

Determining Reward Amounts

There are two basic ways that boards can determine reward amounts to be paid to Crime Stoppers tipsters — through a recommendation of a reward amount from the Coordinator or by using a Point System.

Both methods are being used by Crime Stoppers programs around the world. Here's how they work:

At its regularly scheduled monthly meeting, the Crime Stoppers Coordinator presents a case to the Board of Directors that has been solved by a Crime Stoppers tip. The conversation might go something like this:

"Caller #93-1066 called on September 8, 1993, to report that John Doe at 1100 South Main Street was selling crack cocaine to school kids. Following an extensive investigation by our Narcotics Unit, we were able to arrest Doe and seize 55 rocks of crack cocaine with a value of \$110. Doe has been indicted by the Grand Jury on a count of Possession With Intent to Traffic a Controlled Substance. I am recommending a reward of \$250 for this caller."

Now it's the board's turn. They might ask the Coordinator what degree of risk the caller had to take in order to have the case solved. Perhaps the caller made a series of controlled buys for detectives or allowed detectives to use his/her house as a surveillance location. The Coordinator must be careful about the information that is disseminated to the board because the identity of the Caller might be compromised. Board members might want to know more about John Doe's criminal history. Is this the first time Doe has been arrested for Narcotics Trafficking? What were the ages of the young people who were buying drugs from Doe? And board members might want to determine if the caller might become a Crime Stoppers tipster again in the future.

All of these things might be involved in the decision to pay the requested reward amount. The board has the right to go along with the Coordinator's recommendation or establish a reward amount of their own. However, once all the discussion has been completed, someone on the board will make a motion to pay Caller #93-1066 a certain amount of reward money. Someone on the board will second the motion. There might be further discussion about the motion and the case. Then the board will vote on the motion and either approve it or vote it down. Eventually Caller #93-1066 will be approved to receive a cash reward. But it is the Board of Directors who is the *final* authority over what this amount will be.

The second most common method of determining a reward amount is the use of a Point System. As its name implies, the Point System uses a point value for each type of crime solved by Crime Stoppers (see Appendix). With murder receiving the highest total, the points will go down to the crime receiving the lowest value (usually a non-violent property crime).