



# RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER



Subject: <b>PROCEDURE FOR EYEWITNESS IDENTIFICATION AND TAKING INTERVIEW STATEMENTS</b>	Chapter 7	Number 8	# Pages 9
CALEA Standards: 1.2.3a, 42.2.9a-g, 42.2.10a-g	Related Orders:	Effective Date: 12/01/2023 Revised By: Standard Prv. Rev. Date: 06/09/2022	
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**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this directive is to establish the proper guidelines for obtaining reliable eyewitness identification, taking statements during interviews and guidelines for the preparation and presentation of photographic.

**II. SUMMARY OF CHANGE**

*To ensure adequate and consistent directions is being given by individuals administering show-ups to witnesses, instructions have been created and are now reflected in the PD-159A form. All changes will be bold and italicized throughout the document.*

**III. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Richmond Police Department to provide its members with the constitutional standards and practical guidelines for taking interview statements and obtaining eyewitness identification. Eyewitness identification evidence is often crucial in identifying offenders as well as exonerating the innocent. Research of cases in which Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) evidence has been used to exonerate individuals previously convicted of crimes leads many experts to conclude that improved, more reliable methods of handling eyewitness identifications may promote higher standards of justice. The Department subscribes to the guidelines developed by the Department of Justice for conducting the most reliable and accurate eyewitness identification procedures.

**IV. ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT**

All employees are expected to fully comply with the guidelines and timelines set forth in this general order. Failure to comply will result in appropriate corrective action. Responsibility rests with the Division Commander to ensure that any violations of policy are investigated and appropriate training, counseling and/or disciplinary action is initiated.

This directive is for internal use only, and does not enlarge an employee’s civil liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violation of this directive, if

proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

V. DEFINITIONS

- A. **BLIND-SEQUENTIAL LINE-UP** – The preferred method of conducting a photographic line-up in which photographs are presented to the witness one at a time, rather than in a grouping. This is conducted by someone who does not know which member of the line-up is the “true” suspect. It is also known as a “double-blind” procedure as the witness also does not know which photo will be the true suspect.
- B. **INTERVIEW** – An interview is a conversation with a cooperative witness, who willfully furnishes information. Generally, interviews will be made with persons making complaints or persons with knowledge of the incident being investigated.
- C. **PHOTOGRAPHIC LINE-UP** – A procedure in which photographs are used instead of live persons. This procedure is often used when a suspect has not been identified or when such a person has not been located or arrested.
- D. **PHOTOGRAPHIC SHOW-UP** – A procedure wherein a picture of the suspect is taken and shown to the victim rather than actually placing the suspect before the victim for identification.
- E. **PHYSICAL SHOW-UP** – A procedure in which circumstances require the prompt display of a suspect to a witness to determine if the captured person is actually the criminal.

VI. PROCEDURE

[CALEA 1.2.3a]

- A. Procedure for Taking Handwritten or Electronic Statements:
  - 1. Statements shall contain an introductory paragraph, which will include the following:
    - a) Name of witness;
    - b) Name of interviewer;
    - c) Name(s) of everyone present;
    - d) Location of interview;
    - e) Date and time of interview; and,
    - f) Nature of interview.
  - 2. The second paragraph of the statement shall be a brief resume of the witness to include:
    - a) Residence location;

- b) Date of birth;
- c) Educational background;
- d) Employment;
- e) Marital or family status;
- f) Home, work and any alternate telephone numbers;
- g) E-mail information, if applicable; and,
- h) Any other information that would contribute to the character of the individual, who is making the statement.

B. Procedure for Recording Statements:

- 1. The officer shall attempt to record questions to clarify any point that is unclear or to explore areas that the witness has overlooked;
- 2. If statements from the witness are taken in written form, the officer shall give the witness an opportunity to read and initial any corrections, and sign and date the statement;
- 3. The officer shall sign the statement and enter the time of conclusion of the interview; and,
- 4. If requested, the witness will be given a copy of the statement.

C. Evidentiary Methods of Eyewitness Identification:

The officer shall document an accurate and exact description of a defendant before any identification method is used. There are three (3) types of evidentiary methods for eyewitness identification: Physical Show-up, Photographic Show-up, and Photographic Line-up.

1. Procedure for a Physical Show-up:

- a) A physical show-up shall only be used immediately after a crime has occurred, but in no circumstances shall a show-up be used more than three hours after a crime has occurred. A judge will carefully scrutinize a physical show-up for suggestiveness. [CALEA 42.2.10a]
- b) A physical show-up shall not be used if an officer believes that a victim cannot make a positive identification at the time of the crime because of physical or psychological reasons, i.e. pain, undue stress.
- c) An accurate and exact description of a defendant taken from the victim, prior to the physical show-up, can be used to determine whether the victim is capable of making identification. The only justifiable reasons for this type of eyewitness identification are:

- (1) Emergency – when other forms of identification cannot be used; and,
  - (2) Immediate Identification – a physical show-up near the scene and time of the crime to determine if the captured person is actually the criminal.
- d) If practical, the witness shall be transported to the location of the detained suspect. [CALEA 42.2.10b]
  - e) If there are multiple witnesses and one witness makes an identification during a show-up, the remaining witness(s) shall be reserved for another identification procedure. [CALEA 42.2.10c]
  - f) ***Prior to conducting a physical show-up, retrieve and complete a Conducting a Show-Up form (PD-159A), which describes the procedure for preparing the witness for the process.*** [CALEA 42.2.10d]
  - g) Witnesses shall be asked to give feedback in their own words regarding their level of confidence in their identification. [CALEA 42.2.10e]
  - h) Officers shall refrain from giving witnesses any feedback regarding the individual they have selected or comment on the outcome of the procedure in any way. [CALEA 42.2.10f]
  - i) Documentation of the show-up and its results shall be maintained in the officer's field notes. Officers and civilian employees with access to [REDACTED] will record this information in [REDACTED]. [CALEA 42.2.10g]

***NOTE: Documented show-up procedures need to be provided to the Planning Division for CALEA reporting purposes.***

## 2. Procedure for a Photographic Show-up:

- a) A photographic show-up is the same as a physical show-up, except a picture of the subject is taken and shown to the victim, rather than actually placing the suspect before the victim for identification.
- b) A photographic show-up shall only be used if the victim knows the suspect and can provide a name. The photograph is used to make a positive identification. (**NOTE:** If there is time to photograph the suspect, there is time to compile a photographic line-up. A photographic show-up is not a preferred method of eyewitness identification.) [CALEA 42.2.10a]

## 3. Procedure for Photographic Line-up:

A photographic line-up is the most common and practical eyewitness identification method. It is a proper identification method only when officers follow the procedures listed below to ensure that the photographic line-up is not unnecessarily suggestive of any particular suspect (Manson v. Braithwaite, 432 U.S. 98 (1977) and Neil v. Biggers, 409 U.S. 188 (1972)). The Department's

preferred method of conducting photographic line-ups is the blind sequential method. Procedures for a photographic line-up are as follows:

- a) General Responsibilities:
  - (1) Department personnel shall strictly adhere to established procedures for conducting suspect line-ups in order to avoid the possibility of error or undue suggestiveness to witnesses.
  - (2) Department personnel shall report to their supervisor any known errors, flaws or non-conformance with established procedures in the conduct of a suspect line-up that *the employee* may observe or become aware of in order that corrective actions may be taken and safeguards established to protect the innocent.
  - (3) Department personnel will confer with the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office in establishing line-up procedures in order to assure the best use of this type of evidence and to assure that procedures established are compatible with the prosecution of criminal cases.
  
- b) Composing the Line-up: [CALEA 42.2.9a, 42.2.9c, 42.2.9g]
  - (1) In order to ensure that inadvertent verbal cues or body language do not impact on a witness, whenever practical and in consideration of personnel and staffing conditions within the Department, the person conducting the photographic line-up should be someone who does not know which member of the lineup is the "true" suspect.  
[CALEA 42.2.9f]
  - (2) The person administering the line-up should ensure that the line-up is assembled in such a manner that the suspect does not unduly stand out; however, complete uniformity of features is not required.
  - (3) Photographs shall either be all black and white or all color. The photo lab may assist in preparing images for photographic line-ups, to include certain alterations. However, alterations of any photographs used in photographic line-ups shall be limited to changes such as the color to the background, enlarging or shrinking the image, and/or changing a color image to black and white. RPD personnel shall not make any alterations to the person themselves. Prohibited alterations include but are not limited to changing shirt colors, adding/removing jewelry, adding/removing scars, marks or tattoos, changing hair color, style or length, etc. However, if the subject of the investigation has a notable scar, mark or tattoo, which will clearly set them apart from other photos in the lineup, such identifying feature(s) may be redacted using an all-black or all-white redaction "box". Such box/boxes shall be implemented on all photos in the lineup in the same location, so as to prevent the witness from identifying an individual based solely on the location of the redaction box/boxes.

- (4) On the bottom left of each photograph, a unique five digit number is produced by [REDACTED] RMS followed by a single digit number in sequential order to identify each photo, (Ex: 40501 – 1, 40501 – 2, 40501 – 3, etc.). The photographs shall be displayed in numerical sequence (Ex: 40501 – one (1) will be the first photo shown, 40501 – two (2) will be the second photo shown etc.).
- (5) Prior to conducting a photographic line-up, the Detective shall ensure that the names and corresponding unique photo line-up numbers are recorded and create an ID Line-up in the case file. No writings or information concerning previous arrest(s) shall be visible to the witness. If it is ever necessary to block-out or cover any notation on the photograph, similar blocking-out or covering marks shall be placed on all photographs so that they appear alike.
- (6) The investigator conducting the lineup procedure shall use six photographs presented in a sequential manner. One of the photographs shall be of the suspect and the remaining five photographs shall be fillers (non-suspects).
  - (a) Select fillers who generally fit the witnesses' description of the offender. When there is a limited or inadequate description of the offender provided by the witness or when the description of the offender differs significantly from the appearance of the suspect, fillers should resemble the suspect in significant features.
  - (b) Select a photograph that resembles the suspect's description or appearance at the time of the incident, provided that multiple photographs of the suspect are reasonably available to the investigator.
  - (c) Avoid reusing fillers in line-ups shown to the same witness when showing a new suspect.
  - (d) Review the array, once completed, to ensure that the suspect does not unduly stand out.
  - (e) Document the presentation order of each line-up, ensuring that a complete written record of the proceeding is made and retained. The photographs shall be preserved in their original condition.
  - (f) The suspect's defense attorney need not be present at either a pre-indictment or post-indictment photographic line-up, as they do not personally involve a defendant.

D. Conducting the Identification Procedure:

1. The identification procedure shall be conducted in a manner that promotes the accuracy, reliability, fairness and objectivity of the witness's identification.

These steps are designed to ensure the accuracy of identification or non-identification decisions.

2. When presenting the photographic lineup, the person administering the lineup shall: [CALEA 42.2.9d]
  - a) Prior to conducting a Sequential Line-up, complete a Conducting a Sequential Photographic Line-Up *form* (PD-159), which describes the procedure for preparing the witness for the process. The PD-159 contains a set of instructions and an opportunity for the witness to state, in their own words, the level of certainty of the identification. [CALEA 42.2.9e]
  - b) Instruct the witness that it is just as important to clear innocent persons from suspicion, as it is to identify guilty parties.
  - c) Instruct the witness that the offender may or may not be among those in the photographic line-up and, therefore, the witness should not feel compelled to make identification.
  - d) Instruct the witness that if the offender is seen in the line-up, the *offender* might not appear exactly the same as on the date of the incident because features such as clothing, head or facial hair can change. Additionally, photographs do not always depict the true complexion of a person that might be lighter or darker than shown in the photograph.
  - e) Advise the witness that regardless of whether *they* make *an* identification, the Department will continue to investigate the incident.
  - f) Provide the following additional viewing instructions to the witness:
    - (1) Individual photographs will be viewed one at a time.
    - (2) Photographs are positioned in random order.
    - (3) Take as much time as needed to make a decision about each photograph.
    - (4) All photographs will be shown even if identification is made prior to viewing all photographs.
  - g) Confirm that the witness understands the nature of the sequential procedure.
  - h) Present each photograph to the witness separately, in a previously determined manner, as documented, removing those previously shown.
  - i) Avoid saying anything to the witness that may influence the witness's selection.

j) Show the photographs in the sequential line-up to only one witness at a time. **NEVER** show the photographs to two (2) or more witnesses who are together at the same time. [CALEA 42.2.9c]

3. Witnesses shall be asked to give feedback in their own words regarding their level of confidence in their identification. [CALEA 42.2.9e]

4. Officers shall refrain from giving witnesses any feedback regarding the individual *that the witness* has selected or comment on the outcome of the procedure in any way. [CALEA 42.2.9f]

5. If identification is made, avoid reporting to the witness any information regarding the selected individual until the entire process has been completed.

6. If the witness requests to view the photographic sequence or specific photographs again, a second viewing is allowable but all photographs must be shown in the same sequence as the initial viewing and in its entirety, even if the witness makes identification during this second showing.

7. Instruct the witness not to discuss the identification procedure or its results with other witnesses involved in the case and discourage contact with the media.

E. Recording Identification Results: [CALEA 42.2.9g]

1. When conducting an identification procedure, the person administering the line-up shall preserve the outcome of the procedure by documenting any identification or non-identification results obtained from the witness. A complete and accurate record of the outcome of the identification procedure is crucial.

2. When documenting the identification procedure, the person administering the line-up should record both identification and non-identification results, including the witness's own words.

3. Ensure that the results are signed and dated by the witness and the person administering the line-up.

4. Ensure that no materials indicating previous identification results are visible to the witness.

5. Ensure that the witness does not write on or mark any materials that will be used in other identification procedures.

**NOTE:** Photographic line-ups may be recorded using video or audio equipment if the line-up takes place at either police headquarters or any police precinct. If the photographic line-up takes place elsewhere, an audio device may be used to record the outcome. Use of the device shall be at the discretion of the involved officer. [CALEA 42.2.9b]

F. Procedure for Identification under Emergency Circumstances:



Particular care must be exercised in the identification of an accused subject under emergency conditions to prevent a violation of the Due Process of law, as required in the United States Constitution. The conduct of a confrontation depends on the totality of the circumstances surrounding it. Only under emergency conditions would an officer be upheld in the identification of the accused where the criteria do not fall within the guidelines as set forth in this directive.

VII. FORMS

A. PD-159, Conducting a Sequential Photographic Line-up

***B. PD-159A, Conducting a Show-Up***