

EXPANDED COURSE OUTLINE
REGULAR BASIC COURSE
LEARNING DOMAIN 30
CRIME SCENES, EVIDENCE, AND FORENSICS

I. LEARNING NEED

Peace officers must have a general understanding of the total range of basic criminal investigation procedures in order to make the appropriate decisions regarding the identification and preservation of physical evidence at the scene of a crime.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- A. Identify the goal of a criminal investigation
 - 1. Preservation of crime scene
 - 2. Evidence collection and crime scene reconstruction
 - 3. Successful prosecution of the guilty and exoneration of the innocent
- B. Perform the steps of a preliminary criminal investigation, including:
 - 1. Proceed safely to the scene
 - 2. Determine need for emergency medical services and aid any injured persons
 - 3. Verify that a crime, if any, has occurred
 - 4. Identify and arrest the suspect(s), if appropriate
 - 5. As soon as possible, provide dispatch with any suspect information including physical descriptions, direction of flight, mode of travel, and other pertinent information
 - 6. Contain and protect the crime scene and cause the proper collection of physical evidence
 - 7. Locate and interview victim(s) and/or witness(es) and identify other sources of information
 - 8. Collect all available information necessary to write a clear and accurate report (who, what, when, where, why and how)
- C. Demonstrate actions peace officers may employ to preserve possible physical evidence at a crime scene
 - 1. Secure and protect the integrity of the scene
 - 2. Avoid further disturbance of the scene unless preserving life or providing aid to a victim if anything is moved document it
 - 3. Preserve the scene from factors like the environment. Ex. Wind or rain
- D. Identify the primary purpose of the:

1. Initial survey of a crime scene
 2. Crime scene search
- E. Identify criteria for allowing crime scene photographs to be admitted as evidence by the court
1. Accurate representation of the scene as you saw it
 2. Show items of evidence and their location
 3. Show overall appearance of people involved in the crime and any injuries they may have
- F. Identify elements to be included on a crime scene diagram
1. Appropriate diagram view for the scene Ex. Birdseye, exploded
 2. Location and measurements of the overall scene
 3. Location, measurements and spatial relationship of items of evidence

I. LEARNING NEED

Peace officers must be aware of and comply with the general guidelines for the collection, packaging, and processing of physical evidence found at a crime scene to ensure that each piece of evidence is admissible in a court of law.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- A. Demonstrate appropriate precautions that should be taken prior to collection and removal of physical evidence from a crime scene
1. Documentation of description and location of item
 2. Gloves and Mask for safety and prevention of contamination
 3. Proper collection technique Ex. Tweezers for hair or tape lift for fibers
- B. Identify the purpose of collecting control/known samples
1. A known sample can be compared to an unknown sample
 2. Similarities or differences can be found
 3. Examples of known samples can be carpet fibers or fingerprints
- C. Identify the primary reason for establishing a chain of custody record
1. Evidence must be accounted for from time it is collected till time it is presented in court
 2. Has evidence changed or could it have been contaminated
 3. Establishes validity and integrity of evidence in court
- D. Prepare the information that should be noted on a chain of custody record
1. Report number
 2. What is it and where was it collected
 3. Who collected it and booked it
- E. Identify the three forms of fingerprint impressions that may be found at a crime scene

1. Visible – Can see fingerprint with naked eye Ex. Print in blood or paint
 2. Plastic – Fingerprint impression in substance Ex. Putty or Soap
 3. Latent – Not visible to naked eye needs development Ex. Black powder
- F. Apply the basic steps for developing latent fingerprints
1. Locate area or item to be processed
 2. Process area or item with black or magnetic powder
 3. Document – Ex. Lift or photograph
- G. Identify general guidelines for collecting and processing physical evidence that may be located at a crime scene
1. Document location and condition Ex. Notes or photographs
 2. Appropriate Safety precautions Ex. Gloves and or Mask
 3. Collect using proper procedure and tools Ex. Lift tape or tweezers for fibers and hair

II. REQUIRED TESTS

- A. A scenario test that requires the student to demonstrate proficiency in conducting a preliminary investigation of a felonious assault. At a minimum, the test shall evaluate the following competencies:
1. Problem Solving/Decision-Making - analyzing situations and implementing plans through one's actions to solve problems. Using verbal or physical skills to determine the appropriate resolution to a situation.
 2. Legal Authority/Individual Rights. The identification of laws and constitutional rights governing consensual encounters, detentions, and arrests.
 3. Officer Safety - The demonstration of situational and tactical awareness and appropriate response.
 4. Communication - The use of effective verbal and non-verbal skills to convey intended meaning and establish understanding.

Presenters must use the POST-developed Scenario Test and the POST Scenario Competency Evaluation and Grading Test Forms or presenter-developed forms approved by POST, which minimally include the performance dimensions used for this scenario test.

III. REQUIRED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- A. A learning activity that requires the student to systematically search a simulated crime scene and generate crime scene notes and a crime scene sketch. The learning activity shall minimally test the student's ability to:
1. Use a systematic method to search the scene and recover all items of physical evidence

2. Generate crime scene notes that document observations, scene conditions and investigative actions
 3. Generate a crime scene sketch that includes measurements, reference points, identification of evidence, a legend and the direction of north
 4. Locate latent and plastic prints placed on objects of varying texture and color
 5. Complete the necessary forms generally utilized by law enforcement to insure the chain of custody
- B. The student will participate in one or more learning activities from the POST – developed *Instructor’s Guide to Learning Activities for Leadership, Ethics and Community Policing (December 2005)* or other comparable sources regarding crime scenes, evidence and forensics. At a minimum, each activity, or combination of activities must address the following topics:
1. Application of SARA or other problem solving model in the conduct of a thorough preliminary investigation
 2. How a peace officer may collaborate with the community to solve a crime and identify underlying conditions that contribute to the crime problem
 3. Modeling ethical leadership by a peace officer in the performance of an investigation
 4. Impact of an effective investigation on a peace officer’s trustworthiness and credibility during courtroom testimony

Description	Hours
POST Minimum Required Hours	<u>12</u>
Agency Specific Hours	<u>6</u>
Total Instructional Hours	<u>18</u>