

CAMBRIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Title: *FIELD INTERVIEWS*

Procedure: 4.032

Date Issued:

Revised:

PURPOSE:

To identify suspicious persons and their possible association with criminal activity.

POLICY:

It is imperative that police departments adopt aggressive measures for the prevention of crime and the apprehension of criminals. Field interviews are endorsed by the Police Department as an appropriate technique to deter and identify criminals.

LAW:

Temporary questioning without arrest

A peace officer, after having identified himself as a peace officer, may stop any person in a public place for a reasonable period of time when the officer reasonably infers from the circumstances that the person is committing, is about to commit or has committed an offense and may demand the name and address of the person and an explanation of their actions. Such detention and temporary questioning will be conducted near where the person was stopped.

Search during temporary questioning

When a peace officer has stopped a person for temporary questioning and reasonably suspects that he or another is in danger of attack, he may search the person for weapons. If the officer discovers a weapon, he may take it until the completion of the questioning, at which time he shall either return the weapon, if lawfully possessed, or arrest the person so questioned.

PROCEDURE:

1. When an officer has a reasonable suspicion of possible criminal activity he may stop an individual. The standard of reasonable suspicion is substantially lower than the requirement of probable cause. However, the reasonable suspicion must be

based upon objective circumstances that led the officer to suspect possible criminal activity and possible involvement by the suspect.

2. When determining the appropriateness of field interviews the officer should evaluate contributing factors including suspicious behavior, time of day, the actions of the person, the circumstances of the moment, and the general awareness of crime in the areas.

3. When stopping a suspicious person or vehicle the following will apply:

Notify communications of the location of the stop and a brief description of the person(s);

if a vehicle is involved give a brief description of the vehicle, license number and number of occupants; and,

the communications operator will dispatch a backup unit to assist in the field stop, unless the officer indicated that a backup is not necessary.

4. Field interview stops will normally be concluded in one of three ways:

The officer's original suspicion is unfounded and no Field Interview Report (FIR) is required.

probable cause for an arrest is established and the offender is taken into custody and the arrest report makes a Field Interview Report unnecessary; or

there is a doubt about the person stopped but the officer does not have grounds for a legal arrest so a Field Interview Report is completed.

5. When completing a Field Interview Report the officer will obtain as much information as possible. Since the requirement of reasonable suspicion to stop must be based on objective grounds, officers should be reminded to specifically record the objective grounds, along with any other specific conduct of the subject that contributed to the officer's suspicion, in the appropriate space on the FIR.

6. On all citizen contact stops, when a FIR is completed, the officer should request the communications operator to initiate a case report number and advise when the stop is complete. All FIRS from a single stop may be logged under the same case report number.

7. Completed FIRS will be turned in to the shift supervisor who will review them for accuracy, completeness and whether the FIR is in compliance with the Department's policy. All FIRS will be initialed by the supervisor and then forwarded in compliance with reporting procedures.

8. Field Interview Reports will be routed to the Criminal Investigation Division supervisor for review.

9. Field Interview Reports will be returned to the records center for filing.

10. Field Interview Reports will be purged three (3) years from the date of the initial contact.