

NIAGARA FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT
GENERAL ORDER

EFFECTIVE DATE: 09/16/2013	SUBJECT: OFFICER RESPONSIBILITY; SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITY; COMMAND PROTOCOL	Number 303.00 (NYSLEAP O-40-1; O-40-2; O-40-3)
RESCINDS: 04/15/2003		Number of pages 2

I. Policy:

- A. It is the policy of the Niagara Falls Police Department that every case which can be disposed of by the Patrol Division, should be so handled. Exceptions to this policy shall be limited to those cases where departmental efficiency demands specialized assistance.

II. Responsibility:

- A. The preliminary phase of an investigation begins with the discovery or report of a crime or other circumstances requiring police action.
- B. In most instances, patrol officers respond to and make preliminary investigations as far as it is possible, up to and including arresting the offender. However, in some cases, the follow-through to the point of arrest is not possible. It is at this stage of the investigation that the Criminal Investigation Division or other investigative unit will begin a follow-up.
 - 1. The preliminary investigation will end when the patrol officer has exhausted all police action at his/her immediate disposal.
 - 2. Consideration should be given to such factors as expertise (knowledge and skills), time (sufficient manpower available), and the degree of seriousness of the offense.
 - 3. The Niagara Falls Police Department believes in proactive police service and of giving all officers the means and tools available to seeing an investigation through to its end.
- C. The severity of the crime, and/or hours put into the preliminary investigation are determining factors in regards to allowing an officer to go above and beyond his/her tour of duty in pursuit of a successful disposition.

- D. The Patrol Supervisor will be responsible for overseeing the preliminary investigation.
 - 1. Supervisors shall respond to any unattended death, serious crime scene, barricaded subject or hostage situation, serious traffic accident, missing person (endangered), officer involved off-duty situation, citizen complaint against an officer, use of force, or any request from an officer for supervisory assistance.
- E. Upon the arrival of a detective, the responsibility for the investigation will be placed under the detective's authority.
- F. Preliminary investigations will encompass the following tasks:
 - 1. Initial detection of a crime or response to the scene of a reported incident;
 - 2. Inquiry to determine if an offense has been committed and if so, its nature and severity;
 - 3. Assisting injured persons, if any;
 - 4. Search for victims and perpetrators;
 - 5. Communicating descriptions, method of travel and direction of suspects and any other relevant information as may be necessary.
 - 6. Securing and/or locating any witnesses and canvassing the neighborhood for witnesses and suspects.
 - 7. Determining solvability factors.
 - 8. When appropriate, advising the victim(s) of programs available for assistance.
- G. When further investigation is required, it shall be noted on the original police report and the appropriate division shall follow up the investigation.