




Clayton County Police Department

PROCEDURES

Subject CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION		Procedure # E6	
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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide officers and crime scene personnel with general guidelines and procedures for the investigation, interpretation, documentation, collection, packaging, preservation and court presentation of physical evidence from crime scenes.

II. POLICY

The Clayton County Police Department (CCPD) shall have a unit, or designated personnel, dedicated to crime scene processing and investigations twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. [CALEA 83.1.1] For the purpose of this policy, the aforementioned unit, or designated personnel, will be referred to as the Crime Scene Investigations (CSI) Unit or CSI personnel.

III. DEFINITIONS

Crime Scene: The location(s) at which a crime has been committed and/or where evidence of a crime is located or presumed to be located, and the site(s) of accidents and suspicious incidents where foul play could be involved.

Crime Scene Processing: The specific actions taken at the scene of a crime or accident; consisting of the taking of photographs, preparing a sketch of a crime or accident scene, and the collection and preservation of physical evidence.

Evidence: Anything that tends to assist in ascertaining the truth of a matter, or furnishes proof of a fact. Normally, evidence is classified as either physical or testimonial. Procedures for testimonial evidence will not be covered by this policy.

Latent: A fingerprint or other prints that may not be apparent to the eye but can be made sufficiently visible, as by dusting, for use in identification.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

The proper search of a crime scene for physical evidence is a critical part of any criminal investigation. The ability of personnel to identify what constitutes probative or viable physical evidence, and to properly secure and preserve it for trial is essential to the investigation of the crime and the prosecution of offenders. Certain procedures must be followed in the processing and preservation of evidence in order to ensure that its value for laboratory examination will not be adversely affected and that it will be admissible in court. Due to the complexity of criminal investigations, the contents of this procedure are considered minimal and investigations should exhaust every effort to bring an investigation to a successful conclusion.

- A. The Uniform Patrol Division is responsible for conducting preliminary investigations of all incidents and categories of crime. In addition to other responsibilities, the primary reporting officer shall maintain and protect the crime scene to preserve evidence. Depending on the type of crime and/or other extenuating circumstances, the primary reporting officer may arrange for the collection of evidence by contacting and/or requesting personnel from the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) and/or the Crime Scene Investigations (CSI) Unit to respond.
- B. No officer of this Department shall request CSI personnel to respond to a call, unless such officer can ensure that the incident and/or response location is safe.
- C. When requested to respond, CID and/or CSI personnel shall assume responsibility for making arrangements for the collection of evidence; however, this assumption will be clearly stated and relayed to the primary reporting officer and/or the concerned Unit/Shift supervisor.

V. CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATIONS (CSI) UNIT

A. General

- 1. The CSI Unit provides services for the County as well as the cities of Jonesboro, Riverdale, Forest Park, Morrow, Lake City, Lovejoy and Clayton State College. The CSI Unit utilizes their specialized training and equipment to search for, identify and collect evidence from crime scenes.
- 2. CSI personnel are trained in multiple disciplines including fingerprint comparison, crime scene processing, blood stain analysis, footwear comparison, death investigation, DNA collection, sexual assault evidence collection and much more.
- 3. CSI personnel are provided with state-of-the-art forensic tools and equipment, and they are extensively trained in the use of this equipment to allow them to identify, collect, forensically examine, interpret, and preserve physical evidence discovered at crime scenes. Included in the equipment issued to the CSI Unit are the FARO Laser Scanner, forensic light sources, and Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS).
- 4. CSI personnel are called upon to examine crime scenes, process evidence, consult on crime scene reconstructions, and provide expert testimony in court, and to be guest lecturers and instructors for police academies, government entities, educational and service organizations.

B. Unit Command Authority

- 1. The CSI Unit is a subdivision of the Criminal Investigation Division (CID). The CID Commander (Major) is in charge of operations for the Division.

2. The CSI Unit is comprised of sworn and non-sworn personnel.
3. CSI personnel shall report to the CSI Commander, or authorized designee, daily for their assignments.
4. Personnel assigned to the CSI Unit are not first responders.
5. **Non-sworn CSI personnel will not be armed nor authorized to arrest or detain suspects, conduct traffic or investigatory stops of vehicles or persons, write citations, issue parking tickets, nor use force other than in self-defense.**

C. Standard Duty Hours

The CSI Unit shall have personnel available twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. At the discretion of the CID Commander, CSI personnel shall be assigned to shifts and scheduled for standard duty hours.

D. On-Call Status

CSI supervisors and/or CSI personnel shall be available in an on-call capacity. The CID Commander, or authorized designee, shall create at their discretion, an *On-Call Schedule* for the staffing of off-duty hours during weekends, holidays, nights, etc. The *On-Call Schedule* will be provided to all CSI personnel, the E911/Communications Center and any other concerned Division and/or Unit.

E. Assignment of Patrol Officer(s) to the CSI Unit

The CID Commander may request the permanent or long-term transfer of patrol officers to satisfy any administrative workload increases, supplement any special operations and/or details. Such a request will be made through the Assistant Chief. The decision to approve such a request rests with the Chief of Police. If the request is approved, the newly assigned patrol officers may assist CSI personnel as necessary.

F. Uniform Requirements

CSI uniforms are distinctly different in color and design, from the Class A utility uniforms worn by patrolman assigned to the Uniform Patrol Division. CSI uniforms consists of the following:

1. Shirts
 - a. Sworn personnel shall wear a black or navy-blue polo shirt with their name embroidered on the right side of their chest, and an embroidered CCPD badge on the left side of their chest.
 - b. Non-sworn personnel shall wear a black or navy-blue polo shirt with their name embroidered on the right side of their chest, and "Crime Scene Investigations" shall be embroidered on the left side of their chest.
2. Charcoal gray BDU style pants that fit accordingly.
3. Black boots, as described in CCPD SOP *D2: Dress Code*, are the preferred footwear due to the types of crime scenes worked at any given time.
4. CSI personnel will not wear any part of their uniform or equipment while off-duty, except when traveling back and forth to work and/or court.

5. Non-sworn CSI personnel will not represent themselves as law enforcement officers, or display any badge or emblem to designate themselves as such.
6. **The carrying of weapons, even if properly licensed, is forbidden for non-sworn CSI personnel. Non-sworn CSI personnel will not carry any type of weapon (e.g., firearms, baton, OC spray, etc.) while working in the CSI Unit.**

G. Radio & Equipment

1. CSI personnel will be equipped with a police radio, which will enable them to request immediate assistance in emergency situations.
2. Non-sworn CSI personnel will not carry any type of physical restraint device.
3. CSI personnel will be issued an identification card that shall be used for official use only, and shall remain as the property of the Department. CSI personnel shall notify their supervisor if the card is lost or stolen. At no time will CSI personnel display their identification card to secure special privileges or personal gain.
4. CSI personnel are responsible for the care, control and maintenance of all County equipment permanently and/or temporarily assigned to them. They shall inspect all assigned County equipment prior to each use to ensure operational readiness. In the event any County equipment is lost or stolen, damaged or unusable, CSI personnel will notify their supervisor in accordance with CCPD SOP: B14: *Agency Property Control*.

H. Personnel Inspections

CSI supervisors shall conduct personnel inspections daily, to ensure:

1. Employees are in compliance with the Department's grooming and dress standards, general appearance, readiness for duty; and
2. The general condition of an employee's Department issued and/or approved equipment is in a state of operational readiness as set forth by CCPD SOP: *D2: Dress Code*.

I. Assigned Vehicles

1. CSI marked vehicles are distinctly different in body style, color and graphic design from any Uniform Patrol Division marked police vehicle.
2. CSI vehicles shall be inspected by the assigned CSI personnel operator prior to operation. The inspection(s) will be directly supervised and documented in accordance with CCPD SOP: B8: *Vehicle Usage and Mileage*.
3. CSI personnel will notify a supervisor of all Department vehicle accidents, or of any damage occurring to a CSI marked vehicle or equipment, assigned to them, in their care or occurring in their immediate presence. For further information refer to CCPD SOP: B22: *Department Vehicle Accidents & Investigations*.

J. Duties & Responsibilities

1. CSI personnel will be required to comply with the Department's core values, policies, procedures and rules and regulations, and all applicable laws.
2. CSI personnel must conduct themselves in such a manner as to demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism so as to maintain the public trust.

3. CSI personnel shall establish and maintain good working relations with the public.
4. Occasionally CSI personnel may attend a special event, community event, neighborhood watch meeting, and respond to questions and requests for information.
5. CSI personnel shall provide information and assistance to citizens.
6. CSI personnel will be polite and courteous at all times.
7. CSI shall work alongside sworn police officers at crime scenes and/or other locations.

K. CSI Response to CSI Calls for Service

Calls for service that originate with the Department through the E911/Communications Center is a potential criminal matter; hence, sworn officers of the Department have overall control of incidents that occur in the unincorporated areas of the County.

1. **Non-sworn CSI personnel shall only respond to CSI calls for service.**
2. CSI personnel will notify the E911/Communications Center, via the County radio, using their assigned radio number when they begin their scheduled shift.
3. CSI personnel are required to follow safety procedures while in the field.
4. Non-sworn CSI personnel shall not drive any CSI vehicle in an emergency mode, under no circumstances. It will only be driven in the routine response manner adhering to all traffic laws.
5. Non-sworn CSI personnel will not use CSI vehicles to transport citizens; if a citizen needs to be transported, a sworn officer will transport the individual.
6. Non-sworn CSI personnel have no legal authority to stop, detain, question or hinder any person from moving about freely.
7. At no time will a non-sworn CSI member initiate or voluntarily become involved in an investigation or incident that may become dangerous or volatile in nature.
8. Non-sworn CSI personnel shall not take unreasonable risks that could result in death or serious bodily injury and will disengage or withdraw if such action can be safely accomplished without further endangering themselves, other officers or the public.
9. Occasionally CSI personnel might be dispatched to a scene where, upon arrival, it becomes evident that the call for service requires attention of emergency personnel (e.g., police, fire, EMS). In such circumstances, non-sworn CSI personnel will discontinue activities and immediately notify the dispatcher that additional resources are needed.
10. Non-sworn CSI personnel shall not place hands on or intervene physically with individuals. If a situation (i.e., self-defense) occurs where any CSI personnel has placed hands on or intervened physically with an individual, the involved CSI member shall notify their supervisor as soon as practicable.
11. CSI personnel will notify the dispatcher when they arrive and/or depart from the scene of any dispatched or self-initiated call, follow-up investigation, or officially responded to any call, while acting on behalf or under the authority of the Department. If a CSI member changes locations while conducting official business. The new or next location of their call for service, if not already known, will be provided before they start to such location.

L. Training

The Department will ensure that all CSI personnel will receive specialized training to obtain the Georgia Peace Officer Standards & Training Council (GPOSTC) Identification Technician Certification. CSI personnel will specialize in the interpretation, collection, preservation and court presentation of physical evidence. The Department shall provide or have access to equipment and supplies used for crime scene processing, specifically for, but not limited to, the recovery of latent fingerprints, photography, and crime scene sketches. [CALEA 83.2.4]

VI. GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR CRIME SCENES [CALEA 83.2.1]

Though these procedures are primarily intended for CSI personnel, all sworn personnel will perform their duties in a manner that is compliant with these guidelines, as necessary. Depending on the circumstances, sworn personnel may be asked, expected or ordered to perform any of the following procedures, at which time they will also adhere to these guidelines.

A. CSI Personnel Documentation & Case File Procedures [CALEA 83.2.6]

Using the following procedures, CSI personnel will document the steps taken during the processing of a crime scene:

1. A crime scene case number will be requested from dispatch.
2. Detailed field notes will be taken on the scene, documenting all aspects and circumstances of the scene, to include who, what, when, where and how.
3. The field notes will be used to generate a *Crime Scene Report*.
4. All crime scene investigations that result in the collection of physical evidence by CSI personnel shall have a CSI case file created. The case file should contain a copy of the corresponding *Crime Scene Report* and any supporting documents (e.g., sketches, photographs, latent lift backing cards, *Property Receipts*, *Division of Forensic Sciences (DOFS) Evidence Submission Forms*, etc.).

Generally, CSI case files will be maintained for a period of seven (7) years. However, CSI case files will be maintained indefinitely for the incident or crime types of aggravated child molestation, aggravated sexual battery, aggravated sodomy, armed robbery, homicide, kidnapping, rape, or when deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) evidence exists for any crime.

Upon completion, all *Crime Scene Reports* will be forwarded to the concerned supervisor for review and/or approval.

B. Processing a Crime Scene

The following twelve (12) step process will be used when processing a crime scene:

1. Preparation
 - a. Evaluate the current legal ramifications of crime scene searches (e.g., obtaining consent to search, conducting a warrantless search, obtaining a search warrant, etc.).
 - b. Assess, obtain and maintain necessary packaging and collection materials for typical search circumstances.
 - c. Discuss upcoming crime scene search with all involved personnel prior to arrival on scene, if possible.

2. Approach the Scene

- a. Be alert for discarded evidence.
- b. Notate possible crime scene approach and/or escape routes.
- c. Determine how the crime scene has been protected prior to arrival.
- d. Determine the crime scene boundaries. Expand the scene as necessary.

3. Secure & Protect the Scene

- a. Upon arrival, take control of the crime scene.
- b. Ensure there is adequate crime scene security.
- c. Record and/or document detail notes. Do not rely on memory.
- d. Restrict access to authorized personnel only. Only personnel directly involved in the investigation are authorized. Create and maintain a *Crime Scene Log* of all personnel who enter and exit the crime scene.

4. Preliminary Survey of Scene

The preliminary survey is a step used for the organization and planning of the entire crime scene search. It incorporates a cautious walk-through, assessment, identification, determination and documentation of the following:

- a. Special problem areas or unique challenges;
- b. Unstable evidence;
- c. Need for additional equipment and/or personnel;
- d. Specific assignments and/or tasks for personnel; and
- e. Physical and environmental conditions.

5. Evaluate Physical Evidence

Determine what evidence is likely to be present at the crime scene by using the information obtained from the preliminary survey.

- a. Focus on easily accessible areas (e.g., open or plain view, etc.) first.
- b. Progress to areas that are out of view, specifically looking for evidence that is hidden from view or was intentionally hidden.
- c. Consider whether or not any evidence appears to have been inadvertently moved.
- d. Evaluate whether or not the crime scene and/or any evidence appears to have been staged.

6. Narrative Description & Scene Documentation

A well-documented crime scene ensures the integrity of the investigation and provides a permanent record used during judicial proceedings. The *Crime Scene Report* shall include a running narrative of the crime scene conditions which should include, but not limited to, the following:

- a. What items that should be present at the crime scene;
- b. What items are not present at the crime scene;

- c. What items are out of place at the crime scene; and
 - d. Situational factors (e.g., personal items, lights are on/off, doors and windows are open/closed, odors, ice and/or liquids present, movable furniture, temperature, weather conditions, etc.).
7. Photograph the Scene
- a. Photography shall begin as soon as possible. In addition to any photographs taken by CSI personnel, crime scenes should be photographed by the County Photographer, as directed by authorized personnel, whenever possible. The following guidelines shall be used for crime scene photography:
 - 1) Ensure all evidence is photographed prior to collection and packaging;
 - 2) Ensure that crime scene photography includes progression of overall, medium range and close-up views; and
 - 3) Use devices to show scale (e.g., ruler, etc.).
 - b. When photographs are taken by CSI personnel while processing a crime scene, a *Photo Log* will be completed and maintained with the *Crime Scene Report*.
 - c. Generally, video recordings are required on violent felony crime scenes, but may be utilized on any crime scene as necessary. Video recordings will be made by the County Photographer as directed by Criminal Investigations Division (CID) personnel.
8. Prepare Sketch of Scene
- A rough sketch is completed, when needed, at the crime scene and is typically not to scale. It establishes a permanent record of items, conditions and distance-size relationships. The rough sketch is used as a model for the final sketch which is used to supplement photographs.
9. Conduct Detailed Search
- a. Accomplish search based on the prior evaluation of evidence possibilities.
 - b. Begin by conducting the search in a general manner and work to the specifics regarding items of evidentiary value.
 - c. Use of specialized search patterns (e.g., grid, strip/lane, spiral, etc.) is recommended when possible.
 - d. Indicate the locations of evidence on the sketch.
 - e. Ensure all entrance and exit areas of the crime scene are searched.
10. Collect and Record Physical Evidence
- a. Complete an evidence log with descriptions and notations for each piece of evidence.
 - b. Measurements will be taken using recognized methods (e.g., baseline, triangulation, etc.).
 - c. Ensure that the evidence or evidence container is initialed by the CSI personnel who collected the evidence.
 - d. Seal all evidence containers while at the crime scene.

- e. If applicable, obtain known control samples (e.g., carpet fiber, paint, etc.) for future analysis.
- f. Constantly review all documentation, packaging notations and other pertinent recordings of information for accuracy and clarity to prevent confusion at a later time.
- g. Package, seal and label all evidence in accordance with departmental procedures and Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) standards. See also CCPD SOP: *E3: Evidence & Property Control*.
- h. Do not handle evidence excessively after its recovery.

11. Conduct Final Survey

The final survey is a critical review of all aspects of the crime scene search.

- a. Discuss the search with all concerned personnel jointly for completeness.
- b. Review documentation to ensure accuracy and clarity.
- c. Ensure that any possible search areas that are out of view or hidden have not been overlooked in a detailed search.
- d. Complete a final, overall search survey to ensure that all evidence has been collected.
- e. Account for all equipment used during the search.
- f. Account for all evidence before departing from the crime scene. Review the crime scene to determine the need for an additional search during daylight hours or to wait for more favorable weather conditions.

12. Release the Crime Scene

- a. Release of the crime scene will only occur after the completion of the final survey.
- b. At a minimum, documentation of the release of the crime scene shall include the date and time of release, and to and by whom it was released.
- c. Ensure that an inventory has been provided, if applicable, to the person whom the crime scene was released. Consider the legal requirements for search warrants.
- d. Only the officer primarily responsible for the investigation (e.g., primary reporting officer, case detective, etc.), or the supervisor overseeing the investigation, may release the crime scene.
- e. Consider the need to have certain specialists observe the scene before it is released.
- f. Once the scene has been formally released, re-entry may require a search warrant.

C. Completion of Evidence Processing

Generally, evidence retained for processing by CSI personnel will be processed within three (3) working days of collection and/or receipt, unless otherwise approved by a CSI supervisor.

D. Crime Scenes Not Routinely Processed by CSI Personnel

- 1. Generally, crime scenes of the following incident or crime types will not be processed by CSI personnel:
 - a. Recovered, stolen motor vehicles; and

- b. Theft and/or attempted theft of and/or from a motor vehicle.
- 2. Crime scenes of the aforementioned incident and crime types may be processed if any of the following circumstances exist:
 - a. The crime scene is a vehicle that was used during the commission of a felony or violent crime;
 - b. The crime scene is a vehicle that is believed to be part of a pattern of ongoing criminal activity in a specific area, or used in the targeting of a specific class of victim; and/or
 - c. The crime scene is a vehicle and a concerned supervisor believes or has determined that viable evidence exists in and/or on it.

E. Assisting Other Agencies

- 1. Circumstances and evidence may indicate that a portion, or all, of a criminal incident occurred within the boundaries of Clayton County. In the event that another agency has an investigative interest in a criminal incident, departmental personnel will process, collect, maintain and transfer evidence in accordance with this departmental policy.
- 2. CSI personnel will update the corresponding CSI case file(s) upon transferring evidence to another agency. CSI personnel will notate the date of transfer, specific items of evidence transferred, and who delivered and received the evidence.

VII. FINGERPRINTING & PHOTOGRAPHING OF OFFENDERS

A. Adult Offenders

Generally, adult offenders will be fingerprinted and photographed by Clayton County Sheriff's Office personnel during the booking process.

B. Felony Juvenile Offenders

Pursuant to OCGA § 15-11-702, every juvenile charged with an act, which would be a felony if committed by an adult shall be fingerprinted and photographed upon being taken into custody. The statute further requires that the photographs and fingerprints shall be taken and filed separately from those of adults.

The arresting officer will be responsible for the fingerprinting and photographing of felony juvenile offenders utilizing the Live Scan Fingerprint System. CSI personnel will assist as necessary. This information, along with relevant demographic and charge data will be kept in a secure area within the CSI Unit.

VIII. LATENT PRINT & FINGERPRINT COMPARISONS

CSI personnel are responsible for conducting fingerprint examinations and/or comparisons for criminal investigations. The following procedures are to be followed in order to establish reporting guidelines, and maintain the integrity and quality of the comparison.

A. Qualified Personnel

In order to be qualified to conduct fingerprint examinations and/or comparisons, personnel must have successfully completed a Georgia Peace Officer Standards & Training Council (GPOSTC) Fingerprint Classification Course, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Latent Print Identification Course and FBI Latent Print Development Course.

B. Assignment of Fingerprint Comparison Request

All requests shall be directed to the CSI Commander for assignment. The *Latent Comparison Request* will be assigned to the CSI personnel who processed the crime scene. If a request is made regarding a case that was not previously assigned to CSI, the CSI Commander shall assign the case to CSI personnel on a rotational basis.

C. Fingerprint Identifications

Fingerprint identifications will be made only by comparison of a legitimate, known, original inked print card or a legitimate, known copy of an original inked print card.

D. Verification of Fingerprint Identifications

After CSI personnel complete the initial fingerprint identification they will submit the case to another qualified fingerprint examiner for verification. Final verification will be completed by the CSI Commander, a qualified CSI supervisor, or other authorized and qualified designee, in the absence of the CSI Commander. Once the verification process is completed, the case will be returned to the assigned CSI personnel. The updated *Crime Scene Report*, complete with the comparison results and supporting documentation, will be forwarded to the concerned officer or detective and/or agency. CSI personnel will then document who received the results and when they were delivered.

E. Latent fingerprints that meet the guidelines set by the GBI Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) may be searched or compared against the AFIS database. When a latent fingerprint has been identified by AFIS, the same procedures regarding latent print and fingerprint comparisons will be followed.

IX. CANCELLATION

This procedure amends and supersedes standard operating procedure *E6: Crime Scene Investigations*, dated July 1, 2013.