APB's, Night / Day Detective logs, and Critical Reach Flyers for information that may be pertinent.
19. An Investigator should attend BFO patrol and Special operations briefings when necessary to share available information. Patrol Units may often be the best resource to identify suspects.

20. Unit sergeants will review open cases assigned to their Investigators at a minimum of 30, 60, and 90 day intervals, with more frequent review to occur when necessary. Any cases that are open in excess of 90 days will be reviewed by the appropriate Sergeant, and the Unit Lieutenant will be advised.



## EQUIPMENT

### VEHICLES

1. Vehicles are assigned on a “pool” basis. The vehicles will be shared among Unit members. Unit vehicles will be kept clean and maintained in good condition.
2. Vehicle keys will be maintained by the team supervisor, and made available to any Unit member requiring a vehicle. When not in use, a vehicle will be parked in its assigned space, and the vehicle keys will be returned to the team sergeant. “Hoarding” of a vehicle will not be allowed.
3. Vehicles will not be taken home without prior approval of the Unit Commander.
4. When a vehicle assigned to the Financial Crimes Unit is *loaned to another Unit*, it must be approved by the Unit Commander. When a Unit vehicle is out on loan, a notation will be made on the vehicle board indicating the Unit and officer’s name, as well as estimated time of return.

### SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

Certain items of special equipment are assigned to Investigators in the Financial Crimes Unit. This equipment consists of, but is not limited to; hand pack radios, digital recorders, digital cameras, raid jackets etc. When a piece of special equipment is assigned to an Investigator, that Investigator assumes the responsibility for the care, safety and reasonable handling of that equipment. Assigned equipment will be returned when the member leaves the Unit.

### FIELD EQUIPMENT

It is the responsibility of each Unit member to always maintain a complete uniform and all equipment. This is necessary in the event the Department should go on tactical alert or other situations occur requiring the unexpected use of a field uniform. Each supervisor will ensure



that Unit members have the proper equipment in serviceable condition and will inspect this equipment periodically. The required equipment is listed in the Duty Manual and includes a baton, helmet, face mask respirator (gas mask) and body armor.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**EVIDENCE**

1. Evidence obtained during an investigation shall be booked into Central Supply as soon as practicable.
2. Evidence that is to be evaluated by the Homicide Crime Scene Unit (CSU) may, with the approval of the CSU supervisor and an FCU supervisor, be temporarily kept in the CSU Technical Evidence Room. When CSU has completed its evaluation and collection of evidence,

the Investigator will be notified. The Investigator will then take custody of the evidence and book it into the Property Room.

3. Under no circumstances will evidence remain in the Unit, locked in desks or case files. Weapons, clothing, currency and other property will be photographed, logged, and booked as evidence. Documentary evidence such as checks, receipts, or credit cards should be uploaded into to case in Versadex.
4. Evidence brought into the Unit for evaluation and/or photographing will remain under the direct control of the case Investigator. At no time will evidence be left unsecured in the Unit, in desks or in vehicles.

### **COLLATERAL ASSIGNMENTS**

Collateral assignments will be the responsibility of the Unit sergeant(s) and are assigned by the Unit commander.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

#### **DRESS STANDARDS**

- At all times, an Investigator shall maintain a neat and orderly appearance. All Investigators assigned to the Bureau of Investigations shall dress in “business attire.” Exceptions to this policy may be made for certain operations and/or duties and will be approved in advance by a supervisor.
- Standard “business attire” for a male Investigator shall be a suit or sport coat and necktie appropriate for court room testimony.
- Standard “business attire” for a female Investigator shall be a comparable standard for an office environment and court room testimony.

### **PRESS RELEASES**

- The Unit commander shall approve all press releases prior to their release.
- An Investigator may be requested to draft a press release regarding their assigned case. A supervisor should review the press release, and if necessary, appropriate direction and technical assistance will be provided.
- In the absence of the Unit commander, a Unit supervisor may review and approve a press release. In this event, the supervisor will check with the PIO as well as the BOI Captain prior to the issuance of the press release.
- A copy of any press release shall be distributed to the following:
  - FCU Commander
  - BOI Deputy Chief
  - BOI Captains
  - PIO

- Case file

Press release distribution is generally handled by the PIO Office.

### **EXCEPTIONAL POLICE WORK**

When exceptional police work is noted, it should be reported to the appropriate supervisor. Commendation of good police work promotes high morale, improved relationships, and motivates further good work. The recognition of exceptional police work, either formally or informally is encouraged by all Unit personnel. Equally, deficiencies or problems in performance should also be addressed through the appropriate supervisor.

In cases worthy of commendation, documentation of the event should be made by a supervisor through a formal commendation, or by mention in a performance appraisal at a later time. Formal commendations will be routed through the chain of command and if approved, made a part of the employee's personnel file.