	Abilene Police Department Operating Procedures		
	Subject: <i>Crime Stoppers, Inc.</i>	Issued: 07/27/2015	TBP:

Crime Stoppers, Inc.

Abilene Crime Stoppers, Inc. is a non-profit 501(C) (3) organization. A civilian board of directors, comprised of 15 to 25 members, broadly representative of the community, oversees the operation of the program and administers the funds received through public contributions and grants.

The program has formed a tri-lateral partnership between the community, the media and law enforcement in a common goal to combat crime. The Crime Stoppers program is designed to foster citizens’ interest in crime reporting.

Crime Stoppers Regulations

All policies and procedures outlining the Crime Stoppers program are governed by the Texas Government Code Chapter 414, Texas Crime Stoppers Council, the Local Board of Directors and bylaws of Abilene Crime Stoppers, Inc.


Reward Eligibility

Any person, except as restricted below, who directly contacts Crime Stoppers and gives information which leads to the arrest and charges filed against an adult or the equivalent in a juvenile case, or the arrest of a wanted fugitive, will be eligible for a reward.

Members of the Department shall not enter into agreements with Crime Stoppers informants regarding a specified amount of reward to be paid for their information. The Crime Stoppers Board of Directors shall have absolute authority in establishing the policies and procedures of the program, reward payments and the disbursement thereof.

The following persons will not be eligible for reward:

- A. Commissioned law enforcement officers and/or members of their immediate family;
- B. The perpetrator or co-perpetrator of the crime;
- C. Victim of the crime and/or members of their family;
- D. The fugitive; or
- E. Law enforcement informants funneled into the program.

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Funneling

Funneling is the process whereby an informant who has already given law enforcement officials information, is sent to Crime Stoppers to obtain a reward.

Depending upon the circumstances, such an incident would be considered as:

- A. A violation of departmental policy, which would subject the law enforcement officer to corrective action or discipline.
- B. A fraud perpetrated against a non-profit, charitable corporation (Abilene Crime Stoppers, Inc.).
- C. The criminal offense of Perjury if it is discovered that the informant's identity was known to the officer and the informant was not really an anonymous Crime Stoppers informant, and the officer had testified falsely in court or made untrue allegations in an affidavit for a warrant.
- D. Grounds for attacking all of the officers' and informants' cases for lack of credibility.

Informant Confidentiality

Every informant shall remain anonymous. At no time shall an officer of the Department attempt to learn the identity of a Crime Stoppers informant. The only possible exception to this rule would be where investigation should reveal an informant is a perpetrator/co-perpetrator/conspirator in the crime in question. To maintain anonymity of an informant, a code number is issued to the informant.

Taking Informant Information

In the event an informant should provide information to an employee of the Department regarding information that is timely and needs immediate attention, the employee should follow the following procedure:

- A. If the information received is such that immediate follow-up is needed, the informant's Crime Stoppers code number should be used if known by the informant. If it is a new informant or the code number is not known, then the informant should be given the sequence number. A call sheet can be generated from the information. The officer can instruct the informant to call the Crime Stoppers Hot Line. The employee must tell the informant to give Crime Stoppers the sequence number on the call sheet, if one is generated. The employee should document on the call sheet that they instructed the informant on the procedures.



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- B. In cases where a person has information but asks an employee how they can remain anonymous, and before any information is given, the informant can be given the option to call the Crime Stoppers Hot Line. The number provided is (325)676-TIPS (8477), or they can go online at abilenecrimestoppers.com and leave their tip information on the web. An informant can also text their tips to "CRIMES" (274637). The informant must type (tip126) at the start of their message. Whether the internet or via text message the informant will receive their code number once they hit send.
- C. Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent an officer from using information gained from citizens to assist in criminal investigations.