

Criminal Justice: An Overview of the System

Module 4: Law Enforcement

Section 4.4: Investigations And Specialized Units

Active Shooter: An individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area.

Child Abuse: The physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual mistreatment of a child.

Child Neglect: Failure to provide reasonably necessary care to a child.

Clearance Rate: The proportion of crimes known to the police that are solved (an arrest is made) versus all crimes known to the police.

Confidential Informant: A person who secretly provides information to law enforcement, often in return for money or an agreement not to prosecute the informant.

Crime Scene Investigation (CSI): A component of the overall criminal investigation process wherein evidence is collected, documented, and preserved at the location where a crime took place.

Domestic Violence: Violent, aggressive, or harmful behavior within the home, most often defined in terms of spouses.

Drug Awareness Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.): A cooperative program between police and schools designed to keep youth from becoming involved with drugs.

Drug Enforcement Unit: Specialized units within one or more (such as multiagency taskforces) local law enforcement agencies that focus on drug related crimes.

Informant: A person who provides helpful information to the police.

Internal Affairs: A specialized unit within a police department that investigates allegations of misconduct by the department's officers.

Juvenile Curfew: A law (most often a municipal ordinance) that prohibits persons under a certain age from being out in public after a certain time at night.

Mafia: A criminal organization brought to the United States by Italian immigrants in the early nineteenth century.

Scene Integrity: The idea of keeping a crime scene free from contamination and tampering.

This study guide is designed to help students learn the terms and definitions used in Criminal Justice: An Overview of the System, an Open Educational Resource (OER) developed by Adam J. McKee. As an OER, this document may be copied and distributed freely for educational purposes.

School Resource Officer (SRO): Sworn peace officers assigned to public schools for the purposes of crime prevention and education.

Specialized Units: Any subdivision of a law enforcement agency that has a mission different from patrol.

Traffic Unit: A specialized unit within police departments tasked with enforcing traffic regulations and providing related services such as writing accident reports.

Vice: An informal term used to denote 'victimless crimes' such as gambling, prostitution, and drug possession.