

## SEARCHING

**Principle** The thorough search of a crime scene helps ensure that all relevant evidence will be recognized, documented and collected.

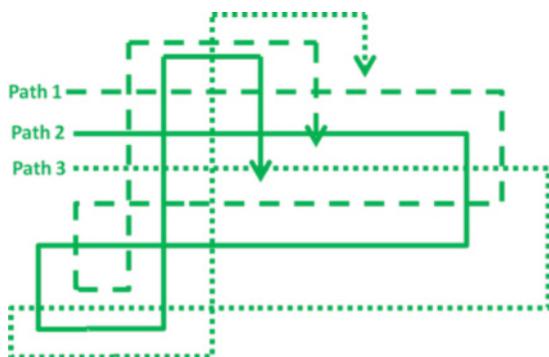
**Policy** The investigator(s) in charge shall consider different search strategies for crime scenes depending upon locale and the number of officials available to aid in searching.

**Procedure** There are four types of search methodology that can be considered to search a crime scene:

- Lane or strip search
- Grid search
- Zone Search
- Spiral search



*Figure 1.* A **Zone Search** involves dividing the area to be searched into adjacent zones. The smaller the size of the zone, the more methodical the search can be. Zone searches may be done by multiple searchers per zone.



*Figure 3.* A **Grid Search** is a lane search that is conducted by completing a lane search in one direction and then completing a lane search in a perpendicular direction. While it takes twice as long as a lane search, it provides a more thorough search of an area.

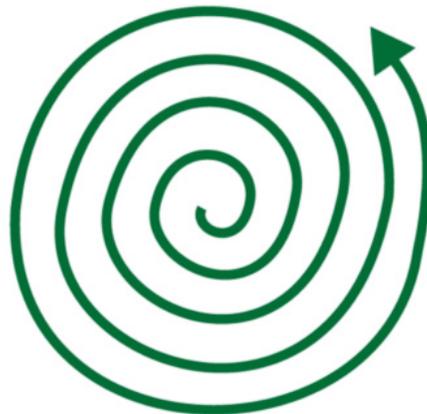
### *General Considerations*

- The size of the lane of the search should be approximately the arms' length of the searcher.
- As the search of an area is completed, some marking should be made to indicate that the area has been completed.
- A mechanism should exist for the circumstance when potential evidence is found (e.g. who is called over, what path they should take, whether the other searches should halt moving until this finding is resolved).

Source: *Crime Scene Investigation, A Guide for Law Enforcement* (2013) 2019 Courtesy NFSTC@FIU [shop.nfstc.org/printables](http://shop.nfstc.org/printables)



*Figure 2.* **Lane or Strip Searches** are accomplished by the searchers walking in parallel along defined lanes in the same direction.



*Figure 4.* A **Spiral Search** involves a spiral into (inward) or out from (outward) a crime scene. A practical disadvantage with outward spiral searches is the evidence may be destroyed as the searchers move to the center of the crime scene area to begin their outward search.