

## **OSAC REVIEW SPRING 2025 (OSAC = Organization of Scientific Area Committees)**

**NAME OSAC UPDATE #22:** OSAC 2022-N-0025 (OSAC Proposed)

### **Standard for Scene Response: Initial Response by Scene Investigators**

This Standard was developed by the Crime Scene Investigation and Reconstruction Subcommittee of OSAC. It has been submitted to a standards development organization and may change as it undergoes revisions in that consensus-based process.

**(Like all OSAC developed Standards, Best Practices, and Guides, these are voluntary and separate from NAME standards and accreditation.)**

*This is a brief summary of OSAC 2022-N-0025, and as such may leave out or misinterpret important details. **See link to full document (below).***

As part of the OSAC process this document was subject to an open comment period with comment adjudication. This is a link to the comments received, with adjudication:

<https://www.nist.gov/document/osac-2022-n-0025-comment-adjudication>

### **Value:**

This standard is a continuation of *ANSI/ASB 160: Best Practice Recommendation for Initial Response at Scenes by Law Enforcement Officers*, and is mostly duplicative of that document. (ANSI-ASB 160 was reviewed as part of this series two weeks ago—OSAC update #21, available on the NAME website, right hand tabs.) Obviously, this document is not directed at Medical Examiners but overlaps with our work. The responsibilities of crime scene investigators and death investigation authorities at death scenes varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, sometimes because of differing law. This document could be used in training to delineate the responsibilities of agencies. The general investigative principles in the standard also apply to medicolegal death investigators.

**SCOPE:** Crime scene investigators document, search for, identify, collect, interpret, and preserve evidence. The standard addresses the required activities and actions of crime scene investigators when responding to a scene.

### **Arrival at the Scene:**

The crime scene investigator communicates with the first responding law enforcement officer about primary authority, agencies on scene, any information about alterations to the scene, hazards at the scene, etc., avoiding biasing information.

### **Safety:**

The crime scene investigator wears appropriate PPE, and requests assistance if hazards such as chemical or radiological hazards exist or are discovered.

### **Scene Containment and Control Responsibilities of Crime Scene Investigators:**

- Review the boundaries established by law enforcement and determine if they are adequate.
- Ensure that all personnel entering or exiting the scene are documented.
- Confirm that the path for entrance and exit is appropriate for preservation of evidence.
- Establish a staging area in a location to maintain command and employ response resources efficiently.
- Establish areas for trash and biohazards.
- Secure a place for the temporary secure storage of evidence

### **Legal Considerations:**

Crime Scene Investigators must comply with all applicable legal standards including those relating to search and seizure, as their work may be used in every step of the legal process.

**Assessing the Scene:**

- The scene investigator shall conduct a scene assessment—walkthrough.
- Shall use the scene assessment to develop a plan for identification, collection, and preservation of evidence.
- Evidence collection is to be prioritized to protect evidence that may be lost or compromised.
- The scene assessment shall determine the need for additional or specialized resources.

**Documentation:**

The scene investigator shall document all pertinent information and observations.

**Full Document:**

<https://www.nist.gov/document/osac-2022-n-0025-standard-initial-response-scenes-scene-investigators-version-21>

**Checklist:**

<https://www.aafs.org/research-resources-featured-standards-resources-and-training/checklists>