


NORTHAMPTON POLICE DEPARTMENT Administration & Operations Manual		
Policy: Vice, Drugs and Organized Crime		AOM: O-425
Massachusetts Police Accreditation Standards Referenced: [43.1.2], [43.1.1.a], [43.1.1.b], [43.1.1.c], [43.1.3], [43.1.1.d]		Issuing Authority <hr/> Jody Kasper Chief of Police
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I. Introductory Discussion

Vice, drugs, and organized crime investigations are often extremely lengthy and complex in nature, and are likely to require the use of extraordinary investigative techniques. This directive establishes department policy and guidelines relative to the investigation of organized crime, drug, and vice investigations.

II. Definitions

- A. Vice Crimes: Vice crimes as defined as those crimes that involve prostitution, the illegal sale/use of alcoholic beverages, illegal gambling, or distribution or sale of obscene or pornographic material in violation of the law.
- B. Drug Control Investigations: These investigations focus on the distribution and sale of illegal and controlled substances, and are typically more far reaching and

complex than those arrests made for simple possession or use. They focus more on networks and distribution rather than private use possession cases.

- C. Organized Crime Investigations: Those cases that involve investigation into unlawful activities that are organized and businesslike in nature, and involve members of organized groups or associations. Typically these groups are highly organized and secretive, and the criminal activities range from extortion, illegal gambling, theft, and racketeering to the supply of illegal goods and services such as prostitution, drugs, liquor, and weapons. The nature of these organized offenses may also involve the intentional intimidation and corruption of officials in positions of authority.

III. Investigative Authority

- A. The Detective Bureau has organizational responsibility to conduct and manage all organized crime, vice, and drug trafficking/control operations.
 - 1. Although all sworn personnel have general investigative responsibilities in criminal investigations, the nature of drug control and drug trafficking investigations, organized crime investigations, and vice investigations will frequently require an investigative effort beyond the time constraints, scheduling capabilities and manpower assignment requirements of patrol shifts.
- B. All records and reports relating to active organized crime, drug, and vice operations shall be securely filed within the Detective Bureau and maintained separate from the central records system. [43.1.2]
- C. Once a month, the Detective Lieutenant shall inform the Chief of Police, or their designee; in person or in writing, concerning Vice, Drugs, and/or Organized Crime activities.

IV. Information Processing and Case Initiation [43.1.1, a]

- A. Information regarding organized, vice, or drug related crime may be received from a variety of sources, both within and outside of the department.
 - 1. Regardless of how criminal intelligence information is received, this information shall be documented via standard reporting procedures. A case number shall be assigned and all information shall be documented within a report. Refer to *[AOM 0424 Managing Intelligence Information](#)*. [43.1.1, b]
- B. In cases where there is an initial criminal investigation or complaint handled by patrol officers, where the preliminary investigation points to indicators of organized crime or criminal activity best investigated by the Detective Bureau, the Officer-in-Charge of the shift should recommend the case be re-assigned to the

Detective Bureau.

C. In cases where the original information, regardless of whether obtained from a known informant or member of the public, indicates organized criminal activity, the handling of the information intake process will immediately shift to the Detective Bureau.

D. In all cases, the department member receiving the information should attempt to obtain the following: [43.1.1,a]

1. Name, date of birth, sex, race, and occupation of the informer.
2. The extent of the knowledge/participation of the informer.
3. How the informer obtained the information.
4. Name, date of birth, sex, race, address, occupation, and vehicles owned or operated by the suspect(s).
5. The routine of the suspect(s) (i.e. personal life, social spots, habits etc.)
6. The routine of the suspect's illicit activity.
7. Location of the illicit activity.
8. Participants in the illicit activity.
9. Relatives, friends, and co-conspirators of the suspect.
10. Timeliness of the information (from the occurrence of the activity to the time of the report).

E. After the information has been obtained, the person receiving the report should attempt to verify as much of the information as possible and incorporate that information into the initial report.

1. Verifications may be made through investigative checks of the following:

- a. department records
- b. state, local, and federal criminal history records
- c. motor vehicle registrations
- d. motor vehicles license
- e. department intelligence records/files
- f. surveillance

F. Once the report has been received by the Detective Bureau Commander, the report shall be assigned for active investigation on a priority basis. Complaints shall be evaluated for police action based upon the severity and magnitude of the alleged violations as well as the impact or potential impact of the violation on the community.

V. Organized Crime/Vice Records [43.1.1, b]

A. The Detective Bureau Commander shall ensure that "active" and "unconfirmed" case files for organized crime and vice complaints are properly maintained and are kept separate from one another.

1. Active case files shall consist of those complaints that have been determined as valid. Active cases which have been assigned for investigation shall be categorized as “confidential” and filed as such.
2. Unconfirmed case files shall consist of complaints which cannot be validated.
 - a. Unconfirmed files shall be maintained for future corroborating information. If the information is later validated, the files shall become active and assigned accordingly.
 - b. The Detective Bureau Commander shall review and purge unconfirmed cases periodically at their discretion. Electronic files shall be electronically purged and any hard copies shall be shredded.

VI. Information Exchange [43.1.1,c]

- A. A record of organized crime/vice information received from or conveyed to any outside agency is made through the normal field reporting system.
 1. Employees receiving or providing any information to outside agencies shall document such transactions in accordance with *AOM 0424 Managing Intelligence Information*.

VII. Use of Background Investigations

- A. When investigating organized, vice, or drug related crimes, it may be necessary to conduct background checks of any suspects that may be involved in the activity. When conducting background investigations, the following shall be considered:
 1. All background investigations shall be conducted strictly for purposes of the criminal investigation;
 2. Any information obtained shall be marked “confidential” and shall be accessible only to those personnel directly involved in the investigation;
 3. All background information shall be stored with their case files and shall be maintained in accordance with the procedures set forth above.
- B. Background information can be obtained through the following sources:
 1. Information from persons (i.e. witnesses, informants, custodian of records, fellow officers, etc.).
 2. Records of business and financial institutions (i.e. banks, real estate agencies, credit agencies, hospital records, transportation company records, etc.).
 3. State and local law enforcement agency records.
 4. Federal government records (i.e. DEA, FBI, NCIC, etc.).
 5. Federal and state court records

6. State, county and municipal government records (i.e. birth, death and marriage certificates, license information, tax returns, wills, etc.)

Note: For a complete and detailed account of the sources available for conducting background investigations, refer to the *Police Background Investigations Manual* located in the office of the Operations Division Commander.

VIII. Surveillance, Undercover and Raid Operations [43.1.5]

- A. Surveillance, Undercover, and Raid Operations are often critical to the success of organized crime, vice, and drug investigations.
- B. These operations require careful planning and operational coordination and shall be conducted as provided in ***AOM 0425tb1 Surveillance, Undercover & Raid Operations***, immediately following this chapter.
- C. Personnel assigned to special operations shall be supplied with expense funds or reimbursed for expenditures made which were required to properly and safely conduct operations of a vice, drug, or organized crime investigation. Refer to ***AOM 0423 Confidential Funds***. [43.1.3]

IX. Reporting of Confidential Investigations [43.1.1,d]

The Detective Bureau Commander shall periodically verbally inform the Operations Division Commander and the Chief of Police of ongoing vice, drug or organized crime investigations.