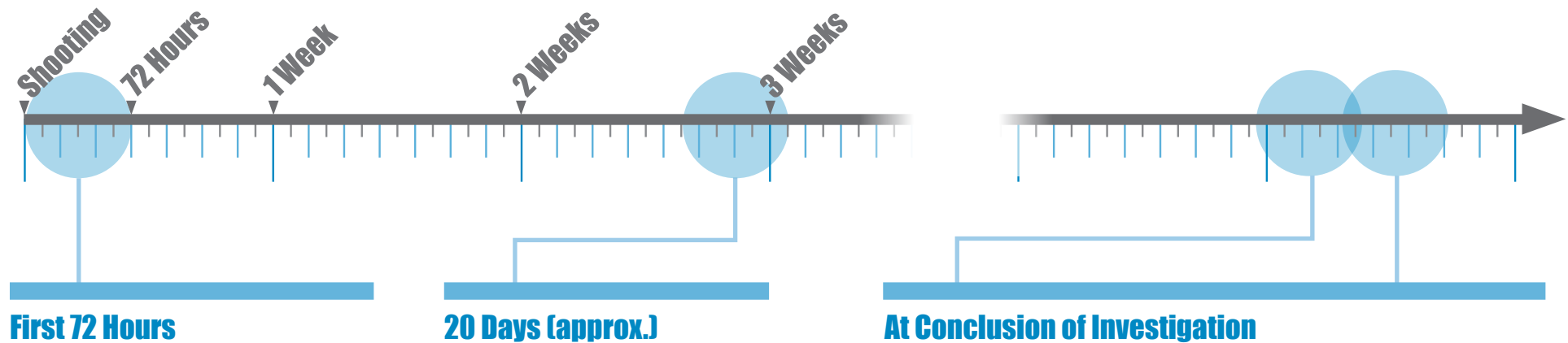


How New Jersey Ensures Independent Investigations of Officer-Involved Shootings

Timeline of an Investigation



First 72 Hours

1. Immediate Response to the Crime Scene.

First responders secure the crime scene. The law enforcement agency where the officer works is immediately walled off the investigation and does not participate in the matter going forward.

2. Evidence Collection.

An independent investigative team begins to interview witnesses and collect evidence, including any available video footage.

3. Conflict Check.

The independent investigative team performs a “conflict check” to determine whether there are any actual or potential conflicts of interest and reports the results to the Attorney General’s Office. If a conflict exists, the Attorney General either removes the conflicted individual or assigns a new investigative team to handle the matter.

20 Days (approx.)

4. Public Release of Body-Worn Camera Footage.

Once the investigative team has completed the initial round of witness interviews – typically within 20 days – the police department releases any available footage from an officer’s body-worn or dashboard camera, whenever such footage is formally requested.

At Conclusion of Investigation

5. Decision Whether to Present to Grand Jury.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the independent investigative team decides whether to seek an indictment from a Grand Jury, which is comprised of 16 to 23 civilians. Under the Independent Prosecutor Directive, the team is required to present such cases to the Grand Jury, except in situations where the Attorney General’s Office has reviewed the matter and determined that the undisputed facts indicate that the use of force was legally justified.

6. Public Announcement of the Findings.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the independent investigative team makes its findings public, either in the form of an indictment charging the officers or a public statement explaining why the officers’ use of force was legally justified.

www.nj.gov/oag/independent-prosecutor