



## **Retail Crime (Initial Investigation) Procedure**

This Procedure is part of North Yorkshire Police policy to which all personnel and all functions provided by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner are required to adhere.

### **Procedure Statement**

This document sets out the Force Procedure on the Initial Investigation of Retail Crimes which are graded TELEPHONE following a THRIVE assessment in Force Control Room (FCR).

Communications Officers in FCR will determine if this procedure applies and will commence by sending an email link to a Retail Crime Evidence Pack hosted on the North Yorkshire Police external website. On receipt of a completed Evidence Pack, officers in the Initial Enquiry Team (IET) will conduct an initial investigation.

This Procedure sets out the Initial Investigation Procedure and the Roles and Responsibilities of those involved.

For the purposes of the Procedure, Retail Crime is:

- a) Theft from Shop
- b) Attempt Theft from Shop

Key Principles:

- Communications Officers (FCR) will not make a diary appointment
- Initial investigations will be conducted remotely
- Investigators will follow all reasonable lines of enquiry
- An Initial Investigation is one which identifies a suspect or not
- Suspects will be managed by area Commands
- Proportionality will be determined by the behaviour of the offender rather than monetary value
- The business impact to independent retailers is high relative to major retailers
- Victims will be supported in accordance with their 12 Rights under the Victims' Code
- Assault and public order offences against shop workers are not covered by this Procedure

### Key Benefits:

- Where there is CCTV evidence, Retail Crime is removed from IET appointment demand
- Eliminates wastage in frontline attendance where there is no solvability
- Increases capacity of frontline resources for prevention and early intervention work
- Better management and prioritisation of volume crime demand
- Ensures the allocation of resources is proportionate to the offence under investigation
- Effective in targeting prolific offenders and supporting repeat victims within a single department
- Essential to the delivery of the Early Action Together (EAT) Programme within Customer Contact

### Overarching Policies:

CCTV Investigation Policy and Procedure

Data Protection Policy

Information Security Policy

Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy

### Procedures:

Investigation Procedure (Local Policing)

Property and Exhibits Procedure

### Other Documents:

The Victims' Code

College of Policing APP Investigation Guidance

Criminal Procedure and Investigations (CPIA) Act 1996

Code of Ethics Guidance

### Process

All reports of shop theft will have a STORM Log created and an incident specific question set will be completed. A THRIVE assessment will be undertaken. Where Victim or Witness Vulnerability is identified, this Procedure will not apply.

All Immediate and Priority grade incidents will be sent to dispatch. The Procedure will not apply in these circumstances unless the grading changes to TELEPHONE prior to officer attendance.

If the reporting person does not support an investigation, Communications Officers will record the incident, provide a reference number and close the log without further investigation. CROMU will record the crime to comply with NCRS. Outcome 16 will apply.

If the reporting person does support an investigation, the Communications Officer will follow the question set to determine if it may be possible to identify a suspect from CCTV or witness evidence. If identification is not possible, the log will be closed. CROMU will record the crime to comply with NCRS and Outcome 18 will apply.

If identification is possible from CCTV, the Communications Officer will send an email to the retailer containing a link to the Evidence Pack, which is hosted on the NYP website. How to access Supporting Victims North Yorkshire will be included in this email. Where the possibility of identification from

## Retail Crime (Initial Investigation) Procedure

CCTV does not exist but there is witness identification evidence the incident will be graded ENQUIRY and an IET remote appointment will be made.

CROMU will record and finalise the crime pending return of a completed Evidence Pack. Outcome 15 will apply where a suspect has been named, Outcome 18 if not.

The Evidence Pack contains four documents comprising:

1. Information for Retailers
2. CCTV Chronology
3. List and Description of Stolen Goods
4. CCTV Operator Witness Statement

Retailers will be asked to return the Evidence Pack by email to IET within 7 calendar days. Where retailers tell us they cannot meet this deadline it will be extended as agreed. The returned Evidence Pack must include:

1. CCTV Chronology
2. List and Description of Stolen Goods
3. CCTV Operator Witness Statement
4. CCTV Still Image

Documents (1), (2) and (4) will be produced as Exhibits within the CCTV Operator Witness Statement. The Information for Retailers will not be returned by the Retailer and is Unused Material.

Returned Evidence Packs will be allocated to an IET constable on duty who will become Officer in Case (OIC) in Niche.

The OIC will follow reasonable lines of enquiry to identify a suspect. They will within 3 working days of receipt of the pack into IET:

- Assess the Evidence Pack for solvability
- If identification is possible, disseminate the CCTV still image as per Force Briefing protocol adding a 30-day diary flag to the niche occurrence
- Contact the retailer and provide information on how their case will be progressed
- Conduct a Victim Needs Assessment and complete a Victim/Witness Contact Management module on Niche (VWCM)

The OIC must establish whether a suspect has been identified from Force briefing or another source. If the suspect remains unidentified for 30 days, the OIC must update the OEL in Niche, update the victim and no further action is required.

If a suspect is identified the OIC must task CMU to un-finalise the crime where it will become under investigation. An IET member of staff will collect the CCTV footage ensuring continuity of the exhibit. The CCTV footage should be viewed. The footage must be downloaded onto DVD, CDR or USB to produce working copies. All Exhibits must be booked into Property Other Than Found on Niche and stored as per Force Procedure.

## Retail Crime (Initial Investigation) Procedure

If the suspect has been identified and the offence is made out, the OIC will complete a Crime Handover Package comprising the following documents as applicable:

- Handover Document
- CCTV Operator Witness Statement incorporating support for prosecution
- CCTV footage of suspect(s) – Exhibit
- Still CCTV image of suspect(s) – Exhibit
- CCTV Chronology Document – Exhibit
- List and Description of Stolen Goods - Exhibit
- Other Witness Statement(s)
- Victim Personal or Business Impact Statement
- Police Officer/Staff statement of identification
- A fully updated OEL with case summary and actions to date

Crime Handover Packages will be subject to IET Supervisor Review.

The IET Supervisor will task via niche the relevant area Suspect Action box where the offence took place. The IET Supervisor will endorse the niche occurrence OEL.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Operational Police Officers and Staff**

#### **Communications Officers (FCR)**

- Recording of calls for service having due regard to the retail crime question set
- THRIVE assessment and Incident Grading
- Explain and send an email from RetailCCTVReturns@northyorkshire.police.uk ensuring that the link to the Evidence pack is included
- Full update and closure of the STORM Log

#### **Crime Recording and Occurrence Management Unit (CROMU)**

- All retail thefts will be recorded in accordance with NCRS at the earliest opportunity by crime recording staff as part of the validation process
- Finalise the crime where there is no support for further investigation. Outcome 16 will apply.
- Finalise the crime pending return of the Retail Crime Evidence Pack. Outcome 15 applies if a suspect is known or outcome 18 if not
- Add IET as OIC in Niche and add RETAIL PACK SENT in Operation Name

#### **Initial Enquiry Team (IET) Constable**

- Review the Evidence Pack within 3 working days of receipt into the 'RetailCCTVReturns' inbox
- Contact the retailer and inform them how their case will be progressed

## **Retail Crime (Initial Investigation) Procedure**

- Conduct a Victim Needs Assessment and add a Victim/Witness Contact Management Form (VWCM) in Niche
- Collect all evidential material
- Circulate CCTV still image(s) of suspect(s) as per Force briefing protocol
- Add 30-day Diary Flag to the niche occurrence
- Update the niche occurrence OEL if there has been no identification within 30 days
- Where a suspect has been identified task CMU to un-finalise crime
- Assess whether evidential and public interest thresholds are met
- Where a suspect has been identified and where both thresholds are met complete crime package
- Request IET Supervisor Review of crime package
- Update the retailer as to whether a suspect is identified or not

#### **Initial Enquiry Team Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)**

- Collect and process CCTV footage as a Designated Power ensuring continuity of the Exhibit
- Support the OIC in the viewing of CCTV footage and the production of working copies
- Liaise with NPTs to gather intelligence and identify suspects
- Identify repeat victims, repeat offenders and communities vulnerable to ASB linked with high levels of shoplifting
- Share information as above to inform local prevention and early intervention work
- Agree with NPTs how individual retailers are to be supported and record

#### **First Line Management**

##### **Initial Enquiry Team (IET) Sergeant**

- Twice daily check of the 'RetailCCTVReturns' inbox for returned Evidence Packs
- Assign a constable on duty as OIC for each Evidence Pack
- Evidential evaluation of crime packages prior to handover to area Duty Sergeant
- Authorise handover, task re-work to OIC or add final review
- Task via niche the relevant area Suspect Action box where the offence took place and endorse the niche occurrence OEL
- Review Retail Crime investigation workloads of their team

##### **Duty Response Sergeant**

- Daily check of niche Suspect Action task box for Retail Crime Handover Packages
- Allocate to a local resource within 24hrs
- Start and complete the task and update the occurrence with the area OIC
- Change IET OIC to Assisting Officer

##### **Neighbourhood Policing Teams**

- Encourage retailers to engage with this Procedure providing guidance where necessary
- Support repeat victims with reassurance and crime prevention advice

- Signpost retailers to national organisations, local support groups and retail forums
- Identify a point of contact for IET to share retail crime intelligence, crime series and information about repeat victims, prolific offenders and vulnerable locations
- Agree with IET PCSOs how individual retailers and communities are to be supported

#### **Inspector FCR - Service Improvement Manager**

- Management of retail crime demand to ensure service levels are met
- Responsibility for the quality of investigations and crime packages
- Resolve disputes on handover
- Review of process
- Public Complaints and Organisational Learning