

School Crime Scene Management

Evidence is very important in criminal cases. Therefore, only trained professionals should do the collection and preservation of evidence. These professionals are called crime scene technicians.

If you ask a crime scene technician to name the biggest problem that they encounter on the job, you will consistently hear – crime scene contamination.

Before those professionals arrive, it is important that the crime scene remain as uncontaminated as possible. There are things that can be done by people who arrive at the scene first to help protect the evidence.

Since school employees will be first at a school crime scene, the State Police recommend that a person from the school staff be designated to manage the crime scene prior to police arrival.

The following pamphlet outlines an easily retainable acronym designed to assist responding school personnel in managing a school crime scene.



Respond
Evaluate
Secure
Protect
Observe
Notify
Document

Respond . . .

- Personal safety - Your safety comes first! You can't help others if you are injured.
- Organize your thoughts and formulate a plan on how to handle the situation.
- Make mental notes of your observations.

Evaluate . . .

- Evaluate the severity of the situation. Is the crime/incident in progress or not? School Emergency Response Team should be calling 9-1-1 if appropriate.
- Identify all involved and uninvolved individuals in the area. Emergency response personnel should be offering aid to the victims.
- Be aware of weapons and hazards.
- Be aware of potential evidence.
- Don't touch anything unless necessary.

Secure . . .

- Clear away uninvolved people.
- Establish a perimeter with survey or custodial tape, cones, desks.
- Police will adjust the perimeter if they need to.

Protect . . .

- Safe guard the scene - limit and document any people entering the area.
- Don't use phones or bathrooms within the scene area.
- Don't eat, drink or smoke in the area of the scene.

Observe . . .

- Write down your observations - These notes will be utilized to report crime scene management to responding police. Your notes could possibly be used at a later date in criminal court.
- Record detailed information - don't rely on your memory.

Notify . . .

- Call 911 (Police/EMS/Fire Personnel), if not already called or there.

Document . . .

- Take good notes - Such as: time, date, people at scene, weather, doors open or closed, lights on or off and position of furniture.
- Be prepared to provide your notes and information to police.

In July 2000, Governor Pataki signed the SAVE legislation that requires schools to develop policies and procedures for securing and restricting access to the crime scene in order to preserve evidence in cases of violent crimes on school property. Crime scenes often have some of the most important evidence.

This pamphlet was designed to give guidance in developing your policies and procedures. Police agencies are available to assist with further education and training.

PROTECT THE SCENE - PROTECT THE SCENE - PROTE



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Protect

Document

PROTECT THE SCENE - PROTECT THE SCENE - PROTE

Notify

Secure

Observe

Evaluate

New York State Police

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