



# DEPARTMENT NOTICE

23-060

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## Phone Ping During Homicide Incidents

(Re-issue DN 20-117)

While investigating a homicide incident, officers may come upon cell phone information related to an outstanding suspect. Occasionally, there may be a life-threatening need to locate someone as soon as possible.

Members **SHALL NOT** use dispatch to initiate exigent phone ping (Geolocation) under any circumstances. If a member is faced with a situation that they believe merits an exigent ping of a phone number, they shall notify a supervisor who will confer with the lead on-call Homicide investigator before initiating any action. If an exigent phone ping is determined to be justified, the Homicide investigator will make arrangements to set up the phone ping.

Members are reminded that the provisions of penal code sections 1546-1546.4 apply to exigent phone ping and that any member requesting one will be required to comply with this statute – including the application for a search warrant of the affected number within three court days of obtaining the phone ping, notification to the authorized possessor, subsequent return of the search warrant and appropriate investigative documentation of their actions.

Legal remedies for the non-compliance of Cal-ECPA include evidence suppression, as well as civil and criminal liability.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William Scott".

WILLIAM SCOTT  
Chief of Police

*Per DN 20-150, all sworn & non-sworn members shall electronically acknowledge this Department document in PowerDMS. Members whose duties are relevant to this document shall be held responsible for compliance. Any questions regarding this policy should be made to [sfpd.writtendirectives@sfgov.org](mailto:sfpd.writtendirectives@sfgov.org) who will provide additional information.*