

Victoria Police Manual – Procedures and Guidelines

Assault investigations

Source Policy

These Procedures and Guidelines support and must be read in conjunction with the following:

- **VPM Crime and event reporting and recording**

Application

Procedures and Guidelines are provided to support the interpretation and application of rules and responsibilities. They include recommended good practices and assessment tools to help employees make lawful, ethical and professional decisions. Employees should use the **Professional and ethical standards** to inform the decisions they make to support interpretation of Procedures and Guidelines.

Procedures and Guidelines are not mandatory requirements on their own. However, where rules and responsibilities state that employees must have regard to Procedures and Guidelines, the Procedures and Guidelines must be used to help make decisions in support of the rules.

Procedures and Guidelines

1. Responding to complaints of assault

See **VPM Crime and event reporting and recording**

2. Assaults at sporting events

Assaults between participants in a sporting event are usually dealt with by the respective controlling bodies. Members should only conduct an investigation when:

- a person makes a report of the assault to police
- police witness the assault and consider that the circumstances warrant police action
- reliable evidence indicates that the circumstances warrant police action
- the assault involves a non-participant.

3. Assaults involving police

3.1 *Assaults against police - reporting member responsibilities*

Whenever a member, on or off duty, is the victim of an assault or is injured as a result of force used during an arrest or processing:

- Notify the Divisional Patrol Supervisor or the Detective Inspector, in the case of the Crime Command.
- Ensure appropriate medical treatment is sought and injuries are photographed. If available use the services of a Crime Scene Officer (CSO) or the Major Crime Scene Unit (MCSU), Forensic Services Department (FSD) to photograph any injuries.
- Notify the CIU if a serious assault against a police member has been committed.
- Notify the Police Communications D24 where a firearm has been discharged at a police member without resulting in a fatality.

3.2 *Allegations of assault by police – responsibilities of supervisor first made aware of the allegation*

- Where a person is injured and complains of assault by police:
 - determine if it is appropriate for the police involved to continue processing the person, having regard to the **VPMP Managing conflict of interest**
 - if available, use the services of a CSO for the recording of photographic evidence
 - consider arranging for a police member not involved in the incident to conduct the interview and processing of the person
 - consider appointing a Sub-Officer or detective to investigate the incident and oversee or compile relevant Briefs of Evidence
 - notify the relevant Local Area Commander of the circumstances
 - notify the Professional Standards Command (PSC) Team Leader of the incident, after hours via the PCC (PSC will determine the needs for the call out of specialist staff from FSD).
- Where the person suffers serious injury or is admitted to hospital:
 - notify PSC immediately in accordance with **VPMP Complaints and discipline**.
- Where the person is injured but no complaint of an assault by police is made:
 - ensure that the supervising Sub-Officer notifies PSC by completing an Incident Fact Sheet before the end of the shift.

4. Medical treatment, evidence and records

4.1 Member responsibilities

- If available use the services of a CSO or the MCSU for the recording of photographic evidence.
- Where an assault victim requires medical treatment, obtain the services of a FMO in the first instance. Where this is not possible, refer the victim to the nearest hospital or their own medical practitioner.
- Where medical records are required to assist with the investigation, have the victim sign an Authority to Release Medical Records [Form 60].
- Ensure that all medical statements and reports are prepared in consultation with the FMO. If obtaining a statement from a medical practitioner other than a FMO, contact the VIFM for guidelines as required.
- Forward any accounts to the VIFM for authorisation of payment.

Further Advice and Information

For further advice and assistance regarding these Procedures and Guidelines, contact your supervisor or local training officer.

Update history

Date of first issue	22/02/10	
Date updated	Summary of change	Force File number
09/05/11	An update in terminology, section 3. Firearm's that have been discharged at a police member without resulting in a fatality must now contact Major Crime Theme.	067245/11
15/01/13	Updated to reflect organisational governance and structural changes.	FF-074790
15/04/13	Change of notification in section 3.1 from Major Crime Desk to Police Communications D24	FF 076304
30/03/15	Updated reference to the use of a Crime Scene Officer or the Major Crime Scene Unit to photograph injuries	FF-082359
14/08/17	Responding to reports of (minor) assault transferred to VPM Crime and event reporting and recording as part of VPM Review 2016.	FF-106509
28/09/21	Section on threats against police removed and replaced with VPM Threats against staff members (THASM)	FF-151394