

	<p style="text-align: center;">BRIDGEPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">POLICY AND PROCEDURE GENERAL ORDER</p>	Distribution	General Order Number
		ALL PERSONNEL	<b>6.05</b>
		Original Issue Date	Reissue/Effective Date
		11/19/19	1/24/20
<p>Order Title:</p> <p><b>PROPERTY AND EVIDENCE CONTROL</b></p>		Accreditation Standard: POSTC: 1.22, 1.2.3, 1.2.4, 1.2.5, 2.2.7, 3.7.5	Section  6
		<p>Section Title INVESTIGATIVE FUNCTIONS</p>	
<p>Rescinds:</p>		<p><b>Armando J. Perez, Chief of Police</b></p>	

*This General Order is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This General Order should not be construed as creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this General Order will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting*

## I. PURPOSE

To provide a written directive that specifies procedures for submitting, securing, documenting, and accounting for evidentiary and in-custody property handled by the Bridgeport Police Department.

## II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Bridgeport Police Department that the property function shall provide for the security and control of seized, recovered, evidentiary, and found property placed under the custody and control of the Department. The Property Officer serves as the primary property custodian for the department and is responsible for the management of the property function, including the day-to-day duties related to the property room, and all other permanent and temporary evidence and in-custody property storage areas.

The Property Room Supervisor has the overall responsibility for overseeing the property management function of the department. The Chief of Police has discretion in appointing the number of alternate property officers to be assigned. Other personnel may be assigned as temporary and/or part-time property officers to assist the Property Officer, as authorized by the Chief of Police.

The Department will establish property and evidence control procedures that support investigative efforts, assist in the successful prosecution at criminal/civil trials, facilitate the timely return of property to its rightful owner, and protect the department's reputation as honest and worthy of the public's confidence and trust.

The Department's property and evidence management and control system shall consist of strict measures with respect to the receipt, handling, security, and disposition of property. Any discrepancies in the records and/or property being maintained shall be reported through the chain of command to the Chief of Police. Discrepancies shall be investigated in their entirety, administratively and, if appropriate, criminally.

### III. PROCEDURES

#### A. Duties of Property Officer – General

1. The Chief of Police or designee shall assign a sworn officer to serve as an Property Officer.
2. The Property Officer will be issued a set of keys to the Property Storage Areas and will be responsible for securing the room and restricting access to authorized personnel only. A spare set of keys will be issued to the Deputy Chief responsible for property and the Chief of Police or designee.
3. The Property Officer will maintain records of all property brought to the Bridgeport Police Department headquarters.
4. Records will include, but not be limited to:
  - a. Found abandoned or misplaced property,
  - b. Property seized as evidence,
  - c. Cash,
  - d. Drugs,
  - e. Weapons.
5. The Property Officer will ensure these records are neat, up-to-date, and fully inclusive. The records will be ready for inspection at any time.
6. The Property Officer will routinely transfer property from the Temporary Holding areas to the evidence room.

#### B. Procedures for Receiving In-Custody and Evidentiary Property

##### 1. General

The department shall establish procedures for when in-custody and evidentiary property is obtained, including the seizure and recovery of property, by employees into the control of the department, including procedures for:

- a. Logging of all property into department records
- b. Storing of all property prior to end of work shift

- c. Timely completion of all related reports
- d. Providing guidelines for proper packaging and labeling
- e. Taking extra precautions with exceptional and valuable items
- f. Identifying and notifying the owners of found property
- g. Releasing of property

2. Logging of Property into Agency Records

- a. The employee receiving the property is initially responsible for ensuring that the property is properly logged into department records as soon as possible. This shall be accomplished by the completion of evidence and property control form(s), approved by the department, along with entries into a manual and/or computerized records system.
- b. When the Property Officer receives property, the control form shall be updated, and the information shall be entered into the computerized property tracking system. It is the responsibility of the Property Officer to ensure that property tracking system is kept accurate, current, and updated when property is found, recovered, submitted or removed from the property room, or transferred to a different storage location within the property return. With the prior approval of the Chief of Police, a police officer may be assigned to assist in completing this task.
- c. Agency records shall reflect the following information:
  - Location of property stored in the property room, or some other storage location
  - Date and time when the property was received or released
  - Character, type and amount of property on hand
  - Chain of custody of the property through its final disposition

3. Property to be Submitted Prior to End of Tour of Duty

- a. All evidence and property shall be submitted to the designated secured property system prior to the end of the officer's tour of duty. This will be done in accordance with procedures established in Section C of this General Order, and will include tagging, labeling, packaging, and sealing the evidence as well as completion of all required forms.

4. Detailed Report Required

- a. Employees receiving property or evidence are responsible for completing and submitting a written report describing the circumstances by which the property came into the officer's possession, and the nature, condition, and description of each item.

All serialized items shall be checked through NCIC to determine if they are stolen.

- b. This report includes the completion of any required evidence and property control form, which shall be placed in the temporary storage locker with the property, except when the evidence/property is submitted via an area other than the temporary storage lockers such as the Bulk Evidence Area. In these instances, the form will be turned in to the Property Officer. In the event the Bulk Evidence Area is not accessible and the Property Officer is unavailable, the front desk, officer will take temporary custody of evidence that cannot be secured in an evidence locker.
- c. Upon receiving property into the evidence room, the Property Officer will mark the control form to reflect the storage location within the property room and the date and time the item was placed there.
- d. A copy of the control form will be kept in the evidence room files, where it will remain until the property reaches final disposition. A copy is also sent to records and filed in the case file. Copies in each instance shall be retained according to retention laws.

## C. Guidelines for Packaging and Labeling Property Prior to Storage

### 1. Introduction

- a. For physical evidence to be accepted in court, it is essential that the chain of evidence be properly maintained. It is the responsibility of the submitting officer to properly process all property being submitted (i.e., tagged, labeled, packaged, sealed, documented, and recorded), prior to submitting the property into the property system. Property shall not be forwarded to temporary or permanent storage until processing is complete. Property shall not be submitted into the Property room until it is accurately logged into the RMS (NexGen) by the officer seizing the property

### 2. Incomplete Processing

- a. In such cases, the Property Officer will notify the submitting officer's shift commander so that arrangements can be made to complete the processing. The item(s) shall be returned in a secured matter to the submitting officer. It shall be the responsibility of the officer's shift commander to ensure the corrections are made and resubmitted properly.

### 3. Classification of Evidence and In-Custody Property

- a. Packaging and labeling evidence and in-custody property shall be accomplished in accordance with guidelines listed below. The submitting officer will use the appropriate evidence and property control form in the RMS (NexGen) depending on the items classification.
  - **Evidence:** Includes property that is believed related in some way to a crime or suspected criminal offense and property seized pursuant search warrants.
  - **Custodian Property:** Includes property that is found, taken into custody for safekeeping, abandoned property, contraband not connected with a criminal offense and property submitted for any other reason that does not include use as evidence.

### 4. Tagging and Marking Evidence

- a. Evidence is generally not marked per se, as direct markings may contaminate the item. Instead, all evidence shall be tagged and/or packaged and labeled in a manner that enables the officer to positively identify the item at a later date. At a minimum, this identification will contain the officer's initials and ID number. Items that cannot be tagged, such as hair, blood, fibers, etc. shall be placed in an appropriate container that is properly labeled and sealed.

### 5. Labeling Evidence and In-Custody Property

- a. Labeling can be accomplished by writing on packaging (envelopes, paper bags, plastic bags, boxes, etc.) that contains the item, affixing a tag to the package containing the item, or using a bar coded property label.
- b. All property must be labeled to include additional information for identification purposes. Labeling requires that the officer document information for each item, including:
  - Date recovered or taken into custody
  - Case Report number
  - Officer's identity
  - Owner's name, when known
  - Circumstances seized, recovered, or found
  - Corresponding item number from the evidence and property control form, when applicable

## 6. Packaging and Sealing Evidence

- a. Evidence must be properly packaged and sealed in envelopes, paper bags, plastic bags, boxes, etc., that are designed for this purpose. Sealing methods includes the use of stapling, tape, tamperproof evidence tape, heat sealing, evidence labels or similar materials, depending upon the type of article. The submitting officer shall place his/her marking on the package in such a manner that part of the marking is on the package itself and part of the marking is the evidence tape, evidence label or other material used to seal the package.
- b. The following materials for labeling and packaging evidence, found, surrendered, and abandoned property will be maintained in the Department's Detective Bureau, the supply closet near the report room and in the booking report writing room opposite the report writing stations:
  - A box of tamper proof evidence tape
  - Property/evidence tags
  - Property containers
  - Evidence envelopes
  - Clear plastic evidence bags
  - Paper evidence bags
  - Latex gloves
- c. Firearms, narcotics, dangerous items and valuables are to be packaged separately, with no more than one item per package. Other items may be packaged together provided there is no issue of cross contamination and the label details each and every item contained in the package.
- d. Large items and certain types of evidence, such as bicycles, perishable items, etc. may not be easily packaged. When tags are used instead of packaging, officers must complete all pertinent information on the tag. If the item tagged requires further examination for physical evidence, the item must be packaged or protected in such a way to prevent the possibility of cross contamination or loss of the evidence.

## 7. Preparing Evidence for Laboratory Submission

- a. Personnel submitting evidence for processing to the State Police Forensics Lab will follow the procedures outlined below:
  - The evidence will be tagged with a properly completed evidence tag,

- A State of Connecticut Evidence Examination Request (Form # DPS-997-C) will be completed and attached to evidence,
- The evidence will be secured in a property locker.
- The evidence is to be packaged per instructions in the "Forensic Science Laboratory - Guidelines for Evidence Submission" manual. A copy of this manual can be found in the Booking Report Writing Room and Detective Bureau.
- Normally, Detectives or Property Room Personnel will transfer evidence to the State Police Forensics Lab. This transfer will occur during regular lab business hours
- The Property Room Officers will take custody of the evidence to be examined. Once the State Police Forensics Lab has processed the evidence, the Property Room Officers will return said evidence to the Property Room.

D. Extra Security Measures for Exceptional, Valuable, and Sensitive Property

1. General

- a. Extra security measures will be taken to enhance security for any item booked into the evidence room that is considered to be sensitive, high in value, or otherwise constitutes an increased security risk. The following types of property will be stored in separately secured cabinets, or within separately secured interior rooms, inside the main property room:
  - 1) **Valuables and Money:** Includes jewelry, precious metals, and other valuables
  - 2) **Firearms:** Shall be unloaded and secured in a manner to render it inoperable
  - 3) **Drugs and Narcotics:** Caution should be taken, including the wearing of disposable gloves. Shall be weighed anytime items are transferred in/out of the property room for court, lab examination, etc.
  - 4) **Urine, blood, and other body fluid specimens:** Shall be placed in approved and sealed biohazard container, and properly secured and marked with a biohazard label. Then placed in the Evidence Refrigerator. Disposable gloves should be used if there is any risk of leakage.
- b. If, in the opinion of the submitting officer, the property being submitted is of great value or potentially vulnerable to claims of

tampering, the Property Officer may be summoned to personally accept the property and secure it in the designated location within the evidence room. The Patrol Shift Commander must approve such requests if the Property Officer is off duty at the time.

2. Special Procedures for Certain Types of Property

- a. No explosives, dangerous chemicals, unknown biological specimens, nuclear material, or other dangerous material or property are to be accepted into the property holding area. If it is necessary to submit property of a hazardous nature into evidence, the submitting officer shall notify his/her Shift Commander. The Shift Commander shall make contact with the Property Officer before such property is placed into temporary storage. If deemed necessary, the Property Officer will make contact with the Bridgeport Fire Department or other experts to determine safeguards necessary to insure safe storage.

E. Identification and Notification to Rightful Owner or Property

1. Identification and Notification

- a. Officers receiving or taking custody of property will make reasonable efforts to identify, verify, and notify the rightful owner of that property prior to the end of their shift, and arrange for the return of the property, except in circumstances that prohibit the return of certain property, such as contraband, property ordered destroyed by the court, etc.
- b. When property has been forwarded to the Property Officer for safekeeping, or when there is no longer a need to hold property for official purposes, the property officer shall do the same. Such notification may occur in person or by telephone to expedite the process of returning the property. If the property remains unclaimed, prior to taking any action to dispose of the property, the Property Officer shall forward written notification to the owner, according to statutory requirements, that failure to pick up the property will result in the item being disposed of in accordance with applicable statutes. Written notification shall provide the owner a minimum of thirty (30) days in which to claim the property prior to final disposition.

2. Return to Rightful Owner

- a. Upon review and approval by the Property Officer, property may be released to the rightful owner:
  - When all police use of the property is satisfied, or
  - When permitted by law based on the circumstances and its



value

- b. The owner of the property will sign the back of the property tag or other departmentally approved receipt, acknowledging receipt of the property.
- c. In certain cases, it may be more efficient or prudent for the Property Officer to personally return the property to the rightful owner. When appropriate, other officers may be assigned to return such property.

F. Procedures for Temporary and Final Release of Property

1. Temporary Release of Property

Whenever property is temporarily removed from the property room for court, laboratory processing, prosecutor review, etc., such release shall be immediately recorded on the evidence and property control form, or a form used specifically for tracking the chain of custody in the NexGen RMS. The pertinent information shall also be entered into the computerized property records as soon as practical.

2. Final Release of Property

Final disposition of found, recovered, or evidentiary property will be accomplished within six months after all legal requirements have been satisfied. Disposition will be in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Law, as amended, and other provisions as noted in Section L. Written receipts shall be required for all acceptance and transfers of property leaving or coming into possession of the department.

G. Designated Secured Area for Storage of In-Custody and Evidentiary Property

1. Introduction

- a. All evidence and custodian property shall be stored within designated, secure areas. The department's long-term storage areas include:
  - 1) Evidence Room
  - 2) Booking Room (temporary storage of prisoner property)
  - 3) Outside storage containers
  - 4) Bulk Storage
  - 5) Other secure areas approved by the Chief of Police

2. Special Security Precautions

- a. The department's property room shall be an alarmed and secured room

with limited access. In addition, certain types of in-custody and evidentiary property, by their very nature, are afforded extra protection and additional security. Such items include, but are not limited to, money, precious gems, firearms, drugs and narcotics. Specific security measures provided for such items are designated in Section D above.

### 3. Refridgerated Storage

- a. Only evidence requiring re Fridgeration shall be placed in the evidence re Fridgerator (e.g. blood specimens, sexual assault kits). The long-term evidence re Fridgerator will be located in the evidence room. An evidence re Fridgerator for short-term storage is located at the Front Desk. Perishable evidence shall be properly packaged and sealed. Use of that re Fridgerator is governed in Section H.
- b. Use of such re Fridgerators is restricted to storage of evidence/property formally entered into the system, and shall not be used for other purposes.
- c. Re Fridgerators used for the storage of evidence shall have a thermometer for monitoring the operating temperature, which should be maintained in an appropriate temperature range for this purpose. The Property Officer will inspect all re Fridgerators, at least once weekly, and anytime evidence or property is transferred to or from a re Fridgerator, to ensure that they are operating properly.

### 4. Storage of Bicycles and Large Items

- a. The property management system of the department includes areas designated for storing bicycles and large items. These are secured areas with access restricted to the Property Officer.
- b. Officers shall secure large items of evidence or bulk found and abandoned property in the garage bay:
  - 1) Large items of found property, such as bicycles, furniture, etc., shall be secured in the Bulk Storage.
  - 2) The Property Officer will remove the item from temporary storage, if practical, and place it in the inner evidence storage room for disposition.
  - 3) The Property Officer and the Property Room Supervisor are the only people to have access to the inner evidence storage room.
  - 4) The return of any property from this room shall only be done by the Property Officer or or the Property Room Supervisor.

5. Impound Yards

- a. Vehicles seized as evidence will be stored either in the courtyard of the police garage or in the “Police Only” spaces of the police parking lot. Any vehicle seized as evidence will be secured with antitheft/antimovement devices. The keys to these devices will be kept by the Property Officer, and any other personnel as authorized by the Chief of Police.

6. Off-Site Storage Area

- a. If a large number of items, or size of a particular item, exceeds the capacity of any departmental property storage area, whenever possible and approved by the Property Room Supervisor, such items should be photographed and returned to the rightful owner. If this is not feasible, then the Property Officer shall make arrangements to secure the articles at an off-site storage area. Off-site storage areas include any impound yards whether at Police Headquarters or not, offices, warehouses, or rental storage bins.
- b. The Property Officer shall conduct a weekly documented visual inspection of these sites. They shall also be inspected as part of all inventory and procedural audits. During any inspection, or if discovered by any employee, the Property Officer shall be notified immediately and shall respond to the scene, if there is any evidence of tampering, or if areas, lockers, or containers are not secure.

7. Vehicles

- a. Vehicles requiring short-term temporary storage for purposes such as securing search warrants, conducting searches, and evidence processing, etc. shall be secured at Police Headquarters, either in the police garage or in the courtyard of the police garage. Upon completion of these processes, they shall be removed from the police building and moved to an appropriate location (i.e., the rear parking lot, a local towing agency, etc.), depending on whether or not they will be held for evidence or released.
- b. Any officer who impounds a motor vehicle will completely fill out the vehicle impound/inventory forms as required by other applicable directives, and place a completed impound Placard on the vehicle. Placards are located in the garage on a shelf above the oil tank.

## H. Temporary Secured Facilities for In-Custody and Evidentiary Property

### 1. General

- a. All property being submitted to the property system must be secured in a temporary storage area designated for such purposes.
- b. The department provides facilities for the short term storage of evidence and in-custody property during those times when the Property Room is closed and/or the Property Officer is off duty or otherwise unavailable. Short-term storage areas may include:
  - Property Room evidence lockers
  - Front Desk
  - Police Garage
- c. The Property Officer shall check temporary storage areas each workday, remove all items of property or evidence that have been properly submitted from the storage area, and formally transfer and log them into the property system.

### 2. When Temporary Storage is Unavailable

- a. In the event that temporary storage facilities are full or unable to accommodate a particular piece of found, recovered or evidentiary property, the Shift Commander shall be notified. Upon concurrence that there is a need to retain and secure the item, the Shift Commander will notify the Property Supervisor who will respond to the department to accept the item personally for transfer into the property room. Should the Property Supervisor not be available, the Property Room Officer shall be contacted.
- b. Under no circumstance will such property be left out in an unsecured manner to await the return of the Property Officer. All items will be secured in temporary storage areas or turned over personally to the Property Officer.

**Officers shall not store evidence and in-custody property in personal desks, lockers, briefcases, personal or department vehicles, private residences, or other places not specifically authorized by the Chief of Police. Personal use of such property is strictly prohibited. Officers MUST submit all such property by the end of their work shift. If circumstances prevent this, the officer's Supervisor shall be informed of this fact. There are no exceptions.**

I. Restricted Access to Property Storage Areas

1. General

- a. All areas designated for the permanent storage of evidence and custodian property, including the main evidence room, outside and off-site storage areas, and other designated areas in the police department, shall be secured and restricted to personnel authorized by the Chief of Police, or designee. Authorized personnel include the Property Officer and the Property Room Supervisor.

2. Key and Alarm Restrictions to Property Areas

- a. Under no circumstances shall keys or alarm codes to evidence/property storage areas, including temporary evidence lockers, be under the control of anyone, except the Property Room Supervisor, the Property Officer, and other person(s) designated by the Chief of Police as property custodians. Spare keys may be authorized by the Chief of Police, and shall be secured in a lockbox in the Property Officer's office. No keys may be duplicated without the express authorization of the Chief of Police.
- b. The department will maintain keys to the property room, and other areas as needed, in an off-site location for emergency entry into these areas. These keys will be kept in a secured area, inside a sealed envelope that is dated and initialed by the Property room Supervisor. In the event it becomes necessary to access one of these keys, the Chief of Police, Property Room Supervisor, the Property Officer, or designees, shall be authorized to retrieve the key. A logbook shall be kept and completed each time an "emergency" key is used. The log shall indicate the date, time and reason for accessing the keys, along with the person authorizing its use. The Property Room Supervisor will also ensure that the keys are once again placed in a sealed package and returned to the secured area.
- c. The property room doors, and safes and cabinets located within the property room, will be kept closed and locked whenever authorized personnel are not physically in the property room.
- d. The following authorized persons may enter or remain in the property room, provided the Property Officer or the Property Room Supervisor is present:
  - 1) Chief of Police
  - 2) Department employees authorized by the Chief of Police, such as those designated to conduct Staff Inspections, or

unannounced spot checks of the property room area.

3) Custodian (supervised by Property Officer)

- e. Anyone, other than the Property Room Supervisor, entering the property room must complete the appropriate log, detailing the name of the person, time of entry, time of exit, and purpose for the room. The combination to all safes /vaults in the property room, designated for valuables, money, drugs, or firearms, shall be changed upon the assignment of a new Property Officer and/or Property Room Supervisor.
- f. Employees are prohibited from using, borrowing, taking, or removing any items held as evidence or safekeeping, regardless of whether or not such items are used for personal use or for police business, without the written permission of the Chief of Police.

J. Status of Property Held

- 1. The Property Records System shall accurately reflect the classification (evidence or in-custody property), description, quantity, status, and location of all property held, plus the following information:
  - a. Case number
  - b. Submitting officer's name and ID number
  - c. Date and time when property was received
  - d. Chain of custody from date and time received through final disposition
- 2. Applicable information recorded on the evidence and property control form shall be entered into the computerized property tracking system as soon as practical in accordance with the guidelines set forth above. A bar coding system can be utilized to facilitate the tracking and inventory of all property.

K. Inspections, Inventories, and Audits of Property Function

1. General

The following documented inventories, inspections, and audits shall be completed:

- a. Monthly inspections by Supervisor
- b. Semi-annual inspections
- c. Inventory upon change of property custodian
- d. Annual audit
- e. Unannounced spot check inspections

## 2. Monthly Inspections of Property Function

- a. The Property Room Supervisor will conduct inspections of the property room and property storage areas. Such inspections will be completed on a monthly basis and may include any aspect of property operations. The inspections do not necessarily have to be comprehensive, however, they will include the following:
  - 1) A random comparison of at least 10 items in the property room and their property records.
  - 2) A determination that the property room entry log is being utilized.
  - 3) A determination that the accountability (chain of custody) of evidence is being maintained.
  - 4) An inspection of the cleanliness of all long-term property rooms and areas.
  - 5) A determination that property is being protected from damage or deterioration.
  - 6) A determination that provisions of the agency orders or other directives are being followed.
  - 7) A determination that firearms are properly secured and unloaded.
  - 8) A determination that proper disposal methods are being followed.
  - 9) A determination that all keys are adequately secured.

**A report, in the form of an Inter-Office Memo, or other format designed for this purpose, shall be sent to the Chief of Police upon completion of each inspection. Any problems or deficiencies found during the inspections will be documented in the report. The report shall also include any actions recommended or already taken to correct the deficiencies.**

## 3. Property Inventory Required Upon Change of Property Officer

- a. Whenever a new primary Property Officer is designated, an inventory of property will be conducted. The newly designated Property Officer, the Property Room Supervisor, and a designee of the Chief of Police, will perform this inventory jointly, to ensure that records are complete and properly annotated. All firearms, monies, narcotics, precious metals, gemstones, and other valuable items will be accounted for on an individual basis. All other evidence and records do not require an accounting of every single item, however, the inventory should contain a sufficient number of items to ensure the integrity of the system and the accountability of the property. Any and all discrepancies shall be recorded before the newly appointed property custodian assumes responsibility for the property control duties.

- b. Upon conclusion of the inventory, a report containing the results of the inventory and all discrepancies, if any, shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police within thirty days. All officers involved in the inventory shall review and sign the report to verify the accuracy of the report.

4. Annual Audit of Property Function

- a. Supervisors, involved in the property function, shall be responsible for an annual audit to ensure that the security, accuracy, and integrity of evidentiary and in-custody property including narcotics, weapons, and money are maintained. This audit is not meant to be comprehensive, however, it will include random comparisons of records against evidence and custodian property to determine the following:

- b. The audit shall include a review of:

- 1) All temporary and permanent storage areas and rooms, including any off-site storage areas in use, for their general physical condition and appearance, e.g., security, cleanliness, etc.
- 2) The integrity of the property that is being maintained, including a random sampling of computerized and manual records, logs, and forms received since the last audit. This will ensure:
  - a) The accuracy of property received, including money, weapons, and dangerous drugs, have been properly logged and have not been lost or checked out for an unreasonable length of time.
  - b) The maintenance of accurate and proper record keeping procedures
  - c) The accountability (chain of custody) of evidence is being maintained
- 3) A random sampling of disposition files and records to ensure that property, particularly weapons, drugs and money, have been disposed of properly and timely.
- 4) That all written directives pertaining to the property function are being followed.
- 5) That property is kept from being damaged or deterioration.
- 6) A determination that all keys are adequately secured.



c. Upon conclusion of the inspection, a report containing the results of the inspection and all discrepancies, if any, shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police within thirty days. All officers involved in the inspection shall review and sign the report to verify the accuracy of the report.

5. Unannounced Spot Check Inspections of Property Storage Areas

- a. The Professional Standards Commander will conduct an unannounced spot check inspection of all property storage areas twice a year, or more often, at the discretion of the Chief of Police. This spot check will include a random comparison of records against physical property to ensure the accuracy of the records, and inspections of all temporary and permanent storage areas and rooms, including off-site storage areas, for their general physical condition and appearance, e.g., security, cleanliness, etc.
- b. Upon conclusion of the inspection, a report containing the results of the spot check and all discrepancies, if any, shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police, Deputy Chief responsible for Property, and the Property Room Supervisor within thirty days. All officers involved in the inspection shall review and sign the report to verify the accuracy of the report.

6. Unannounced Biennial Audit of Property Storage Areas

- a. The Deputy Chief responsible for the Property Room will assign a Supervisor not assigned to the Property Function to conduct an unannounced audit of all property storage areas once every two (2) years, or more often, at the discretion of the Chief of Police. This audit will include a random comparison of records against physical property to ensure the accuracy of the records, and inspections of all temporary and permanent storage areas and rooms, including off-site storage areas, for their general physical condition and appearance, e.g., security, cleanliness, etc.
- b. Upon conclusion of the audit, a report containing the results of the spot check and all discrepancies, if any, shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police and the Deputy Chief responsible for Property within thirty days. All officers involved in the inspection shall review and sign the report to verify the accuracy of the report.

L. Disposition of Found, Recovered, and Evidentiary Property

1. General

- a. Final disposition of found, recovered, or evidentiary property will be accomplished within six months after legal requirements have been satisfied, unless otherwise directed by law or policy. Disposition will be in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Laws, as amended, and other provisions of this order. Property custodians shall be familiar with all legal requirements and procedures for the disposition of all property, including provisions relating to:
- Contraband and forfeited property, including drugs, narcotics, alcohol, and beer
  - Money and other valuables
  - Weapons and firearms
  - Bicycles and vehicles, and parts
  - Property used in suicides and suicide attempts
  - Miscellaneous and unclaimed property with no value

2. Photographing and Release of Evidence/Property

- a. Property that is subject to spoilage, if needed by the owner, or for some other legitimate reason cannot remain in evidence for an indefinite period, may be photographed and returned with the approval of the State's Attorney. The photograph of the evidence will be submitted to the Property Room as evidence..

3. Property Acquired for Use by the Department

- a. Property shall not be converted to use by the department unless its ownership is legally transferred to the department, such as items turned over as part of the asset forfeiture statutes or per order of the court. Upon being converted as agency-owned property, the item shall be entered into the department inventory system, if required.
- b. The Property Room Supervisor will retain a listing of all property acquired through civil process or asset forfeiture. All such property shall be disposed of pursuant to legal authority and in conformance with asset forfeiture requirements.

#### 4. Self-Audit

- a. Each quarter, the Property Officer and Property Supervisor will conduct a self-audit of property stored in the property room, for the purpose of identifying all items not disposed of in a timely manner as indicated above, after legal requirements have been met. The Property Room Supervisor shall submit a report to the Chief of Police, identifying any item(s) remaining in the property room beyond the three-month time period. The report will include explanations as to why the property has not been disposed of, and what measures are being taken to correct the matter.

#### M. Property Used for Investigative or Training Purposes

1. Any property including, but not limited to, controlled substances, weapons or explosives may be used for training or investigative purpose only after approval is given by the Chief of Police or designee.
2. Written approval by the Chief of Police or designee will include the following:
  - a. A description of the item(s);
  - b. The purpose for use of the item(s);
  - c. The person(s) who will have custody of the item(s);
  - d. The dates that the items are allowed to be removed from the Property Room; and
  - e. Any precautions or reporting requirements to be followed.
3. Any property that has been loaned out of the Property Room will be audited as part of any Property Room inspection.

#### N. Property Acquired Through Asset Forfeiture

All property acquired through asset forfeiture will be logged and secured through the property and evidence process until such time as the property is turned over to the Department by the Court. Once the property is released to the Department by the Court the property will be used by the Department or disposed of according to applicable state or federal requirements