

Cold Case Investigations

1139.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a procedure for the investigation of major Cold Cases.

1139.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the University of Maryland, Baltimore Police Department (UMBPD) that all major cases involving a death, assault, arson or other crimes that carry no statute of limitations, will be investigated until solved.

1139.2.1 DEFINITIONS

Cold Case - Any major criminal investigation that has not been solved for a period of at least one year and has been closed to active follow-up will be designated as a Cold Case.

Major Investigation - Any criminal case investigated by the UMBPD or jointly investigated that is a felony and has no statute of limitations assigned to it is categorized as a major case.

1139.3 BACKGROUND

1139.3.1 REASONS FOR UNSOLVED CASES

There are many reasons for an unsolved case including a lack of appropriate technology sufficient to identify a suspect, uncooperative witnesses, lack of leads, etc. As a result, it is often the case that no further information is available to continue an investigation and the case becomes cold.

1139.3.2 FOLLOW UP INVESTIGATIONS

Upon receiving a major case, the assigned detective will investigate all available leads until the case is solved. If no new information is received after a period of one year, the case will be classified as a Cold Case and remain 'open' but closed to 'active' (daily) follow up until new information is developed. If a new case becomes 'cold' while assigned to a detective, the assigned investigator will remain on the case during their tenure in the Investigations Division. Upon the original investigator being transferred from the Investigations Division, the case will be reassigned to another investigator for continued follow-up.

1139.4 COLD CASE FILES

1139.4.1 STORAGE OF INVESTIGATIVE FILES

A Cold Case file will remain in the files of the Investigations Division while inactive. Case files will be held in a secure locked cabinet inside the Investigations Division when not in use. Restricted access to these files will be limited to ID personnel. Cold Cases will remain in the CID office indefinitely. Outside access to the Cold Case files can only occur upon the approval of the Chief of Police or authorized designee.

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1139.4.2 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Investigations Division Supervisor will assign Cold Cases to investigators for follow-up using the experience of the investigator, area of expertise and training, current caseload, new information and technology available, existing evidence and its quality, availability of witnesses, suspect(s,) and the original investigator, and the age of the case.

1139.4.3 TECHNOLOGY

Annually, at the discretion of the assigned investigator or whenever new information or technology (DNA) becomes available, investigators assigned to a Cold Case will review the original case files and determine if there are any new technologies available that would provide new leads.

1139.4.4 INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Investigators will enter all information on any new actions or investigations in the case files using approved UMBPD reports. In order to assist the Operations and Support Services Bureau Commanders, all reports will be prepared prior to the scheduled annual review and submitted through the Investigations Division Supervisor. The Investigations Division Supervisor or designee will maintain a log on each Cold Case where new activity has been generated by the investigator.