Police Officer’s Role in Criminal Investigations
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Police officers play an important role in the criminal investigation process. Police officers are the first to arrive at the crime scene. How the police officer handles the initial investigation may affect how the case proceeds through the criminal investigative process. At times, the police officer may conduct the entire investigation, assist the investigator, or be assisted by the investigator.

Upon notification of a crime, patrol officer goes directly to the crime scene and takes care of any situation, including injuries. If suspect is at crime scene he should be arrested. The longer it takes for police officers to arrive witnesses will leave or evidence destroyed. The police officer does the following once he proceeds to the crime scene.

1. Find out what happened
2. Locate witnesses
3. Attempt to understand the motivation of the witnesses
4. What are further investigative steps
5. Record what has been done [1].

The police officer complements the investigator. The more investigative functions the police officer is allowed to perform, the more time investigators have time to work on cases. Police officers do solve crimes. One study indicated that police officers had a better record in solving crimes than the investigative unit. Unless relevant information is found at the crime scene or a suspect identified, the investigator has little chance a crime [2].

References


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