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**Section: THREE  
Chapter: NINETEEN**

**SUBJECT:** Preliminary Investigations  
**ISSUE DATE:** 03-19-16  
**REFERENCE:** NYS 40.1

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**I. PURPOSE**

- A. To increase the effectiveness of the Palmyra Police Department's investigative efforts.
- B. To define the components of the preliminary investigation process and to establish responsibility and accountability for that process.
- C. To concentrate the investigative activities based upon definable and locatable factors (solvability), which have proven effective in offense solution and offender conviction.
- D. To concentrate follow up investigative resources on cases which indicate the best-proven potential for solution.

**II. DEFINITION**

- A. The preliminary investigation process is the aggregate of specific and documented activities performed by officers immediately after an offense is brought to their attention. During this initial phase, the majority of case solving information is developed, qualified and the offense solvability factors can be determined. The quality of the preliminary investigative effort and the accurate reporting of that effort directly affect the investigative outcome.

**III. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Patrol personnel shall:
  - 1. The primary officer assigned to respond to a reported incident will immediately, but cautiously, proceed to the scene of the incident, being alert for the suspect or suspect vehicle. The primary officer may only divert from the scene of the incident when authorized to do so by a supervisor.
  - 2. Upon arrival, provide aid and comfort the victim and secure the scene to protect physical evidence.
  - 3. Transmit to other units information of immediate relevance directed at intercepting the suspect or suspect vehicle.
  - 4. Direct investigative efforts to the search for the solvability factors.
  - 5. Obtain and record complete description of the crime and property, if taken (serial numbers, model, colors, damage, etc.).
  - 6. Be prepared to spend sufficient time to conduct a through preliminary investigation with out neglecting other police duties. The preliminary investigation process will be tailored to the gravity and character of the offense.

7. Obtain the necessary information to accurately complete a New York State Incident Report. Be sure to supply sufficient contact information so that victims and witnesses can be located for follow up.
8. Obtain any information that could lead to the identification of a suspect.
9. In any investigation of a reported felony offense, the primary officer will attempt to obtain a supporting deposition that can be used as part of an accusatory instrument in the event of an arrest.
10. Physical evidence shall be photographed and gathered by a crime scene officer. The seriousness of the offense will determine if that process needs to be done immediately, requires the services of a technician or an investigator or if the reporting officer can process the scene.

B. Supervisory personnel

1. Supervisory personnel will review the initial report and quality of the
2. investigation.
3. The supervisor will insure that the report is complete and accurate.
4. Criminal cases require all pertaining documents be copied to a case file and placed in the approved intake for supervisor review.
5. The supervisor shall monitor the progress of an investigation, ensuring that evidence and processes will be admissible and will lead to a prosecutable case.

By order of

David B. Smith  
Chief of Police