


MONROE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

General Order

CHAPTER: 044		TITLE: Major Crimes Unit
EFFECTIVE DATE: September 23, 2004	NO. PAGES: 3	REVIEWED/REVISED: March 15, 2022
 Sheriff of Monroe County		

I. **PURPOSE:** The Major Crimes Unit (MCU) is primarily responsible for investigating the most serious crimes, specifically person's crimes that impact the welfare and safety of the people within Monroe County.

II. **DISCUSSION:** This directive shall apply to all Monroe County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) personnel. The MCU is headed by a detective sergeant who reports to the Special Investigations Division (SID). Cases submitted to MCU are evaluated by SID supervisors and then assigned to an MCU detective for further investigation. MCU detectives are specifically trained to investigate cases that require advanced expertise, knowledge and proficiency in serious crimes against persons. They work closely with the State Attorney's Office (SAO) to ensure cases are reviewed with the potential for successful prosecution. Victim advocate personnel are also assigned within the MCU.

III. POLICY AND PROCEDURE

A. The MCU will be notified and, once assigned, will assume the lead in the following types of investigations:

1. Suspicious death, homicide and suicide
2. Aggravated battery (with deadly weapon/serious bodily injury)
3. Sexual battery and other sexual offenses
4. Crimes against children
5. Human trafficking
6. Missing adults and juveniles
7. Officer-involved shootings and in-custody deaths
8. Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) investigations

B. The guidelines to assist with the criminal investigation are as follows:

1. Persons Crimes:
 - a. Obtain the initial MCSO incident report and any other relevant reports/documentation.
 - b. Plan the investigation: work in conjunction with other criminal justice agencies, the Medical Examiner's Office or Department of Children and Family (DCF) if a child is involved.

- c. Interview victims and witnesses accordingly.
 - d. Examine crime scene and coordinate evidence collection and analysis
 - e. Complete probable cause affidavit for arrest or conclude investigation with applicable closure.
 - f. Provide prosecution summary to SAO if applicable.
2. Crimes Against Children:
- a. Obtain all relevant information to include parties involved, MNI Local, FCIC/NCIC history, deputy/witness observations, and DCF history.
 - b. Contact reporter for information about the case.
 - c. Determine an appropriate time to interview the child victim either at school, home, or another location best suited for the child. The interview time will also be suited for the child, determined by the safety needs of the child.
 - d. When possible, the interview will be tape-recorded, videotaped or both.
 - e. The juvenile activity practice will be used to help qualify the child for court purposes.
 - f. A Child Protection Team medical exam will be scheduled by DCF, as soon as possible, to document the injuries. A psycho-social will also be requested when applicable. A copy of the CPT evaluation will be attached to the report.
 - g. The detective will photograph the residence (inside and outside for DCF records) and the victim's injuries. The injuries will be documented by using a ruler in the photo. The photographs will be property marked for court purposes and then placed into evidence.
 - h. The suspect(s) will be interviewed. The detective will comply with Miranda guidelines.
 - i. The victim's advocate will be notified for the non-offending parent or guardian.
 - j. If probable cause is found and a suspect is known, then a warrant will be applied for. The SAO may be consulted if the detective feels there is a need for review of the probable cause affidavit or if there are any case law problems.
 - k. The child will be taken to a shelter if there are any indications of imminent danger to the child. The detective will follow Florida State Statute 39.401b for the removal of a child.
 - l. Case Closure: If the case is closed by arrest, the detective will prepare the report for prosecution. When there is no arrest, the detective will close the case with the appropriate FIBRS/NIBRS closure.
3. Non-custodial Child Sexual Abuse: Will be handled similar to the custodial without the involvement of DCF.
- a. The Child Protection Team or the SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners) nurse practitioner will conduct physical exam. The detective is responsible to schedule this exam.
 - b. A Child Protection Team psycho-social may also be requested, if applicable.
 - c. The victim's advocate and/or the SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners) advocate will

- be notified.
- d. BOLO will be issued, if appropriate.
4. Sexual Battery and other Sexual Offenses: The MCU will investigate all adult sexual battery reports regardless of their gender. Road Patrol will be the first responder to the report and when the officer receives information of the sexual battery from the victim, the MCU will be notified.
- a. The victim/SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners) and victim advocate will be notified.
 - b. The SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners) nurse practitioner will be requested if the victim agrees, and respond to the hospital for the exam.
 - c. A sworn statement will be obtained from the victim and it will be tape-recorded, if possible.
 - d. Photographs of any injury will be taken. A ruler will be placed along the injury to help measure the area. The photographs will be marked for court purposes and then placed into evidence. If the photographs needed are in a sensitive area, all attempts will be made to have the same sex as the victim photograph the area of injury.
 - e. The crime scene will be secured and a search warrant will be obtained if needed.
 - f. The crime scene technician will process the scene.
 - g. A BOLO will be issued if appropriate.
 - h. The suspect(s) will be interviewed in compliance with Miranda guidelines.
 - i. The suspect(s) will be asked if they would consent to a sexual assault kit being completed on them. This would be done for any possible trace of evidence.
 - j. The crimes compensation form will be completed at the hospital for the cost of the victim's exam.
 - k. The victim will be shown photo line-up of possible suspects. If the line-up is not possible, then all attempts should be made to complete a composite.
 - l. The probable cause affidavit will be completed if the detective feels there is enough evidence. If the detective does not feel they have probable cause, or there are extenuating circumstances, then the SAO may be requested to review the case.
 - m. Case closure will be in accordance with FIBRS/NIBRS guidelines.
5. Officer-involved Shootings: Any potential crime committed against the officer involved in the shooting will be investigated by the MCU. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) will be notified and will conduct the officer-involved shooting investigation per the Sheriff's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement.
6. In-custody Death Investigations: The MCU will investigate all in-custody deaths. FDLE will be notified and assist with the investigation per the Sheriff's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement.
7. Training for the Major Crimes Unit: The detective sergeant will ensure MCU detectives receive the proper training in all areas specific to the unit when possible and/or practical.