



TRANSIT POLICE

CRIME STOPPERS

Effective Date: May 7, 2007

Revised Date: May 27, 2021

Reviewed Dated:

Review Frequency: As Required

Office of Primary Responsibility: Inspector Investigations

POLICY

Summary

Accessing community information through Crime Stoppers is a tactic that may be used to help solve crimes. Transit Police will process Crime Stoppers tips in accordance with Crime Stoppers Program requirements and make requests to Crime Stoppers as set forth with provisions of this policy.

Definitions

Chief Officer – The Transit Police Chief Officer or delegate.

Member – Designated Constable (all ranks), the Chief Officer or a Deputy Chief Officer of the Transit Police.

Metro Vancouver Transit Police (“Transit Police”) – The operating name of the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Police Service.

MRO – A designated Media Relations Officer of the Transit Police.

Source Coordinator – The designated Transit Police Officer for managing the human source program of the Transit Police.

General

1. Transit Police is a participating member of the Crime Stoppers Program.
2. The Source Coordinator is the Transit Police appointed Crime Stoppers Liaison Member (“Liaison Member”), unless otherwise determined by the Deputy Chief Officer Operations. When the appointed Liaison Member or their designate is absent, the on-duty Watch Commander will act as the liaison.

PROCEDURES

Program Explanation

3. The Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers (“Crime Stoppers”) is an independent non-profit association and registered charity managed by a civilian Board of Directors working to help solve crime in partnership with citizens, the media and law

enforcement agencies. Crime Stoppers is not a law enforcement agency. The Crime Stoppers program encourages citizens (through an extensive multi-media advertising program) to anonymously report any information they may have about crimes. The information can be about crimes already committed or that may be committed in the future. The tip/information can be reported by:

- Calling to 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS);
 - Online at www.solvecrime.ca; or
 - Via the Mobile Application "P3 Tips".
4. Transit Police will not release police information to Crime Stoppers that is not available to the public. All information sharing will be only as permitted by law and specifically in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
 5. The success of programs like Crime Stoppers relies upon the confidentiality and maintaining of anonymity of the citizen calling with the tips. Crime Stopper tipsters are not required to attend court and may be eligible for a reward. To protect a tipster's anonymity, Crime Stoppers does not provide identity information (if known) to police and instead retains this separately to pay out any reward monies.
 - (1) Equally as important is timely police follow-up and communication of outcomes to Crime Stoppers so that a person may be rewarded for the tip.
 - (2) Crime Stoppers does not have access to police databases and therefore does not conduct any follow-up to determine a tip's validity prior to supplying the information to the relevant police agency.
 6. The Crime Stoppers' Call Centre is attended 24 hours daily. Crime Stoppers Coordinators will assess the information received from anonymous callers and, when it relates to a crime appropriate to the Transit Police mandate, will contact the appointed liaison person at Transit Police. Information relayed will then be acted upon as set out under this policy.

Crime Stoppers Coordinator

7. The Crime Stoppers Coordinator role includes:
 - (1) Receiving information about crimes related to the Transit Police mandate in the Transportation Service Region;
 - (2) Assessing whether the information is of an urgent nature (e.g., in-progress crime or a serious crime which is expected to occur imminently) and should be acted upon immediately, or if it is not urgent and can be acted upon routinely;
 - (3) If the information is of an urgent nature, contacting the Liaison Member immediately by telephone or the RCMP Federal Operational Command Center ("Fed OCC"), and following up later in writing;
 - (4) If the information is not urgent, communicating with the Transit Police Liaison Member in writing;

- (5) Setting a diary date by which the Liaison Member is required to make return contact on each tip; and
- (6) Seeking any additional information, as required, from Transit Police relative to evaluating any given tip for the purpose of paying a reward.

Receptionist/Complaint Taker

- 8. If the Transit Police support clerk (Public Service Counter) or communications operator (back-up to Public Service Counter) receives a telephone call on tips from the Crime Stoppers Coordinator (which may occur in urgent situation), the support clerk will route them immediately to the on duty Watch Commander.

Public Service Counter - Mail Handling

- 9. When the Public Service Counter receives mail (written correspondence) from the Crime Stoppers Coordinator, the support clerk will route it directly to the Liaison Member, or in their absence, to the on duty Watch Commander.

Tip Investigation and Records

- 10. The Liaison Member will:
 - (1) When on duty, receive all telephone calls directly from the Crime Stoppers Coordinator; and
 - (2) In all cases where tip information has been received from the Crime Stoppers Coordinator, ensure a General Occurrence (GO) file is created on PRIME in response to the tip (if there is an existing GO due to an ongoing or concluded investigation in relation to the incident being tipped, enter the incident number in related events as a cross reference) and record actions being taken in response to the tip.
 - a. In regards to GO scoring, the primary offence UCR will be dependent on: the nature of the tip, if it has already been reported to CCJS and if it is a Transit Police investigation. A secondary UCR of 'ASSIST-PROVINCIAL AGENCY 8190-4' will be used for all Crime Stopper tip GOs that are created. Zcodes are only to be used if Transit Police is assisting in another agency's investigation or for a previously reported offence. The CCJS will be '9' if a Zcode is used.
- 11. The Liaison Member will:
 - (1) Paraphrase all essential reported information and index all entities on the GO, except details that could jeopardize the identity of the tipster;
 - (2) NOT quote directly, or scan or paste the information received from the Crime Stoppers Coordinator (nor attach the tip sheet to the GO), to avoid inadvertent disclosure;

- (3) Ensure that the identity of the tipster is not revealed due to the information contained in the GO or the Member's notebook;
- (4) Complete a synopsis page with a brief summary of the information received and, for reference purposes, may include the Crime Stopper tip number on the synopsis page.

Synopsis example:

Correct (provides a start point for the investigation, but nothing to identify the tipster):

[REDACTED]

Incorrect (provides information which may identify the tipster):

[REDACTED]

12. The Liaison Member will communicate the related PRIME event numbers (includes new GO and related GO if applicable) to the Crime Stoppers Coordinator, as soon as practicable. (Transit Police will not release police information to Crime Stoppers that is not available to the public.)
13. The Liaison Member will, as necessary, assign an investigator (consulting with the Watch Commander and Inspector Operations as appropriate) to investigate the tip.
14. Viewing of the Tip Sheet will be restricted to the Liaison Member and the investigating Member, unless otherwise authorized in writing by the Inspector Operations. E-Mail fan-out of the Tip/Disposition Sheets to Members will not be permitted, nor circulation to any external party.
15. A hard copy of the Tip/Disposition Sheets may be produced for the reference of the Liaison Member and investigating Member. No other Transit Police personnel will be permitted to print or retain a copy of Tip/Disposition Sheets. Hard copies of the Tip/Disposition Sheets must be kept in a secure location by the Liaison Member and investigating Member.
16. The Liaison Member will ensure that any Tip Sheet electronically received and being electronically retained, is stored on a secure drive that is only accessible to the Liaison Member.
17. The investigating Member will retain the tip investigation file (if any) in a secure location, and upon completion of the investigation, transfer any hard copy of the Tip/Disposition Sheets to the Liaison Member and submit the investigation file pursuant to normal records procedures. The Liaison Member will retain the archive tip file (if any) in a secure location under the Liaison Member's custody or control.
18. The Liaison Member will assign diary dates and ensure investigation reports on tips are completed by the assigned Member, as required. This should be done via the Follow-up facility on PRIME and managed in Workflow.

19. Within 60 days of receiving the tip (or as otherwise required by Crime Stoppers Coordinator), the Liaison Member will communicate to the Crime Stoppers Coordinator on the status of the investigation (e.g., file closed due to arrest, file is closed due to lack of information, file is close for information only, file is under investigation and requires diary/BF extension of X days).
20. The Liaison Member will be responsible for completion and return of the Tip Disposition Return Sheet, in accordance to the instructions on the Tip Disposition Return Sheet and set due date.

Intel Only Tips

21. When the Liaison Member receives a Tip Sheet that is marked, "Intel Only", the Liaison Member will extract the relevant content from the Tip Sheet and forward it to the Transit Police Intelligence Officer, Supervisors and Members as appropriate.
22. For Intel Only tips, the Liaison Member will not be required to open a GO or complete/submit a Disposition Sheet (not a requirement of the Crime Stoppers Program).
 - (1) A Supervisor and/or Member receiving such Intel information from the Liaison Member will create a GO, as appropriate.

Information Handling

23. Members will adhere to the following information handling requirements:
 - (1) Do not use or rely on Crime Stoppers tip information for obtaining any Judicial Authorization without taking steps to preserve Police Informant privilege and apply to seal all warrant applications;
 - a. As with information received from confidential informants, Members must take steps to protect sensitive or identifying information in relation to anonymous Crime Stoppers tipsters. Please refer to [Transit Police policy OD050 – Human Sources](#) or contact the Source Coordinator for more information.
 - (2) Tip information should be independently confirmed;
 - (3) In police reports (PRIME) and Reports to Crown Counsel, Members may, if necessary, refer to the fact that tip information came from Crime Stoppers, but do not include the contents of the tip itself. The Member may restate or paraphrase the tip in a report, but do so in general terms only;
 - (4) Do not mention "Crime Stoppers" when dealing with a suspect or witness and never reveal to a suspect or witness a Crime Stoppers tip number or any of the contents of a tip;
 - (5) Crime Stoppers tips are legally privileged and they are the property of Crime Stoppers. The information must be returned after viewing or upon request.

24. Attached as Appendix “A” to this policy are additional procedures that are provided to assist investigators in responding to information received from Crime Stoppers.

Using Crime Stoppers as an Investigational Aid

25. Crime Stoppers can also be used as a means to advance a stalled investigation. For instance, the investigating Member can submit photographs/video of unidentified suspects to Crime Stoppers for public assistance in identification. The following procedures will be adhered to by Members when they wish to submit a file to Crime Stoppers for any purpose:

- (1) Prior to contacting Crime Stoppers, the investigating Member will consult their immediate Supervisor and the Transit Police - Media Relations Officer on release of the information publically (the Liaison Member is also available for consultation to the Member);
- (2) Once concurrence obtained, the investigating Member is authorized to contact Crime Stoppers by email [REDACTED] and explain the request to the Tip Coordinator. A copy of the request is to also be sent to the Liaison Member; and
 - a. Alternatively, the investigating Member may call Crime Stoppers [REDACTED] [REDACTED] during business hours (7 AM – 4 PM, Monday to Friday) to explain their request to a Tip Coordinator. The Member will also notify the Liaison Member of same (if not already done).

APPENDIX “A” FOLLOWS ON THE NEXT PAGE.