



## An Informational Guide for Securitas Clients

At Securitas USA, our objective is that when an inquiry is needed it is performed in a thorough and efficient manner, protecting the interests of our clients, the privacy of the individuals involved, and maintaining a standard that reflects Securitas USA's standing within the security industry.

One of the most common aspects of security operations will be an incident that requires a security officer (SO) to perform an investigation. The type of investigation is dependent upon the actual event and depth of the incident. It is important for Securitas USA's security officers to understand that investigations can be either major or minor in scope.

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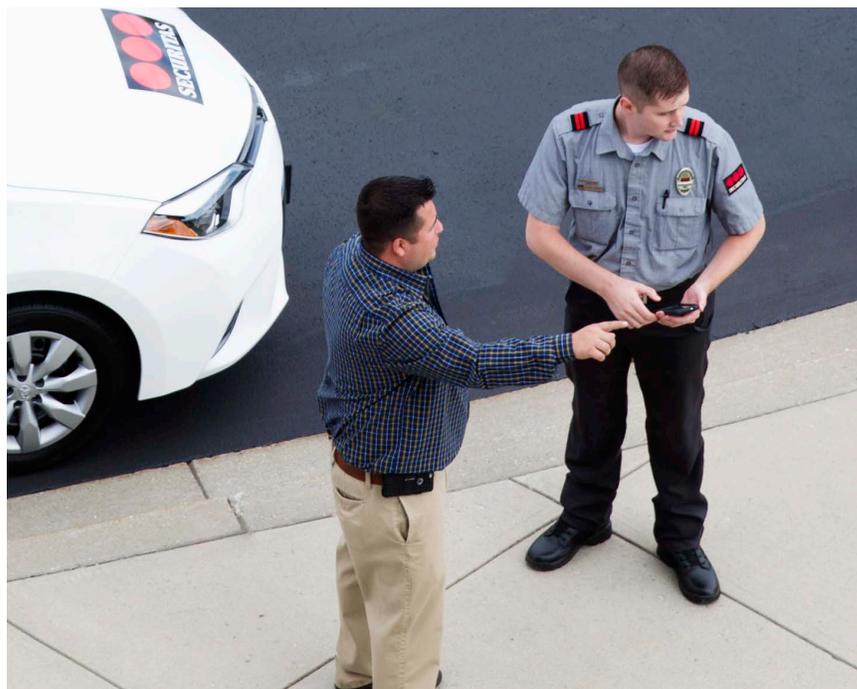


Securitas Security Services, USA, Inc.

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## Investigation of Incidents



### Reasons for an Investigation

When conducting an investigation there are several factors that drive the overall process.

- First, is an attempt to establish a detailed timeline of events of the particular incident.
- Second, an SO is trying to provide a listing of all parties involved and what they witnessed.
- Third, is creating a record of events to potentially be utilized in future law enforcement investigations and legal proceedings.
- Fourth, is to identify any possible remedies to prevent similar

future accidents or incidents from occurring again. It's worth noting that in defining the principles of safety management it can be stated as, "an unsafe act, an unsafe condition, an accident or symptoms of something wrong within the management's system". (Peterson 1997)

- Lastly, an investigation allows for the compiling of a record of the event in order to track any potential patterns to view the larger picture of the overall operations of the site.



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## Stages of an Investigation

Every Securitas USA security officer should follow the same basic steps in an investigation so that there is an accurate and thorough examination of the incident.

- When first arriving on scene the primary duty is to secure the site, provide attention to persons requiring assistance, protect any evidence, gather witnesses and statements, and provide calm and order to the area. Most of these requirements and responses will be planned and established within the site plan.
- Next, once all of the previous items are completed, the officer must select the type of investigation to conduct, in connection with the post orders. The officer must determine if the incident



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only needs to be made in the Daily Activity Report (DAR) or does it need to be formally submitted in an Incident Report (IR). Also, it must be taken into account which managers and site contacts need to be notified, if any, of the incident. This information is usually provided in the site copy of the Post Orders.

Furthermore, an SO must realize that the investigation may require the involvement of local law enforcement, and other police agencies. Officers need to know how and when to contact the local law enforcement and other police agencies, and to assist these agencies in their duties. At no time should a SO hinder law enforcement's investigation of the matter.

After the initial securing of the scene, an officer needs to begin the investigation of the event. The basic purpose is to focus on the way everything was

prior to and after the incident. This is primarily done through interviews and observations.

## ***When conducting an interview there are basic guidelines to follow.***

- First, officers should try to question persons and witnesses in familiar surroundings, to make the interviewee feel relaxed.
- Second, when possible, make note of exact phrases and descriptions from those being examined.
- Third, focus the conversation on concrete facts and not suppositions, opinion or speculation.
- Fourth, interviews, of persons involved, should be separate to stop people from influencing each other.
- Fifth, questions, when asked, should not be intimidating, accusatory, or aggressive because this could potentially intimidate the interviewee or give the impression that they are being blamed for the incident.

Questions should be open-ended and non-leading, thus allowing the interviewee to provide a more direct and informative answer.

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The other major portion of an investigation is to enable you to provide detailed observations. It is through this that a record of the location and events will further complete the overall picture. If the incident is an accident or something like a gate door left open, it needs to have detailed documentation. If possible, and in accordance with the Post Orders and/or with management's consent, take pictures or video of the location, make sure that when doing this, an officer is following the law and rules if it involves recording people. It is also important that photos are not taken of items that are proprietary in nature to the client. Observations are all about trying to find or track evidence, which will enable a determination of an accident or provide key details in a criminal investigation. A key to observations is to take your time so that nothing is overlooked and that the area in question is properly evaluated for evidence. Common items overlooked in many investigations are what the US Department of Justice calls transient evidence and conditions, such as: smells, sounds, sights, temperature, and weather. (DoJ 2000) Make a methodical observation and search of the scene using a grid or other type of

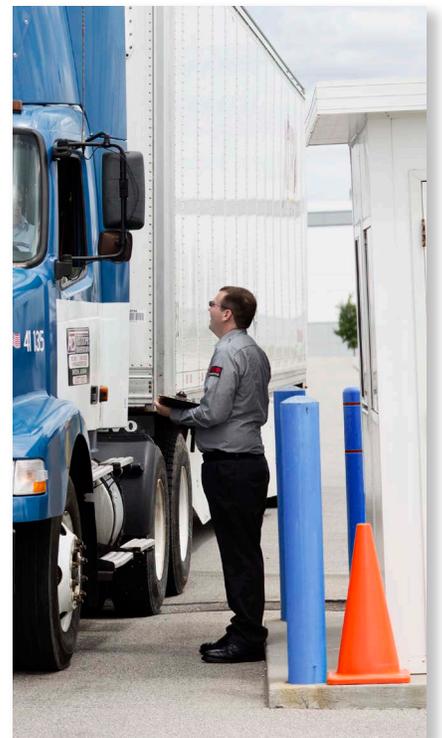
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patterned examination. Finally, pull any video evidence from remote cameras or recordings located at the site. This concludes the interview and observation portions of the event, which will allow the reporting officer to move to the next stage of the investigation.



Once completed the report writing phase of the investigation takes the next priority. Here an officer will create and write a detailed timeline of the event making sure to include all aspects of the investigation answering detailed information on who, what, when, where, and how regarding the incident, obtain or take any witness and participant statements, and all evidence collected to allow for a completed incident report. Timely reporting to the scene, an organized thorough investigation, and a timely submission of a well written detailed report is the best way to document what occurred.

From here the report will be passed along to various groups and individuals. This can range from the client site contact, to Securitas USA Management, to various law enforcement agencies. Remember, as the report is being finalized that this will become a permanent record, and at the same time a reflection of the individual composing it, as well as Securitas USA. For information on what to include or how to write an Incident Report please consult with your Branch Manager or HR Manager about taking the Investigative Report Writing course offered through Securitas.



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## Conclusions

One of the aspects of the stellar service that we provide to our clients is the submission of detailed and accurate reports. It is through the exceptional job performance of our officers that we can display proof of commitment and dedication to the mission and goals as agreed upon in contracts with our clients.

A thorough investigation and its accompanying fully detailed report is just one aspect of the service that is provided, it is a crucial item. At the end of the day investigations are about observation and reporting, if done well it will increase the success of our mission, help protect our clients, and establish a permanent record of events at that particular site. It is why we at Securitas USA must strive to maintain the same level of service and investigations across this vast company and all its markets and verticals.



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For more information on this and other security related topics, visit the Securitas Safety Awareness Knowledge Center at <http://www.securitas.com/us/en/Knowledge-Center/Safety-Awareness-Tips>