

GENERAL ORDER



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Title		
Handling Drug Complaints and Investigations		
Topic	Series	Number
OPS	307	01
Effective Date		
June 15, 2015		
Related to:		
GO-PER-201.01 (Non-Uniformed Assignments)		
GO-OPS- 304.12 (Confidential Sources, Confidential Informants, and Cooperating Witnesses)		
GO-SPT-601.03 (Handling and Accounting for Seized and Forfeited Property)		
GO-SPT-603.05 (Electronic Surveillance Equipment)		

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I. BACKGROUND

This order establishes the procedures to be followed by members of the force relating to the handling of drug complaints and investigations.

II. POLICY

The policy of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) is to respond and investigate all drug-related offenses using resources available within the Department, and when necessary, seek the assistance of our federal law enforcement partners for complex, cross-jurisdictional, or long-term investigations.

III. DEFINITIONS

1. Buy-bust operation – a street level narcotics enforcement operation conducted by the Narcotics and Special Investigation Division (NSID) that utilizes undercover police officers or confidential sources to purchase illegal drugs and arrest the distributors.
2. Buy-identify operation – a longer term street level narcotics operation conducted by the NSID that utilizes undercover police officers to make multiple purchases of illegal drugs in order to identify those involved, obtain arrest warrants, and arrest the distributors.

3. Drug complaints – include drug-related calls for service, drug complaints received at district stations (e.g., by phone, email, walk-in), drug complaints received from citizens by members on patrol, and anonymous tips.
4. Drug investigations – long-term or more complex drug investigations involving search warrants, undercover officers and other related tactics. These will be handled by the Narcotics and Special Investigations Division.
5. Observation post operation – an operation conducted by the NSID or PSB whereby members use discreet surveillance methods to observe illegal activity, identify and arrest the offenders.
6. Narcotics and Special Investigations Division (NSID) – the Department's division responsible for all long-term, complex, and multi-jurisdictional investigations of vice-related complaints (e.g., drugs and prostitution) and conspiracies, to include joint federal operations or task forces.
7. Search warrant buy – an operation conducted by the NSID in which a purchase of illegal drugs is made inside a location, with the goal of obtaining a search warrant for the location.

IV. REGULATIONS

- A. Patrol Services Bureau (PSB) shall be responsible for handling all drug complaints. Drug complaints include drug-related calls for service, drug complaints received at district stations (e.g., by phone, email, walk-in), and drug complaints received from citizens by members on patrol.
- B. The NSID shall be responsible for handling all drug-related investigations
Drug related investigations:
 1. Involve chronic street-level drug complaints;
 2. Occur inside a residence;
 3. Are multi-jurisdictional;
 4. Involve businesses selling synthetic drugs;
 5. Involve drug nuisance properties; or
 6. Are more complex in nature and/or require long-term resources (e.g., undercover assignments, buy-bust operations, buy-identify operations, and search warrant buy operations).

- C. The use of confidential sources, confidential informants, and cooperating witnesses by members shall be in compliance with GO-OPS-304.12 (Confidential Sources, Confidential Informants, and Cooperating Witnesses).
- D. Members who are contacted by an outside agency regarding matters pertaining to drug-related enforcement shall refer the matter to the Commander of NSID via the NSID administrative email box.
- E. Members **shall not** contact any outside agency regarding matters pertaining to drug-related enforcement without first notifying the Commander of NSID.
- F. The Command Information Center (CIC) shall be notified by an official of the involved unit of any seizures of large quantities of narcotics or assets, high profile arrests involving drug-related offenses, or other drug-related matters that may invoke media attention.

V. PROCEDURES

- A. Assignment of Drug Investigations
 - 1. PSB officials shall monitor drug complaints handled in their districts.
 - 2. When a PSB official identifies a complaint that requires investigation by NSID the official shall contact NSID via the NSID administrative email box and shall include supporting information concerning why NSID should handle the complaint.
 - 3. NSID shall be responsible for reviewing the complaints and determining if they fit the criteria for NSID follow-up/investigation.
 - 4. NSID shall notify the requesting official whether NSID will be taking responsibility for the complaint.
 - 5. NSID will notify the Commander of the originating element the results of any drug related complaint referred by members of their command.
- B. Drug Complaints Handled by NSID
 - 1. NSID administrative staff shall assign internal tracking numbers to complaints investigated by NSID and shall forward the complaint to the appropriate NSID lieutenant for investigation.
 - 2. The assigned lieutenant shall respond to the original complainant confirming the reception of the complaint.

3. The assigned lieutenant shall ensure the complaint is investigated and shall communicate investigative findings to NSID administrative staff for closure of complaint or shall request an extension as needed.
 4. NSID administrative staff shall notify the complainant of the investigative findings within seven days of the conclusion of the investigation.
- C. NSID drug related complaint files shall be classified as follows:
1. Open - current investigations.
 2. Closed - investigations that are unfounded complaints, or in which the arrest of the violator can be classified as a one-time occurrence, or inactive investigations that have been re-classified as closed. Investigations terminated by arrest will be recommended to be classified as closed by the detective or officer. If information is presented at a later date that someone else is using the same location for illegal purposes NSID will open a new investigation.
 3. Suspended – investigations that are inconclusive and are pending further information.

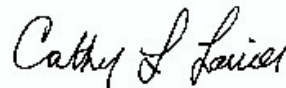
VI. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. District officials shall ensure all drug related complaints are either handled through proactive patrol enforcement or referred to NSID.
- B. District Commanders shall:
1. Address the drug related offenses occurring within the geographic area of their commands by working in close cooperation with the Commander of NSID, and discussing drug related matters periodically with him or her.
 2. Notify NSID of any large drug related seizures or arrests.
- C. The Commander of NSID shall:
1. Conduct case reviews with NSID members who are investigating open drug complaint cases.
 - a. The detective or investigator assigned to the case shall make a recommendation as to when cases are to be closed.

- b. The Commander of NSID is the only individual who can classify an investigation as “closed.”
2. Communicate regularly with district commanders relative to their drug-related offenses.
3. Conduct a monthly conference call with crime suppression team officials regarding the status of ongoing drug investigations.
4. Ensure that all drug-related investigations are completed in the MPD records management system.
5. Act as the liaison in all matters pertaining to drug-related enforcement that require communication or cooperative efforts between an organizational element of this Department and any outside agency.

VII. CROSS-REFERENCES

- A. GO-OPS-304.12 (Confidential Sources, Confidential Informants, and Cooperating Witnesses)



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