

Personnel Standards Checklist for Sexual Assault Investigators

To investigate cold case sexual assault, a law enforcement officer should possess the following experience, personal characteristics, knowledge, and skills and abilities. Many of these qualities are required of all officers investigating sexual assault. Sexual assault cases are demanding and require officers to have solid investigative skills, strong interpersonal abilities, and a firm knowledge of the workings of offenders and victim trauma.

Supervisors can use the following checklist to guide them when hiring or evaluating the performance of a sexual assault investigator. The checklist was created with the input of the International Association of Chiefs of Police as well as current and former sexual assault detectives who have extensive experience supervising sex crime units.

Experience

- Has conducted criminal investigations and has experience working major, sexual assault, and/or cold case sexual assault cases
- Has conducted a temporary assignment in the unit
- Has received the prosecutor's endorsement (Applies only when a close working relationship exists with a specialized sexual assault prosecution or cold case unit.)

Personal Characteristics

- Is self-motivated and a team player
- Is a victim-focused investigator
- Is even-tempered and open-minded
- Demonstrates organization skills and acute attention to detail

Knowledge

- Understands the following:
 - Dynamics of rape and sexual assault
 - DNA forensic analysis and the use of CODIS
 - Crime scene investigation and forensics
 - Criminal sexual assault laws and the application of them

Skills and Abilities

- Demonstrates ability to
 - identify and analyze situations quickly,
 - establish factors,
 - come to valid conclusions, and
 - take appropriate action under stress
- Can use computer equipment and programs to write reports and access information necessary to conduct investigations and information checks
- Possesses strong communication skills and the ability to work effectively with both external and internal partners
- Shows ability to handle sensitive public contacts in a tactful manner and deliver presentations in court
- Demonstrates ability to author search/seizure warrants, arrest warrants, and reports of investigation—among other required documents
- Prepares reports and other documentation clearly using appropriate language, grammar, and spelling
- Demonstrates ability to conduct research and criminal analysis
- Displays ability to conduct comprehensive and complex interviews