

Chapter No. 3110	Page 1
Issue Date: 08/15/89	
Revised: 12/19/19	

**Notes and
References**

COMPLETING AN INVESTIGATION REPORT

I. General

During the course of the investigation, the Investigation Officer will have gathered a large amount of data regarding the defendant, the offense, the defendant's criminal record, social history, etc. With analysis and evaluation, the data is used to create the probation report. The Investigation Officer must explain and interpret the data, demonstrate how and why certain weight is attached to information and statements, and evaluate the data and place into perspective the requirements of the law, the protection of the community, and the treatment needs of the defendant. The evaluation should be realistic and objective. It should provide a fair assessment of the defendant, his or her attitudes, patterns of behavior, motivation for change, risk to the community, and prognosis for success on probation. The Investigation Officer may also outline what goals are to be expected and what specific course of action is needed for the defendant to attain these goals. Finally, the recommendation to the Court should follow logically from the data gathered, through the analysis and evaluation of that data.

II. Case Conferences

A. In the vast majority of cases, the Investigation Officer will write a rough draft of the report and submit this to the Supervising Probation Officer (SPO) or his/her designee for approval. However, in some instances, the Investigation Officer is encouraged to discuss the case, including his/her proposed recommendation, with the SPO prior to submitting the rough draft.

B. The following cases require a staffing with the SPO. After the SPO staffing with line staff, the SPO will request a review by a Manager. The categories indicated with an Asterisks (*) also require a Manager approval.:

- Life sentence cases
- Murder or wrongful death cases
- Recommendations against the negotiated plea agreement*
- Jail imprisonment pursuant to 1170(h)(5)(A) PC/State Prison recommendations (does not include statutorily ineligible cases)*

Chapter No. 3110	Page 2
Issue Date: 08/15/89	
Revised: 12/19/19	

Chapter Title (continued)

**Notes and
References**

- Jail Imprisonment (1170(h)(5) (A) PC/State Prison suspended/1170(h)(5)(B) PC split sentences for Preplea reports (Not applicable to Presentence reports)*
- High profile cases in the media
- Cases involving probation staff as victims/witnesses/defendants
- All sex offenses (excludes 261.5 PC unless age difference is 3+ years)

B. Nothing in this section is intended to discourage any Investigation Officer from discussing any case with the SPO or his/her designee at any other time.

III. Basic Principles of Report Writing

In the actual writing of the report, the Investigation Officer should adhere to the following principles.

A. Accuracy

Identify fact as fact and opinion as opinion, as accurately as possible. Always identify the source of all information and the method of verification. Avoid generalities when specific details are in order. For a report to be accurate, it must present the full picture of the defendant and the offense.

B. Conciseness

Investigation reports should be complete, yet concise and to the point. The Investigation Officer should be selective in including all pertinent information and excluding extraneous material.

C. Continuity and Coherence

The Investigation Officer should organize the information presented so that each point of discussion logically builds from the points before and supports the points after. A foundation should always be established for assumptions and conclusions.

**PROBATION DEPARTMENT
ADULT MANUAL**

Chapter No. 3110	Page 3
Issue Date: 08/15/89	
Revised: 12/19/19	

Chapter Title (continued)

**Notes and
References**

D. Emphasis

The Investigation Officer should give the proper weight to certain factors and explain why emphasis is placed on those factors. Conversely, details of little significance merit little mention, if any.

E. Clarity

The Investigation Officer will achieve a greater degree of clarity and effectiveness in the writing or dictation of the report if he or she focuses attention on one phase or section at a time, rather than attempting to consider or interpret that phase in light of other sections.