

**The Standardized Police Practice at the scene of an incident or thereafter**

1. Any person who is involved in an incident either as a victim or as a witness, can report the incident to the Police

1. Once a person contacts the Police (999: if urgent or 101: if non urgent) they can expect the following actions to be taken:

* The individual will likely be asked to give a full statement to Police (which may result in going to court to give evidence if required). This is a legal document taken on official statement documentation commonly referred to as a ‘**MG11’**. The statement should create a complete picture to the reader as to the circumstances of the incident structuring it as having a beginning, middle and end, who was involved, their descriptions, their relationships to each other, what happened as well as any list of any items stolen, damaged, persons injured etc. It is **vitally important** that you try to give your information in order of events, making sure that it is factual and concise. **\*It is often helpful to make notes of what happened after the incident, as individuals memory recall will not always allow you to remember everything all at once, so it is helpful to keep notes so that it can be put together in a timeline fashion when presenting the information to the Police.**
* A crime reference will created by the local Police force, this can be done before or after a statement is obtained. The crime reference number will be different from their initial CAD report (CAD: call centre log reference). It is **important to note** the following: What is the crime reference number and who is the investigating officer (OIC – officer in charge) and their contact number/email.
* There are certain rules and regulations that the Police must adhere to when investigating incidents. As a result of this you should expect for the investigating officer to make contact with you within 30 days of being assigned the case, as well as providing an update to you with regards to the progress of the case, actions taken etc at least once a month, as per VCOP (Victims Code of Practice).
* Any other evidence that is relevant to the investigation may be required by the Police. This may include videos or images you have taken, physical evidence for example; a hammer or cigarette bud. If this is the case **DO NOT touch the item without wearing gloves** and try to **avoid touching it in the same area where the suspect may have touched it or where the evidence is (handle etc).**

Once the initial actions have been undertaken, an investigation will commence to try and establish the identity of those responsible (if they are not already known). However, it is important to note that when dealing with those responsible for offences, there are again rules and regulations that the Police must adhere to, specifically when arresting or detaining someone. As such the Police must provide justification for arresting someone, detaining them (taking away their liberty) and taking them into custody. These reasons are covered by **PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1983) Code G** and the accepted reasons need to be chosen from a pre-existing list of reasons. (Example: prevent their disappearance, prevent further disorder or to obtain their name and address).

However, the arrest also must be considered to be reasonable and necessary in the circumstance. As such if the person responsible is identified 4 weeks later (when there is no immediate threat to the victims security, no threat of continued violence, the Police know who they are and where they live etc), then if it is deemed appropriate, there is are various ways that a suspect can be dealt with.

Once the suspect has been identified then they will need to be interviewed under caution to obtain their version of events and be given the opportunity to provide a defence to any alleged actions. This can happen in several ways, however the most common would either be:

* Arrest and interview at the Police station. This would mean placing them under arrest and taking them to custody to be interviewed under caution.
* Report for the offence and interview at the scene. This involves interviewing a person under caution at the scene (their residence, place of work etc). This is often used if its not appropriate to take the person into Police custody unnecessarily (for example; if the person was ill in hospital).
* To invite the person to attend the Police station voluntarily for an interview under caution. This is effectively the same as when a person is arrested, however on this occasion their attendance if voluntary. (They are not under arrest and free to leave at any stage).

**All 3 methods will obtain the same result (the identified suspect being interviewed about the offence under caution); however in each case the method in which they obtain this result is dependant on the circumstances. It is worth noting that if the person is not arrested, do not think that the Police are not taking action. It may just be that another option was chosen. This should be explained to you by the investigating officer, however it is always helpful to understand what these things involve.**

1. After the interview has been completed and the evidence has been obtained, the Police will collate this and present it as a completed ‘case file’, which is laid out in a standardized national format.
2. Once the ‘case file’ has been completed then the evidence will be presented to the CPS (Crown Prosecution Service) or the relevant Police force’s equivalent of the CJU (Criminal Justice Unit). To decision that is made is surrounding how to deal with the offending party. If the evidence that is obtained supports it, a decision can be made to charge the person to court, caution them or event issue them with a financial penalty, these decisions are referred as ‘disposal decisions’.  These decisions are made based on a variety of factors which include the suspects offending history, the strength of the evidence and their previous offending history.
3. If the decision is made to issue the person with a caution, issue a financial penalty or even discontinue the case, the investigating officer should contact the victim or witness to advise them of (a) the decision made and (b) the reasoning behind the decision.
4. If the decision is made to charge, then the case will be put before the local magistrate’s court and the process will follow its course from there.
5. A member of the Criminal Justice Unit (CJU) or equivalent in the local force will be the direct liaison between the victim and/or witness to provide them with updates on how the case progresses, if they are required in court (depending on the quality of the evidence provided) and the outcome etc.
6. From the perspective of EEAST, the support that is needed and offered will offered at local supervisory level by their respective LOM or equivalent, with the correct level of support being provided to the victim as per EEAST’s standard policies and practices.