

	SECTION:	SERVICES	SER-351
	CHAPTER:	PROGRAMS AND ASSIGNMENTS	
	DIRECTIVE:	FORENSIC INVESTIGATORS	

351.01 SUMMARY

This directive describes the guidelines and duties of personnel assigned collateral duties as Forensic Investigators (F.I.). Forensic Investigators provide the Department with special skills and equipment relating to the identification, documentation, preservation and collection of physical evidence. F.I.s can also provide skills and tools for the collection and preservation of a variety of evidence including: photography, trace evidence, footprint casting, tool marks, blood evidence, gun shot residue (GSR), firearms, latent fingerprints and diagramming.

351.02 RESPONSIBILITIES OF F.I.

EVAUATE THE SCENE – The F.I. will evaluate the crime scene when called to assist and will determine if he/she has the resources and skills necessary to properly process the evidence or crime scene. The F.I. will inform the on-duty supervisor of any additional resources needed to properly secure and process the scene.

FOLLOW PROCEDURES – The collection of evidence will follow established procedures and Department policy as described in the “**Evidence-Collection and Preservation**” (SER-227) directive. In addition, the F.I. will coordinate activity with other personnel or agencies to facilitate a coordinated investigation of the incident.

351.03 FUNCTION OF THE F.I.

ADVANCED TRAINING – The F.I. will be trained in a variety of specialized evidence collection techniques utilizing special equipment.

- Equipment is stored and available for the F.I. in the Crime Lab Vehicle to facilitate timely responses to crime scenes.
- Lab personnel will be notified by the F.I. before the Crime Lab Vehicle is taken from the Department by F.I. (s) during normal business hours.

ASSIST PATROL OFFICERS – An F.I. may be called to assist with the documentation, process and collect specific item(s) or evidence when the Patrol Officer cannot properly process the evidence with available equipment.

**FUNCTION OF THE F.I.
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PROCESSING MAJOR SCENES – An F.I. may be assigned to process violent crime scenes or complex crime scenes at the direction of a Supervisor when these crime scenes are beyond the training and abilities of Patrol Officers to handle.

- On-duty F.I. (s) should be utilized prior to the utilization of off-duty personnel. A Supervisor will approve any request for off-duty personnel.
- The assigned F.I. will assess the crime scene to determine if the scene can be properly processed with the resources available.
- An F.I. assigned a crime scene may utilize other F.I. (s) or request Lab personnel who have special expertise or skills needed to properly process the scene. The F.I. will notify the on duty Supervisor if additional personnel are needed.

DEATH SCENES – An F.I. may be called to all unanticipated, suspicious or accidental death scenes to assist the Patrol Officer and Supervisor to evaluate the need for additional investigation. A Supervisor may assign F.I. (s) as needed.

VIOLENT CRIME SCENE – F.I. (s) assigned to assist Detectives in processing a violent crime scene or other complex scene shall be under the general direction of an Investigations or Lab Supervisor until the evidentiary duties are completed.

- The Investigations or Lab Manager will keep the F.I.'s normal duty Supervisor informed of when the F.I. (s) may be released to normal duty operations.
- F.I. (s) may be utilized to support lab personnel in major crime scene investigations that are beyond the available manpower resources of the Lab.

351.04 F.I. COORDINATOR

SUPERVISOR OF F.I. PROGRAM – An F.I. Coordinator will be assigned to the F.I. program to plan continued training, ensure proficiency standards, coordinate related activities, and assist with any problem resolution regarding the program. The Chief of Police or designee will appoint the F.I. Coordinator as needed.

