



Eyewitness Identification

I. POLICY

Officers of the Ridgely Police Department will conduct eyewitness identifications in a non partial, professional, and structured manner. Officers will remain consistent with the Annotated Code of Maryland, Public Safety Article, Section 3-505.

II. GENERAL

A. Officers of the Ridgely Police Department will adhere to the following standards when using eyewitness identifications during an investigation:

1. Avoid any action that would be suggestive to the witness during the eyewitness identification process.
2. Officers will utilize "Instructions" to the eyewitness. These instructions are given by the lineup administrator to the eyewitness to deter the eyewitness from feeling compelled to make a selection. One of the recommended instructions includes the directive "The suspect may or may not be present in the lineup".
3. Officers will utilize a "Double Blind/ Blind Administrator" lineup when possible. This is a lineup in which neither the eyewitness or the administrator knows who the suspect is. This prevents inadvertent or intentional verbal or non verbal cues to influence the eyewitness to pick the suspect.
4. When composing the lineup, Officers will utilize suspect photographs that do not bring undue attention to him. Non suspect photographs will be selected based on their resemblance to the description provided by the eyewitness, and not to their resemblance to the police suspect.
5. Officers will have the eyewitness write a "Confidence Statement" upon conclusion of the lineup. This is a written statement, in the eyewitnesses own words, that articulates their level of confidence he/ she has in the identification made.
6. The lineup will be documented. When available, the lineup should be electronically recorded. If this is impractical, an audio or written record will be made. Any identification or non- identification of a suspect will be documented in writing along with any comments made by the eyewitness concerning the identification or non- identification.

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7. Any photograph of an individual identified by the eyewitness will be retained as evidence and handled as such.

8. A criminal investigation will not be concluded or otherwise ceased based solely on the eyewitness identification. Investigations will continue until all physical evidence has been collected and examined, all witnesses identified, and all reasonable leads explored.

B. Officers of the Ridgely Police Department will utilize one, and only one, type of eyewitness identification. The types of eyewitness identification approved by the Ridgely Police Department are:

1. Viewing a Mug Book.
2. Participating in the preparation of a Composite.
3. Participating in a Show Up.
4. Participating in a Live Line Up.
5. Viewing a Photo Line Up.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Mug Book: A collection of photographs of individuals known or suspected to be involved in criminal activity. Mug Books are frequently used when there is no clear suspect and other reliable sources have been exhausted.

B. Composite: Renderings or recollections of an eyewitness describing a suspect's appearance. Composites may be completed by an artist, a computer program, or an Indenti- Kit which features a variety of different facial features.

C. Show- Up: The display of a single suspect to a witness in an effort to obtain identification.

D. Photo Line Up: A display of a photograph of the suspect along with filler photos of other individuals whose physical characteristics resemble the suspect's description or appearance.

E. Live Line Up: A live display of the suspect along with other individuals whose physical characteristics resemble the suspect's description or appearance.