




# City of Manassas Police Department General Duty Manual



Effective Date: 10-12-2007	<b>GENERAL ORDER</b>	Number: 07-08
Subject: Interview Room Procedures		
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Accreditation Standards: 42.2.10	By Authority Of:  Douglas W. Keen, Chief of Police	Total Pages: 2

## PURPOSE:

The purpose of this General Order is to identify the operating procedures and the expected work performance in the Investigative Services Division, specifically the interview and interrogation room(s).

## POLICY:

It is the policy of the Police Department to provide a location that enables Detectives and Officers to conduct interviews in a safe and timely manner. It also provides a guideline for an environment that meets the needs of suspects, witnesses, and victims during the investigation.

## DISCUSSION:

The rights of an individual during a custodial and non-custodial interrogation are a key element in procedure and Constitutional Law. The method that law enforcement uses in dealing with citizens suspected of crimes includes direct questioning and the environment at the time the questioning occurs. This General Order provides a basis that ensures that all officers understand their responsibilities while interviewing or interrogating a citizen.

## PROCEDURE:

### I. Interview Room Procedure

The Investigative Services Division interview rooms may be utilized by any MCPD officer for both custodial interrogations of arrestees and non-custodial interviews with witnesses, victims, or suspects. The rooms can also be used by officers from outside agencies so long as a MCPD sworn supervisor is aware that they are using the room. The basic responsibility for the safety and security of persons brought into ISD remains with the original officer unless relieved by a detective. The interview room is equipped with an emergency button that activates an alarm in Communications. Officers/Detectives may also utilize their emergency button on their portables in case of an emergency during the interview process. The following procedures shall apply to all MCPD officers who utilize the interview rooms.

#### A. Custodial Interrogations

1. All prisoners will be thoroughly searched for weapons, contraband, and evidence prior to being placed in the interview room.
2. There will be no more than (3) Detectives/Officers in the room with the suspect during the interview/interrogation.
3. Each prisoner will be placed in a separate area prior to being interviewed.
4. Prisoners will be handcuffed prior to being placed in the interview room. Handcuffs may be removed at the discretion of the officer having physical custody of the prisoner. If there is any doubt as to officer safety, the handcuffs will remain in place. At no time will prisoners be secured to any object in the interview rooms.
5. The interview rooms are not prisoner holding cells. If a prisoner is left alone in an interview room, visual contact will be maintained through an open door, the two way mirrors or electronic surveillance.

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6. The arresting officer will ensure that the human needs of persons placed in the interview rooms are met (restroom, water, food, etc.)
  7. **No firearms are allowed in the interview rooms when a suspect is being questioned. Lock boxes are provided above the storage cabinets in ISD.**
  8. For fire safety reasons, cigarette lighters and matches will be removed from prisoners placed in an interview room.
  9. The emergency buttons located in the interview room are to be utilized to summon assistance in the event of an emergency.
- B. **Non-custodial** interviews
1. If in the opinion of the officer, a frisk for weapons is necessary, he should ask the suspect or witness to consent to the frisk.
  2. Witnesses/Victims may be left alone in the interview rooms though visual contact should be maintained through an open door, the two way mirrors or electronic surveillance.
- C. **Interview Room Maintenance**
1. The interview rooms shall be left clean. No forms or other documents shall be stored in the interview rooms.
  2. Prior to and after utilizing an interview room, the officer shall visually check the room for the presence of weapons, contraband, and evidence.
  3. Any failure of the recording devices shall be reported to the ISD supervisor immediately.
    - A. A digital audio recorder should be utilized as a backup in the event the existing camera system malfunctions.

These procedures apply to all users of the ISD interview rooms. It is the responsibility of all members of the Division to assure that these procedures are followed. These procedures will be posted in a prominent place near the interview room area.

Attachments: N/A.

Index as: Interview Room.  
Custodial Interrogations.  
Non-Custodial Interviews.

References: N/A.