

Sexual Assault Investigations

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SEX CRIMES UNIT
AUSTIN POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Austin PD Adult Sex Crimes

- ▶ Unit Members
 - ▶ Two sergeants and thirteen detectives
 - ▶ Two victim services counselors and one victim service supervisor
 - ▶ One part time assistant district attorney (Travis County)
 - ▶ One crime analyst
 - ▶ One administrative assistant
- ▶ Victims age 17 and older
- ▶ Multi-disciplinary approach
 - ▶ SARRT
 - ▶ SafePlace
 - ▶ Community based advocates

Felony Title Codes



- ▶ Sexual Assault (Penal Code)/ Rape (UCR)
- ▶ Attempted Offenses
- ▶ Aggravated Offenses
- ▶ Improper Video/Photography
- ▶ Burglary of Habitation with intent to commit Sexual Assault

Misdemeanor Title Codes

- ▶ Indecent Exposure
- ▶ Public Lewdness
- ▶ Assault by Contact/Sexual Nature
- ▶ Disclosure of Visual Material
- ▶ DOC Exposure
- ▶ DOC Window Peeping

Backlog DNA/CODIS Cases

- ▶ One detective/One victim service counselor assigned to work only CODIS returns
- ▶ Labs where cases have been sent to
 - ▶ DPS
 - ▶ FBI
 - ▶ BODE
 - ▶ DANY

Initial Response

- ▶ Communications/911
 - ▶ Victim calls 9-1-1 makes report
 - ▶ May be a “delayed” report
- ▶ Patrol Response/Assessment
 - ▶ Report taken
 - ▶ Contacts on-call detective
- ▶ Crisis Team Counselor
 - ▶ Initial response for crisis counseling / hospital
 - ▶ Victim service counselor assigned for remainder of case

Detective Response

- ▶ Detective Notification
 - ▶ Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (SAFE's) approvals/arrange SAFE's at SafePlace
 - ▶ Guidance to patrol officers on scene
 - ▶ From information receive determine if response to crime scene is needed

Detective on scene

- ▶ Possible suspect in police custody
- ▶ Active / workable crime scene
- ▶ Stranger sexual assault (small percentage of cases investigated)
- ▶ Anything with high profile media potential
- ▶ Cases new or old that offer the potential to recover forensic evidence.
- ▶ High potential the victim will not be located upon follow up.

Investigative Steps

- ▶ Formal interview with the victim
 - ▶ Conduct follow up investigation techniques-composites, pretext phone calls, etc.
 - ▶ This may take 2 days to weeks
- ▶ Formal statement by all witnesses, including outcry witnesses and people who may have seen victim prior to assault
 - ▶ This may take a month or more from date of victim statement

Investigative Steps/DNA

- All evidence will be submitted to an accredited lab for DNA analysis
 - Submitted within 30 days of receiving
- Type of DNA submissions:
 - APD Rush
 - Detective submit DNA request with a "RUSH" title.
 - APD committee will review and will approve/declined
 - DPS submission form completed and submitted

Investigative Steps/DNA

- ▶ Type of DNA submissions continued:
 - D.A.'s office list of 20
 - ADA will notify Det. that DNA has been approved to be submitted to DPS on their "rush"
 - DPS submission form completed and submitted
 - Standard submission
 - DPS submission form completed and submitted

Investigative Step

- ▶ Suspect attempted to be interviewed
 - ▶ Search warrant for Buccal on suspect
 - ▶ This takes weeks to months

Investigative Step

- ▶ Other investigative steps
 - ▶ Search for video evidence at crime scene and/or route to and from crime scene
 - ▶ Search warrant for phone records, electronic devices, crime scenes, vehicles, hotel records, medical records, etc.
 - ▶ Staff cases with the ADA during and at conclusion



Thank you for
your time