

Chapter 1 - Criminal Investigation: An Overview

1. What term is used to describe a legislative act relating to prohibited conduct, and attaching a penalty or punishment to that conduct?

- a. *criminal statute*
- b. *ordinance*
- c. *elements of the crime*
- d. *certiorari*

ANSWER: a

2. On the scene of a criminal investigation, what should always be protected from the elements by being covered, until photographing and measuring can be done?

- a. *evidence*
- b. *minutiae*
- c. *testimony*
- d. *latent investigation*

ANSWER: a

3. Investigators that are working in what division often have more lenient standards of physical appearance and are allowed to have things such as having tattoos or body piercings?

- a. *undercover*
- b. *patrol*
- c. *Crime scene investigations*
- d. *victim advocacy*

ANSWER: a

4. The preferred method that a criminal uses when they are committing a crime is known as _____:

- a. *modus operandi.*
- b. *mens rea.*
- c. *ex parte.*
- d. *Amicus curiae.*

ANSWER: a

5. A fact is:

- a. *an action, an event, a circumstance, or an actual thing done.*
- b. *a process of reasoning.*
- c. *an action based on the known facts.*
- d. *a personal belief*

ANSWER: a

6. An inference is a(n):

- a. *form of probability error*
- b. *process of reasoning by which a fact may be deduced.*
- c. *coincidence and meaningless to investigators.*
- d. *expectation of guilt.*

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ANSWER:

b

7. Securing the crime scene is a major responsibility of the:

- a. dispatchers.
- b. forensic specialists.
- c. first officer(s) on the scene.
- d. field supervisor.

ANSWER:

c

8. Spontaneous statements uttered by individuals at the time of a crime, concerning and closely related to actions involved in the crime, are referred to as what type of statements?

- a. ~~in flagrante delicto~~
- b. ~~exculpatory~~
- c. ~~res gestae~~
- d. ~~mediating~~

ANSWER:

c

9. At a death scene, what is of immediate concern?

- a. relocating the body
- b. identifying the body
- c. preserving the scene
- d. determining the cause of death

ANSWER:

c

10. Crime mapping focuses on:

- a. hot spots, or the location, where crime occurs.
- b. factors.
- c. the use of maps to direct officers to the scene.
- d. the individual criminal and their subsequent activity.

ANSWER:

a

11. Which statement is one of the four basic principles of CompStat?

- a. a clear and concise focus on exculpatory evidence.
- b. disposition of information
- c. the use of intuition to increase solvability factors.
- d. relentless follow-up and assessment

ANSWER:

d

12. The act of sifting through a plethora of available, and often overwhelming information to find the data that pertains to an investigator's case is referred to as:

- a. data dumping.
- b. data diving

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- c. data banking.
- d. data mining.

ANSWER:

d

13. The initial contact with a police agency is usually made between a citizen and a(n):

- a. patrol officer.
- b. detective
- c. dispatcher.
- d. investigator.

ANSWER:

c

14. The initial response by law enforcement crucial to as most cases are lost within how many hours of the start of the investigation?

- a. Within the first hour
- b. Within the first 24 hours
- c. Within the first 48 hours
- d. Within the first 72 hours

ANSWER:

a

15. What type of response time from law enforcement is necessary to increase the probability of arrest at the scene?

- a. one minute or less
- b. three to five minutes
- c. 5 to 10 minutes
- d. law enforcement response time is not correlated with probability of arrest.

ANSWER:

a

16. Whose staff can provide information and advice to investigators about legal issues, search and seizure, warrants, confessions, and admissibility of evidence?

- a. defense counsel
- b. ACLU
- c. prosecutor
- d. federal task force

ANSWER:

c

17. Medical examiners and coroners (ME/C) have the authority to investigate deaths and determine whether they were:

- a. natural
- b. accidental
- c. the result of a criminal act
- d. all of these choices

ANSWER:

d

18. Which approach to case investigation involves using specialists in various fields from within a particular jurisdiction?

- a. multijurisdictional

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- b. multidisciplinary
- c. multipredictory
- d. multicriminalistic

ANSWER:

b

19. According to the National Institute of Justice, a case is considered “backlogged” after a case has been submitted to the lab and sat untested for how many days?

- a. 7 days
- b. 30 days
- c. 60 days
- d. 90 days

ANSWER:

b

20. What type of crime is considered the most serious type of crime, and is punishable by a sentence of more than one year in prison, and in some states, even death?

- a. Misdemeanor
- b. Felony
- c. Ordinance Violation
- d. Civil Liability

ANSWER:

b

21. Experiments have shown that the initial investigations by patrol officers can be as effective as those conducted by specialists, like detectives.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER:

True

22. Investigators must remain detached and uninvolved, otherwise the problems of those with whom they are in contact, will decrease their ability to remain objective.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER:

True

23. The first goal of the investigator is to assess whether the evidence corroborates a specific offense.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER:

True

24. A fact is an action, an event, a circumstance, or an actual thing done. In contrast, an inference is a process of reasoning by which a fact may be deduced.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER:

True

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25. It is more difficult to expand the perimeter of a crime scene than it is to make the crime scene smaller.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

26. Locard's principle of exchange states that when objects come in contact with one another, there is always a transfer of material (however small) between those two objects.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

27. The media has a constitutional right to enter any crime scene to which the general public does not have access.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

28. It is common for crime victims to misclassify what has occurred.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

29. Today the majority of law enforcement agencies use some degree of geographic information systems (GISs) or mapping technology to locate callers and to provide first responders with critical information before arriving on the scene.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

30. Before any in-custody interrogation, an officer must read the *Miranda* warning to a suspect.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

31. In a community policing paradigm, investigators rely heavily on assistance from numerous other individuals, agencies, and liaisons.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

32. Community policing is best defined as philosophy that addresses public safety issues (such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime) by working through organizational strategies to support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively respond to public safety issues

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: True

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33. If a suspect is known, or has confessed, an investigator is not required to prove the elements of the crime nor establish evidence connecting the suspect with the criminal act.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

34. Scientific evidence supports a belief that eyewitness identification is very credible and reliable.

- a. True
- b. False

ANSWER: False

35. What is the name of the world's largest police organization, consisting of 194 member countries, providing investigators in agencies worldwide with current crime trend information?

- a. INTERPOL
- b. DHS
- c. ATF
- d. DEA

ANSWER: a

36. What member of the investigative team is usually the first to arrive at a crime scene and often has the unique opportunity to observe the crime scene before it is disturbed?

- a. Patrol Officer
- b. Detective
- c. Crime Scene Investigator/Criminalist
- d. Assistant District Attorney

ANSWER: a

37. Probation and parole officers might be good sources of information for investigators for which of the following reasons?

- a. They may be able to provide valuable information on repeat offenders
- b. They often have advanced photography training and can assist with crime scene investigation
- c. They often have advanced degrees in criminal psychology and can provide insight as to an offender's psychological profile.
- d. None of these because probation and parole officers are rarely sought as sources of information.

ANSWER: a

38. Rossmo (2009) identified the reasons behind criminal investigative failure, and grouped faulty thinking into three general categories. Which category attempts to explain mental errors, such as the investigator having "tunnel vision?"

- a. Cognitive Bias
- b. Organizational Traps
- c. Probability Errors
- d. Organizational Failures

ANSWER: a

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39. Investigators learn to recognize when a case is unsolvable, but only after all the _____ (or avenues bearing clues of potential sources of information relevant to solving the crime), have been exhausted.

ANSWER: _____ leads

40. Determining the _____ is more important than obtaining a conviction or closing a case.

ANSWER: _____ truth

41. Effective investigators are also _____, which means they are skilled at interacting across gender, ethnic, generational, social and political group lines.

ANSWER: _____ culturally adroit

42. What is the name, or title, given to the specialist who scientifically develops, processes, and packages all physical evidence found at the crime scene?

ANSWER: _____ Crime Scene Investigator or CSI

43. Life threatening situations, such as downed power lines, chemical spills, or detonated explosives are all examples of _____ that investigators may encounter on a scene.

ANSWER: _____ environmental hazards

44. For investigators who specialize or work on family, domestic, or child related crimes, _____ can be valuable partners in helping elicit relevant information from suspects and victims alike.

ANSWER: _____ social services

45. Shrinking police budgets and the complications of modern day crime have resulted in _____ becoming necessary to solve many crimes.

ANSWER: _____ task forces/major task forces

46. Criminals often leave _____, which is less visible evidence such as fingerprints, small particles of glass or dirt, body hairs, or clothing fibers.

ANSWER: _____ trace evidence

47. Investigators can use _____ tests to develop and lift fingerprints; discover flammable substances through vapor and fluid examination; detect drugs, explosive substances on hands or clothing, imprints of firearms on hands or bullet-hole residue; and conduct many other tests.

ANSWER: _____ field

48. *Res gestae* statements are generally an exception to the _____ rule because they are usually very closely related to facts and are therefore admissible in court.

ANSWER: _____ hearsay

49. A persons degree of risk being sued is also called their _____

ANSWER: _____ civil liability

50. What is the definition of an “investigation”?

ANSWER: An investigation is a patient, step-by-step inquiry or observation, a careful examination, a recording of evidence, or a legal inquiry.

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51. What are the primary goals of a criminal investigation?

ANSWER: The major goals of a criminal investigation are to determine whether a crime has been committed, legally obtain sufficient information and evidence to identify the responsible person, locate and arrest the suspect, recover stolen property, and present the best possible case to the prosecutor.

52. What are some physical characteristics of effective investigators?

ANSWER: Effective investigators obtain and retain information, apply technical knowledge, and remain open-minded, objective, and logical. They are emotionally well-balanced, detached, inquisitive, suspecting, discerning, self-disciplined, and persevering. Furthermore, they are physically fit and have good vision and hearing.

53. After having dealt with any emergency, what is the first and most important function of a first responder?

ANSWER: The first and most important function of a first responder is to protect the crime scene and evidence.

54. What are the officer's responsibilities during the preliminary investigation?

ANSWER: Responsibilities during the preliminary investigation include questioning victims, witnesses, and suspects; conducting a neighborhood canvass; measuring, photographing, videotaping, and sketching the scene; searching for evidence; identifying, collecting, examining, and processing physical evidence; and recording all statements and observations in notes.

55. What is the difference between crime mapping and location intelligence?

ANSWER: Using computers such as CompStat, crime mapping gives analysts and policymakers a graphic representation of crime and its related issues. Location intelligence solutions consist of a combination of software, data, and expert services that help organizations leverage spatial capabilities without the need for a GIS expert. Location intelligence includes automatic vehicle location (AVL) and global positioning systems (GPSs).

56. Discuss the advantage of geographic profiling in a criminal investigation. Include a definition of the phrase "least effort" principle in your discussion.

ANSWER: Geographic profiling is an advancement in mapping that is based on the theory that all people, including criminals, have a pattern to their lives. This pattern involves, among other things, a limited geographical area that encompasses the bulk of a person's daily activities. According to the "least effort" principle of human behavior, people travel only as far as necessary to accomplish their goals, so the most likely area for a crime is where an offender's desire for anonymity intersects with the offender's desire to stay within his or her comfort zone.

57. What are several ways to implement AVL/GPS technology in police work? In your answer, define AVL and GPS and describe their use.

ANSWER: The definition of AVL is automatic vehicle location and GPS is global positioning system. Three ways to implement AVL/GPS technology are: (1) to place a unit inside or on a police vehicle, (2) to install a unit into a laptop computer, or (3) to equip the officer's portable radio with a built-in GPS transceiver. Note: Automated vehicle location is a class of technologies designed to locate vehicles for fleet management purposes and for stolen vehicle recovery. Infrastructure can be land-based radio towers or satellites. Global positioning systems were originally designed by the Department of Defense, and are now used in a myriad of functions, including driving locations and locating lost pets or children. Police now can place locators on suspects' vehicles to track their movements.

58. Clarify the role and relationship investigators should have with the media, and explain why this role is necessary.

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ANSWER: A healthy relationship with the media fosters a positive relationship with the general public. Dealing with the media is inevitable, and investigators should keep those dealings positive and professional. They depend on one another and have a mutual need for cooperation. Police rely on the media to disseminate news about wanted suspects, to seek witnesses, and to convey important information quickly to the public.

59. What is the purpose of case screening?

ANSWER: Case screening is used to help determine solvability factors and whether to continue with an investigation.

60. What is the role of medical examiners and coroners?

ANSWER: Medical examiners and coroners' offices provide death investigation services. These officers are responsible for the medicolegal investigation of deaths. They may conduct death scene investigations, perform autopsies, and determine the cause and manner of death when a person has died as a result of violence, under suspicious circumstances, without a physician in attendance, or for other reasons.

61. What four elements are included in protection against lawsuits?

ANSWER: Protection against lawsuits includes effective policies and procedures clearly communicated to all, thorough and continuous training, proper supervision and discipline, and accurate, thorough police reports.

62. What legal statute states that anyone who acts under the authority of law and who violates another person's constitutional rights can be sued?

ANSWER: Most civil lawsuits brought against law enforcement officers are based on Statute 42 of the U.S. Code, Section 1983, also called the Civil Rights Act. This Act, passed in 1871, was designed to prevent the abuse of constitutional rights by officers who "under color of state law" denied defendants those rights.

63. Define the term exculpatory evidence.

ANSWER: Exculpatory evidence is evidence that may be favorable to the accused.

64. As a police investigator, what is one of the best ways to avoid lawsuits or to defend oneself if sued?

ANSWER: The police investigator should keep complete, accurate records of all official actions he or she takes.