

## PATROL

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### FIELD IDENTIFICATION

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**Purpose:** To establish guidelines in the application of field identification.

**Policy Statement:** It is the policy of this agency to utilize field identification only as necessary and shall be conducted in a manner that minimizes suggestiveness and maximizes the accuracy and admissibility of suspect identification.

**Summary of Changes:** New format.

**Procedure:**

**1 Policy [CALEA 42.1.12a]**

- 1.1 Due to the inherent suggestiveness, field identifications should be avoided in most cases. However, circumstances are not always conducive to preferable identification techniques such as a line-up; and therefore, necessitate the use of field identification. When these situations arise, officers should consider the following before conducting a field identification:
- 1.1.1 Field identification shall only be used when circumstances require the prompt display of a suspect to a witness;
  - 1.1.2 The suspect is detained within a reasonable amount of time following the offense;
  - 1.1.3 The suspect matches the description provided by the witness/victim;
  - 1.1.4 There is an immediate need to arrest the suspect;
  - 1.1.5 A line-up cannot be promptly arranged;
  - 1.1.6 In situations where probable cause to arrest the suspect already exists, it is preferable to not subject the suspect to field identification;

**2 Field Identification Procedures**

- 2.1 Get a complete description of the suspect prior to conducting the identification process. An officer's field notes and the description broadcast can be vital evidence.
- 2.2 If possible, transport the witness/victim to the suspect's location. This helps minimize the length and scope of detention of the suspect and prevents the suspect from contaminating the crime scene or allowing him/her to know where the victim/witness works or lives. If exigent circumstances exist that would prevent the witness from being transported, the suspect may be transported to the witness' location upon approval by a supervisor. [CALEA 42.1.12b]
- 2.3 The victim or witness should remain in the transport vehicle, if possible, to make the identification. This should reduce victim/witness anxiety levels and ensure that no DNA evidence is transferred to either party.
- 2.4 The victim/witness will be advised that they are about to view a person who may or may not be the suspect in the offense under investigation, and further advised to indicate whether or not the person being viewed is in fact the person they previously observed involving the incident under investigation. The witness should also be informed they should not feel compelled to make a positive identification. [CALEA 42.1.12d]
- 2.5 Words or conduct of any type that may suggest to the witness that the individual is or may be the perpetrator should be avoided. Do not confirm a witness' positive identification. [42.1.12f]
- 2.6 If there are multiple suspects, they should be separated and subjected to separate field identifications.
- 2.7 If there are multiple victims/witnesses to the offense, only one at a time should participate in the identification process. If a field identification is made, the other victims/witnesses should be presented with a photographic line-up by investigations personnel. [CALEA 42.1.12c]
- 2.8 The exact words of the victim/witness indicating their level of confidence in the positive identification of a suspect will be documented in the incident report and included in the original case file. [CALEA 42.1.12e,g]
- 2.9 The following measures should be taken to minimize the suggestiveness of the field identification process:
  - 2.9.1 Remove the suspect from the squad car.
  - 2.9.2 Remove the suspect's handcuffs, provided that the removal of handcuffs does not create an unreasonable safety risk. If removal of handcuffs presents a safety issue, try to conceal the handcuffs.
  - 2.9.3 Do not require the suspect to put on any clothing or disguises worn by the perpetrator, or perform any actions that were performed by the perpetrator.

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Chief of Police