



ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT
GENERAL ORDERS

SOP 1-27 (Formerly 5-3)

Effective: 01/17/2023 Review: 01/17/2024 Replaces: 04/08/2021

1-27 COLD CASE UNIT

Related SOP(s), Form(s), Other Resource(s) and Rescinded Special Order(s):

A. Related SOP(s)

[2-74 Submission of Cases to the District Attorney \(Formerly 2-39\)](#)

B. Form(s)

None

C. Other Resource(s)

None

D. Rescinded Special Order(s)

None

1-27-1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the requirements for all Cold Cases in which the primary investigator has exhausted all leads.

1-27-2 Policy

It is the policy of the Albuquerque Police Department (Department) to establish a unit dedicated to reviewing cold cases using the skill of specialized investigators who will carefully and thoroughly review cold cases and evaluate to see if recent technological advancements or other forensic techniques could lead to the identification of the person responsible.

N/A 1-27-3 Definitions

A. Clearance

The closing of a case where an individual has been arrested and the case turned over to a prosecutor's office or the individual cannot be arrested or prosecuted due to their death or lack of extradition to our jurisdiction for prosecution.

B. Cold Case

An unsolved homicide investigation in which the primary investigator has exhausted all leads.

7 1-27-4 Rules and Responsibilities



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A. Cold Case Unit personnel shall:

1. Maintain all files of Cold Cases in a secure environment;
2. Update the Cold Case Checklist with any new information pertinent to the Cold Case;
3. Maintain Cold Cases in the case management system for information tracking, and crime analysis;
4. Assume case responsibility for reopened Cold Cases and conduct follow-up investigation, including, but not limited to, interviewing or re-interviewing witnesses, informants, or suspects;
5. Notify the primary detective, if this individual is still working for the Department, when a Cold Case is investigated and give the detective periodic progress updates;
 - a. Under circumstances as determined by the Cold Case Unit Sergeant, a case may be returned to the original detective for investigation or completion.
6. Prepare and submit a monthly activity report as designed by the division commander;
7. Assist sworn personnel, the District Attorney, or other agencies in documenting and directing information concerning Cold Cases;
8. Analyze Cold Cases with any new and available forensic technologies, where appropriate;
9. Correspond with other agencies within New Mexico and throughout the nation, regarding Cold Cases;
10. Collaborate with support organizations;
11. Assist other homicide or violent crime-investigating units (e.g., Armed Robbery Unit, Crimes Against Children Unit, etc.) within the Criminal Investigations Division (CID), when necessary;
12. Collaborate with the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) on all unsolved missing persons cases, which are maintained in the Cold Case Unit; and
13. For Cold Case Unit Detectives, be in an on-call status.

B. The Cold Case Unit Sergeant shall:



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1. Conduct a case review of incoming Cold Cases, including the Cold Case Checklist, to ensure that all leads have been exhausted before accepting the case;
2. Send the case to the Violent Crimes Section Lieutenant for clearance; and
3. Confirm clearance by the Violent Crimes Section Lieutenant before accepting the file.

C. Leads and Investigative Tips

1. As leads develop and investigative tips are received, the Cold Case Unit shall report the information to the Cold Case Unit Sergeant, when necessary, and conduct follow-up investigations.
2. The Cold Case Unit Detective shall:
 - a. Update the Cold Case Checklist and notify the Cold Case Unit Sergeant of a lead and an investigative tip within seventy-two (72) hours;
 - b. Complete a Supplemental Report, which shall be included with the Cold Case file, documenting the outcome of the lead and investigative tip; and
 - c. Should the lead or tip result in a cleared Cold Case or arrest, complete the Cold Case, consistent with SOP Submission of Cases to the District Attorney.