

# Study Guide for NC BLEET Report Writing

## Field Note-Taking

1. Definition: Field notes are shorthand records created by law enforcement officers from arrival at the scene until the assignment is complete.

2. Purposes:

Foundation for report writing.

Reference for investigations.

Potential evidence in court.

3. Importance:

Pieces of a puzzle to reconstruct events.

Help recall details.

Serve as a handy reference and evidence.

Used to identify leads, inconsistencies, and ensure court admissibility.

## Essential Guidelines for Field Notes

1. If it's not written, it didn't happen.

## 2. Uses:

Basis for final reports.

Record of specific events and activities.

Refresh memories.

Reveal leads and ensure chronological order.

## 3. Notebook Essentials:

Types: Hip-pocket, loose-leaf, bound books.

Storage: File chronologically.

Identification: Include name, rank, and departmental ID on the inside cover.

## 4. Information to Include:

Investigating officer's details.

Dates, times, and locations.

Sketches and descriptions.

Names/IDs of involved individuals.

Interview results.

Weather conditions and leads.

Addresses, phone numbers, and other relevant details.

## 5. Note-taking Instruments:

Use pen or pencil.

# The 6 Key Questions for Notes

1. Who: Victims, suspects, witnesses, owners (full names, accurate spelling, aliases).

2. What: Crimes, evidence, property involved, or vehicles used.

3. Where: Locations of crimes, suspects, evidence.

4. When: Time and date of the incident.

5. Why: Possible motives.

6. How: Methods, tools, weapons, and travel details.

## Other Tips

1. Record weather conditions.

2. For mistakes:

Do not erase.

Strike through the error, and initial it.

3. Use common abbreviations only.
4. Statements must be verbatim reproductions of words spoken.

---

## Photo Documentation

1. Include:

Photographer's name.

Case number.

Case/criminal charge type.

---

## Report Writing

1. Purpose:

Communication with others.

Documentation of knowledge and activities.

Evidence support.

Statistical data recording.

## 2. Qualities:

Factual, clear, concise, complete, objective.

## 3. Report Structure:

Factual: No opinions or unfounded conclusions.

Accuracy: Gather information thoroughly.

Clarity: Use simple language and logical order.

Conciseness: Avoid wordiness.

Completeness: Small details may be crucial.

## 4. Key Goals:

Avoid vague or ambiguous terms.

Focus on determining the truth.

# Report Writing Dos and Don'ts

Do: Base conclusions on facts.

Don't: Enter personal opinions or biases without caution.

---

## Objective

Your ultimate goal in report writing and note-taking is truthful, clear, and accurate documentation to aid investigations and court proceedings.