



**SACRAMENTO POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**OFFICE OF OPERATIONS**



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527.05  
**PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS**  
05-13-93

**PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines for the amount of time to be spent on preliminary investigations.

**POLICY**

That officers assigned to the Office of Operations continue preliminary investigations to the point where delay in the investigation would not materially jeopardize the investigation.

**PROCEDURE**

- A. The scope of preliminary investigations can constitute an entire investigation or be limited by:
  - 1. investigative policy.
  - 2. officers' workload assignments.
- B. Officers shall conduct a thorough investigation to include:
  - 1. establishing the violation of law.
  - 2. thorough identification and interviews of all victims, witnesses, and responsible parties.
  - 3. collection and preservation of any evidence.
  - 4. taking appropriate enforcement action.
- C. A report shall be:
  - 1. accurate and completed during the work shift.
  - 2. submitted for supervisory review and approval. (Where a report is associated with an arrest it shall be submitted to a supervisor before going home.)
- D. Necessary reports shall be taken by officers and Community Services Officers.
- E. An officer may refer a complainant to a call expeditor or the report writers per G.O. 130.02.
- F. GUIDELINES FOR PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS
  - 1. To strike a balance between the need of answering calls for service and the amount of time expended on preliminary investigations, officers shall limit preliminary investigations to one hour unless supervisory approval is obtained. NOTE: When determining the length of time on a preliminary investigation, the report writing time need not be included.
  - 2. Preliminary investigations causing travel outside the sector shall necessitate:
    - a. supervisor approval.
    - b. the supervisor notifying the supervisor of the sector to which the officer is responding.
- G. SECTOR SERGEANTS:  
Sector Sergeants shall:
  - 1. when practical, allow officers to carry an investigation to its logical conclusion.
  - 2. balance the absolute need of maintaining adequate levels of police service and the compelling need to complete the investigation.
  - 3. take the following factors into consideration when authorizing extended preliminary investigations:
    - a. calls for service
    - b. available personnel resources
    - c. severity of the crime
    - d. necessity of immediate apprehension
    - e. potential location of apprehension
    - f. likelihood of apprehension
    - g. loss of evidence
    - h. loss of witnesses
    - i. availability of call expeditor and/or report writers.
  - 4. keep the Watch Commander advised of any extended investigation and the amount of personnel resources committed to it.