

SCRANTON POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY

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Policy Number:
08-016

Policy Subject:
Computer Voice Stress Analyzer (CVSA)

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PLEAC Standard(s):

I. PURPOSE

This document contains the Department's policy governing truth verification using its Computer Voice Stress Analyzer (CVSA). It is a tool to be used in conjunction with an investigation for truth verification.

II. POLICY

The Scranton Police Department has established guidelines for administering CVSA examinations in conjunction with pre-employment screening and investigations conducted by the Police Department. CVSA examinations by qualified examiners are an aid and tool to be used in conjunction with an investigation. However, they should not be used as a single determinant for gaining employment or a final determinant factor in investigations. They should not be used to circumvent good investigative procedures. The CVSA is used for truth verification. Therefore, the CVSA should be viewed as a means to protect the integrity of an investigation and/or the interviewee.

III. DEFINITIONS

Computer Voice Stress Analyzer (CVSA) – CVSA detects, measures and charts the stress in a person's voice following a pre-formatted questionnaire.

Qualified Examiner – A person who has satisfactorily completed training by a recognized instructor in truth verification and the use of the CVSA. In addition, recertification must be successfully completed every three years. A member(s) who administers a CVSA will be certified in its use.

Overt Interview – A live interview by a CVSA examiner with a suspect, victim, witness, complainant, or prospective employee. These interviews are conducted with prior knowledge and permission that certain questions will be recorded live and captured by the CVSA for analysis.

Structured Interviews – A legally obtained audio tape interview of a suspect, victim, witness, or complainant. The interviews are designed to capture a response to

preformatted questions. This taped interview is then analyzed by the CVSA examiner.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Pre-employment screening

1. CVSA examinations shall be used in the selection process for law enforcement employment.
2. Questions to be asked will be provided to an applicant just prior to and at the location of the tests so applicants can have sufficient time to review and ask the examiner questions.
3. The CVSA examiner will review the questions with the applicant prior to the formal examination.
4. The CVSA will not be the single determinant of employment status. However, admissions made before, during or after the examination may be used to show cause.

B. Investigative screening

1. CVSA examinations should be utilized in conjunction with investigative leads and interviews of available suspect(s) and/or witness(s).
2. These results are not to be used for arrest or legal action but are designed for developing leads and/or obtaining case direction.

C. Persons who may be tested

1. Any individual who knows right from wrong. Generally, children who recognize right from wrong may be tested.
2. Tests are conducted at the discretion of the examiner.

D. Persons who may not be tested

1. Children under the age of eighteen must have parental or legal guardian consent prior to testing. The consent must be in writing and in the possession of the CVSA examiner prior to the beginning of the examination.
2. Any person who has been forced or coerced into taking the examination.
3. Any person who has been indicted by a grand jury or formally charged for the crime the CVSA is being requested for, unless there is an agreement and stipulation signed by the person to be examined, his/her defense attorney, and the prosecutor.
4. Victim(s) of sexual assaults or domestic violence
If evidence or information should come to light to investigate said victim regarding Unsworn Falsification to Authorities (PACC 4904) or False Reports to Law Enforcement Authorities (PACC 4906), a CVSA test may be requested of said victim for the sole purpose of investigating such violations.

E. Responsibilities of CVSA Examiner

1. The CVSA Examiner will review the available information pertaining to the case in question prior to administering an examination.
2. Any structured interview using the CVSA must be authorized by the Criminal Investigations Division Commander.

3. The Criminal Investigations Division Commander or his/her designee must approve an examination request of another organization prior to conducting the CVSA examination.
 4. All CVSA examiners will maintain a record of all examinations they have conducted.
 5. The CVSA examiner *can* receive a second opinion on examinations from another certified examiner and/or use the FACT scoring system.
 6. The CVSA examiner will refrain from examinations that may compromise his/her integrity. Any tests of friends, relatives, or persons the examiner has a relationship with which would represent a conflict of interest must be conducted by a neutral examiner.
 7. In the event the examiner declines to administer an examination and the decision is questioned, a second opinion from a CVSA examiner is recommended.
 8. At the examiner's discretion, all or portions of an overt interview may be recorded on audio and/or video tape.
- F. Responsibilities of Officer/Investigator requesting a CVSA examination
1. The investigator will complete a preliminary investigation and consult with the examiner prior to a CVSA examination being scheduled. The CVSA is a supplement to, not a substitute for, a thorough investigation.
 2. The investigator is responsible for notifying the subject of the date and time for the scheduled appointment.
 3. The investigator will remain available in the Criminal Investigations Division until the completion of an examination.
 4. The investigator will notify the CVSA examiner immediately if the subject cancels an examination appointment.
- G. CVSA Records
1. CVSA records may include a waiver of rights, voluntary submission forms, subject information sheet, CVSA graph, and/or statement of results.
 2. CVSA records will be maintained for at least a two-year period and/or until any litigation is concluded in the case or issue.
 3. The Criminal Investigations Division Commander or his/her designee is responsible for the storage of the CVSA records. Said records will be maintained in a secure area.

By Order Of:

Chief Carl R. Graziano
Superintendent of Police
Scranton Police Department