



COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order



106.7.1 SPECIAL ORDERS

The Chief of Police, Assistant Chiefs or their designees are authorized to issue special orders for specific circumstances or events which are self-canceling due to an included expiration date.


Special orders may also be issued to introduce time sensitive new policies or procedures or revisions to existing policies or procedures until such time the addition or revision can be approved by the City Manager and added to the Policy and Procedure Manual. This use of a special orders should be reserved for additions or revisions of policy and or procedures which require immediate attention and the immediacy does not allow for the normal approval process as outlined in Chapter 19-22 of the Code of Ordinances prior to implementation. City Manager approval is required before any special order becomes accepted as Policy.

General Information		
Policy Number: 406	Policy Title: EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE SECURITY	
Date Issued 09/22/2021	Date Effective: 09/22/2021	Special Order Number: 21-406-3
Type of Revision: <input type="checkbox"/> New Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy Revision <input type="checkbox"/> Delete Policy		
Purpose of Revision: Introduce the Advanced Action Request Form to this policy and guidance for it's use in obtaining advanced actions or specialized processing on electronic equipment. Use of this form will assist the Investigative Bureau Commander track and manage specialized processing which is fee-based and often has limited licenses for use.		

From the office of the Chief of Police the following Special Order has been issued...

See attached Special Order 21-406-3 effective immediately. The resulting changes are located in section 406.6.D.3.c on page 9 and are highlighted in Blue. This special order will remain in effect until the revisions are approved by the City Manager and adopted into Policy 406.


SIGNATURE


DATE



COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT DIGITAL FORENSICS
REQUEST FOR ADVANCED ACTION AUTHORIZATION

PLEASE FILL OUT 1 FORM PER DEVICE

Submitting Det/Officer:	Case #:	Target Name:	Request Date:
Case Type (most serious offense):		Victim Name:	Offense Date:
Unit: <input type="checkbox"/> CID <input type="checkbox"/> Patrol <input type="checkbox"/> VNOC <input type="checkbox"/> Street Crimes <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic <input type="checkbox"/> Other			

LEGAL AUTHORITY FOR SEARCH/ANALYSIS:

☐ Search Warrant (attached) ☐ Owner Deceased ☐ Other (attach explanation)

Device Make (<input type="checkbox"/> Check if Unk)	Device Model (<input type="checkbox"/> Check if Unk)	Device Color:	Device Case: (<input type="checkbox"/> Check if N/A)
--	---	---------------	---

Explanation Justifying use of a fee-based Advanced Action (we have limited actions for the year):

*****INVESTIGATIVE BUREAU CHIEF USE ONLY*****

Investigative Phone Ping Authorized ☐ Yes ☐ No

Lieutenant Signature _____ Date _____

Assistant Chief Signature _____ Date _____

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

Approved By: Geoffrey Jones Chief of Police

CALEA 6th Edition Standard: 83.1.1; 83.2.1; 83.2.2; 83.2.3; 83.2.4; 83.2.5; 83.2.6; 83.3.1

406 EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

406.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide Columbia Police Officers and Crime Scene Investigators (CSIs) with guidelines and procedures for the following:

- A. 24-hour availability of qualified personnel (83.1.1);
- B. Preservation of a crime or disaster scene (83.2.1);
- C. Preservation, collection, submission, storage, transportation, and documentation of physical evidence (83.2.1; 83.2.5);
- D. Equipment and supplies for recovery of latent fingerprints, DNA, photography and videography, crime scene sketch or diagraming, and collection and preservation of evidence (83.2.2; 83.2.3; 83.2.4);
- E. Evidence collection training requirements (83.2.1b);
- F. Transfer of custody of physical evidence (83.2.1d);
- G. Report preparation responsibilities (83.2.6);
- H. Evidence laboratory submission (83.2.1c); and
- I. Evidence collection from known sources.

406.2 POLICY

The Columbia Police Department is committed to providing qualified personnel and equipment on a 24-hour basis and utilizing best practices in documenting and preserving crime or disaster scenes; documenting, collecting, and preserving physical evidence; maintaining chain of custody; and using outside expertise when warranted.

406.3 DEFINITIONS

Biological Evidence - Biological evidence, which contains DNA, includes body fluids, such as blood, semen, saliva, urine, and skin among other things. Biological evidence isn't always visible to the naked eye, which could include touch DNA. All biological evidence found at crime scenes or from person(s) can be subjected to DNA testing. Samples such as feces and vomit can be tested, but may not be routinely accepted by laboratories for testing.

CSI - Crime Scene Investigator - The Columbia Police Department employs civilian crime scene investigators (CSIs) with specialized training to properly process and document a crime scene. CSIs work a set schedule and are subject to call in for incidents requiring specialized skills/knowledge.

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

DNA - The abbreviation for deoxyribonucleic acid, which is the genetic material present in the cells of all living organisms. DNA is the fundamental building block for an individual's entire genetic makeup. A person's DNA is the same in every cell (with a nucleus). The DNA in a person's blood is the same as the DNA in their skin cells, semen and saliva.

FET – Forensic Evidence Team – The Columbia Police Department (CPD) maintains a group of employees (sworn and civilian) who have received specialized training in crime scene processing and evidence collection. FET members work their regular shift in their assigned CPD roll and may be utilized when their specialized skills/knowledge is needed. FET members are subject to call-in during major incidents when their services are needed to supplement the Department CSIs.

Physical Evidence - Any tangible object that can connect an offender to a crime.

406.4 24 HOUR AVAILABILITY OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL (83.1.1; 83.2.1)

Qualified personnel are available 24 hours a day to process a crime scene or traffic collision requiring a report (83.1.1)

- A. As part of the Missouri peace officer standards and training curriculum, all POST certified law enforcement officers receive training in the proper preservation, collection and documentation of physical evidence. (83.2.1c)
- B. The Department maintains a Forensic Evidence Team (FET) made up of sworn officers and civilian CSAs who have completed additional training in the areas of evidence collection and packaging for circumstances requiring specialized training. FET members receive regular ongoing training to maintain their skills and stay current with best practices. (83.2.1c)
- C. The Department employs civilian Crime Scene Investigators (CSIs) with educational backgrounds in forensic science or similar areas of expertise. A CSI's primary job is the processing of evidence scenes, including the preservation, collection, packaging, submission and documentation of evidence. CSIs undergo initial and ongoing training in various areas of forensic science and stay current with best practices. (83.2.1c)
- D. All officers of the Columbia Police Department are responsible for the identification, preservation, collection and documentation of physical evidence during an investigation for which they are the primary officer unless otherwise directed by a supervisor and relieved of that duty by a CSI or FET member. (83.1.1)
- E. In the event of a major criminal incident or incident requiring specialized processing techniques, the patrol Watch Commander in charge will request a CSI, FET member or both depending on the circumstances. CSI and FET members are subject to call-in, when available, thus providing 24-hour availability of personnel with specialized evidence processing capabilities. The Watch Commander will in turn send an email or text message notification to the CSIs chain of command. (83.1.1)
- F. In the event of a traffic crash involving a fatality or serious injuries that may result in a fatality, the Watch Commander in charge will notify a traffic crash investigator/reconstructionist to take over

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

and complete the investigation and collection of evidence as outlined in Policy 502 TRAFFIC CRASH RESPONSE AND REPORTING. (83.1.1)

- G. In situations where Department resources are deemed insufficient, the CID supervisor or Traffic Unit supervisor should coordinate with command staff to request appropriate resources from an applicable outside agency (*e.g.*, Missouri State Highway Patrol).

406.5 CRIME/DISASTER SCENE PRESERVATION RESPONSIBILITIES (83.2.1a)

The first officer at the scene of a crime or disaster scene is generally responsible for taking reasonable efforts to preserve the scene. Officers shall also consider officer safety and public safety, including reasonable efforts to render medical aid to any obviously injured parties. Once an officer has assumed or been assigned to maintain the integrity of the crime/disaster scene, the officer shall continue the assignment until relieved by appropriate personnel as assigned by a supervisor.

406.5.1 FIRST RESPONDER CONSIDERATIONS (83.2.1a)

The following list generally describes the functions which the first arriving officer should take to secure a crime or disaster scene. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive, is not necessarily in order and may be altered according to the demands of each situation, the availability of resources, capacity of personnel and totality of each circumstance.

- A. Ensure no suspects are still in the area.
- B. Broadcast emergency information, including all requests for additional assistance.
- C. Provide first aid to injured parties, if it can be done safely.
- D. Evacuate the location as required.
- E. Identify hazards or dangerous conditions to responding personnel.
- F. Secure the inner and outer perimeter, if needed.
- G. Protect items of apparent evidentiary value.
- H. Identify potential witnesses.
- I. Start a chronological log noting critical times and personnel allowed access.
- J. Prevent unauthorized access of personnel, the media or the public.

406.5.2 SEARCHES AT CRIME OR DISASTER SCENES (83.2.1a)

Officers arriving at crime or disaster scenes are often faced with the immediate need to search for and render aid to victims and to determine if suspects are present and pose a threat. Once officers are satisfied that no additional suspects are present and/or there are no injured persons to be treated, those exigent circumstances will likely no longer exist. Officers should thereafter secure the scene and conduct no further searches until proper authority for the search is obtained.

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

406.5.3 CONSENT SEARCHES AT CRIME/DISASTER SCENES AND OTHER LOCATIONS (83.2.1a)

Officers should obtain **written** consent to search from an authorized individual whenever possible, but should also consider obtaining a search warrant, in addition to consent, in the case of serious crimes or major investigations. Whenever a search is conducted solely based on consent, the consenting individual retains their ability and means to withdraw their consent at any time while the search is being conducted. If at any point, consent is withdrawn, the search must cease immediately absent a warrant. This includes consent searches of cell phones, computers, other electronic/digital devices, or other items that are conducted on site or removed to be searched at another location. Absent exigent circumstances, an employee conducting or requesting a consent search of a cell phone, computer, or other electronic/digital device shall obtain written consent on a completed CONSENT TO SEARCH ELECTRONIC DEVICE form which provides a mechanism for the device owner to withdraw consent. Copies of this form can be printed from PowerDMS.

406.6 EVIDENCE PROCESSING PROCEDURES (83.2.1b)

Employees involved in documenting, processing and collecting physical evidence should use methods that will best preserve the condition of evidence under the circumstances in which they are being collected. Efforts should be taken to prevent the introduction of foreign materials into a scene or a sample. The following procedures shall govern the processing of such evidence in order to ensure that these objectives are satisfied.

A. OBSERVATIONS/NOTES/REPORTS TAKEN AT THE SCENE (83.2.1b; 83.2.4c)

Initial observations, original notes/reports taken at the scene are the most readily available record of the crime scene and should, under normal conditions, include the following.

1. Types of information generally recorded at the scene includes:

- a. Case number and CAD incident number;
- b. Date and time of arrival at the scene;
- c. Offense or type of incident;
- d. Location of the scene;
- e. Name and pedigree information for victim(s);
- f. Name and pedigree information of suspect(s) if known;
- g. Actions taken at the scene;
- h. Name of the person(s) processing evidence; and
- i. Names of other first responders on scene (Fire, medics, etc.).

2. Initial observations and/or notations should include:

- a. Determine nature and extent of crime scene;
- b. Note all existing conditions;
- c. Gather known information regarding the incident and possible suspect movements, devise a plan, and search accordingly;

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

- d. Note items damaged or out of place;
 - e. Determine location of evidence;
 - f. Establish best working route;
 - g. Determine order of collection; and
 - h. Note relationship between items.
3. A crime scene sketch/diagram can be prepared for major crimes. When used, it should contain, at a minimum, the following information:
- a. Case number and CAD number;
 - b. Time and date prepared;
 - c. Location of offense;
 - d. Location of items of evidence in the scene;
 - e. Location and names of victims, witnesses, and suspects;
 - f. Relationship of the scene to others rooms, buildings, or roads;
 - g. Name of the person preparing the sketch/diagram;
 - h. Direction of North;
 - i. If the Sketch/diagram is not to scale it should say on the sketch/diagram "Not to Scale"; and
 - j. Indicate condition of items in the scene (*e.g.*, temperature, lights on or off, window if open/broken, radio/television on or off, etc.).

B. PHOTOGRAPHS AND/OR VIDEO OF A SCENE AND EVIDENCE (83.2.1b; 83.2.4b)

All sworn personnel FETs and CSIs who are issued a camera, body worn camera, or cell phone equipped with a camera have the ability to document a scene and evidence with still photographs or video. Depending on the circumstances and the initial conditions, it may be imperative for an employee to capture photographs or video of a scene or location of evidence quickly before rain, snow, wind or other conditions deteriorate or alter the scene.

All sworn personnel receive training in properly photographing a scene in the police academy. All civilian FETs and CSIs should receive similar training. Continued and/or advanced training in crime/disaster scene photography may be obtained through in-service training or outside training from a qualified provider.

Photographs should be taken prior to the processing and collection of evidence. Video recordings may supplement, but should not replace still photographs.

Generally, photographs should be taken in the following manner.

1. **Overall photographs** - These photographs should be taken from several different locations. Photographs of the surrounding area should be included.
2. **Midrange photographs** - These photographs should be used to orient the viewer as to the exact location of items of evidence. Whenever possible, two or more items of evidence should be in the field of view. If this is not possible, a common item (desk, bed, table, etc.) should be included in all midrange photographs.

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

3. **Close-up photographs** - These photographs should be taken so that the item fills the field of vision. When appropriate, take at least one close-up shot of each item or injury with a scale (e.g., six inch ruler, etc.) and at least one without a scale.

C. PRESERVATION OF PHOTOGRAPHS OR VIDEO FOR EVIDENCE (83.2.1b)

Depending on the medium in which evidentiary photographs are or video is taken or collected, it may be submitted to evidence via compact disc (CD), digital video disc (DVD), flash drive, or uploaded directly to Evidence.com or other evidence storage program in use by the Department at the time.

D. COLLECTION OF EVIDENCE (83.2.1b; 83.2.4a; 83.2.4c; 83.2.4d; 83.2.5)

1. When collecting items of evidence, the following should be considered.
 - a. Use tongs, tweezers, or rubber gloves when possible. Avoid touching the item with hands or anything which might contaminate the item.
 - b. Collect perishable items first. If the destruction of evidence is not a concern, collect evidence in a logical sequence, trying to avoid disruption of other items of evidence.
- 1) Control specimens/known samples: As a general rule, forensic laboratories can only compare known items with items showing similar characteristics. Therefore, sufficient specimens or controls (e.g., known samples) should be collected and submitted for comparison of such items as hairs, fibers, fabrics, paint, glass, wood, soil and tool-marks. For cases involving liquor violations, when required, sufficient samples should be taken from each item as may be appropriate.
- 2) Perishable items such as food will be photographed and DNA evidence collected from it if applicable. The perishable item should not be submitted into evidence unless extenuating circumstances exist. If submitted into evidence, the item shall be placed in an evidence refrigerator or freezer as applicable and the collecting employee shall consult with a supervisor, prosecuting attorney, and or evidence unit supervisor as appropriate to determine if long term storage is necessary.
- 3) Latent evidence (see Latent Evidence collection section of this policy).
- 4) Cell phones, computer equipment, and other digital evidence (see the Cell Phone and Digital Evidence section of this policy).
- 5) When it appears that the collection of evidence at the scene has been completed, a final thorough search of the scene should be conducted in case any evidence has been overlooked. Whenever possible, an officer unassociated with the processing should be utilized.
- 6) Measurements, sketching/diagramming of the scene: Measurements of evidence items may be required as they relate to more permanent structures for an accurate reconstruction of a scene at a later time. Measurements of evidence items within the scene should be taken after initial photographs. Precautions should be taken not to contaminate the scene while taking these measurements. After items of evidence are collected, measurements of walls, rooms and overall building measurements may be

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

taken. Appropriate Department-owned technology should be used when available to document and measure scenes as completely as possible.

2. LATENT EVIDENCE COLLECTION (83.2.1b; 83.2.1d; 83.2.3; 83.2.4a)

- a. When processing a crime scene for latent fingerprints, the following factors should be taken into consideration:
 - 1) The size of the item to be dusted;
 - 2) The type of surface; and
 - 3) The potential for destruction, if moved. If moving or transporting the object will destroy latent prints, the object should be processed at the scene.
- b. If circumstances dictate that the use of Department equipment is not practical or appropriate for the recovery of latent print(s), the object in question will be seized as evidence, packaged and labeled per Department procedure and conveyed to the MSHP crime lab or other suitable lab for processing.
- c. When processing a scene for latent fingerprints, the proper equipment (*e.g.*, powder, brushes, tape, etc.), will be used.
- d. If latent fingerprints are lifted from a scene, the following procedure will be followed.
 - 1) The fingerprint tape or fingerprint lifters with the lifted print will be placed on the glossy side of the plain white or black fingerprint lift card, On the back of the backing, the following information will be included:
 - a) Report number;
 - b) Officer PIN;
 - c) Location from where print(s) is lifted;
 - d) Date; and
 - e) Lift #.
- e. The recovered print will be packaged, labeled and entered into evidence, and the offense or associated supplemental report will reflect its recovery.
- f. When applicable and appropriate, the above shall also pertain to the handling of fingerprints from known individuals for elimination prints.
 - 1) Officers will ensure that elimination fingerprints are collected for all available subjects.
 - 2) Elimination prints will be forwarded with the latent prints collected to the MSHP crime lab or other lab being used for processing. The elimination prints shall be packaged in a separate envelope.

3. CELL PHONE, COMPUTER EQUIPMENT AND DIGITAL EVIDENCE (83.2.5)

Cell phones, computers and other electronic/digital devices (*e.g.*, routers, smart watches, game consoles, and smart home devices such as Alexa, Google Home, Apple Home, etc.) may contain

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

information that has evidentiary value. This information can be severely damaged and data can be permanently lost due to improper start up, shut down or collection procedures. These electronic devices can be classified into one of two categories:

- 1) Protected by a lock feature requiring a user to enter a password/key/biometrics/etc.; and
- 2) Not protected by a lock feature.

It is important for devices that are protected and powered-on to remain that way in order to increase the likelihood of accessing the device's data. Other considerations to keep in mind when handling electronic devices are Smart Location and "live" data.

When Smart Location is enabled, it keeps the device unlocked for a certain period of time while at a particular location (*e.g.*, the owner's vehicle or residence). Having "live" data is a circumstance where you have reason to believe evidentiary data is in the memory but not stored on the hard/solid state drive (*e.g.*, information typed in Notepad that has not been saved). In both of these uncommon circumstances, the device should be processed on scene.

For cases where an electronic device is not processed on scene and is seized as a result of an arrest or investigation for the information to be extracted from the device, officers must safely preserve, transport and submit the electronic device. Officers should adhere to the following guidance.

a. PRESERVING ELECTRONIC EVIDENCE ON A DEVICE

Isolation of devices such as cell phones, tablets and laptops can be done by placing the device in Airplane Mode. Once in Airplane Mode, verify WiFi, Bluetooth and NFC are also turned off. If access to this setting is protected but it has a SIM card, remove the SIM card and tape it to the device. Only remove the SIM card if Airplane Mode is not possible. Verify WiFi, Bluetooth and NFC are turned off after removing the SIM card.

In cases where the device cannot be isolated by the above methods or the WiFi/Bluetooth state cannot be verified, place the device in a Faraday Box. A Faraday Box is located in the Digital Forensic Investigator Office.

b. TRANSPORTING AN ELECTRONIC DEVICE

When transporting an electronic device, it is not only important to isolate the device but also to protect it from other dangers (*e.g.*, exposure to electrostatic discharge, water, impact, etc). An electronic device should be placed in an evidence paper bag or cardboard box.

Consideration should be given to the likelihood of exposure to other dangers. When appropriate, a sealed anti-static bag may be used to protect against static discharges and water exposure. It is important to note, anti-static bags do not result in isolation. The bags do

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

not stop radio waves such as cell phone signals, WiFi or Bluetooth from being received or transmitted. If necessary, bubble wrap may be used to protect against falls/drops/etc.

c. SUBMITTING POWERED-ON DEVICES

Electronic devices should be submitted to Property and Evidence according to their current state.

Devices that are turned off or are in a status known as Before First Unlock (BFU) can be submitted to the Evidence Unit in a similar manner as non-electronic items. Before First Unlock is when a device is powered on but has not yet had a successful user password entered. This is the typical state after a device restarts or when it is first powered-on.

Devices that are protected and powered-on must have proper steps followed to increase the chances of accessing and analyzing the data on the device. The device should be isolated and plugged in to maintain power.

The device should be placed in a powered locker or cabinet and plugged in using a compatible power block and cable. Verify the device is charging. The appropriate evidence bag or box should be filled out and placed in the locker or cabinet with the device. The device should be entered into the property management system, and the key to the locker or cabinet should be submitted to the Evidence Unit via the evidence chute.

The Evidence Unit will verify and check in the item, including attaching a barcode label. The item will then be recorded in the property management system. The item will remain in the locker or cabinet after being checked in, and the Evidence Unit will maintain the key until the Digital Forensic Investigator (DFI) checks out the key to access the item.

A Digital Forensics Request for Service form shall be completed by the investigating officer and submitted to the DFI along with the authorizing Search Warrant or signed Electronic Device Consent form.

Devices that require Advanced Actions or specialized processing which will result in the use of a limited, fee-based feature will require preauthorization from the Investigative Bureau Commander. An Advanced Action Request form should be completed and routed to the Investigative Bureau Commander via chain of command. Once approved, the signed form should be provided to the DFI along with the device, Request for Service form and related search warrant/consent form.

When the DFI has completed the extraction, the item will be resubmitted to the Evidence Unit. The item will be checked back in to the property management system with an updated location.

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

d. TIME SENSITIVE ELECTRONIC DEVICE PROCESSING

In situations where a device must be processed as soon as possible, the DFI should be contacted and, if necessary, respond to the scene. An authorizing Electronic Device Consent form or Search Warrant should be provided prior to processing unless exigent circumstances apply. A Digital Forensics Request for Service form should be completed and provided to the DFI as soon as practical.

4. DNA EVIDENCE (83.2.1a,b,c,d,e; 83.2.4)

a. FIRST RESPONDER RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRECAUTIONS

The first responding officers on a crime or disaster scene have many responsibilities which include the identification of potential items of evidence, including potential sources of DNA evidence, and taking the necessary steps to protect such evidence until it can be collected. Because DNA evidence is more sensitive than other types of evidence, law enforcement personnel should be especially aware of their actions at the scene to prevent inadvertent contamination of DNA evidence.

- 1) It is important for all law enforcement personnel at the crime scene to make a conscious effort to refrain from smoking, eating, drinking, littering, sneezing, coughing, use of phones that belong at the scene, or any other actions which could compromise the crime scene. The use of a face mask may be considered for individuals with a cold, the flu, or those who are otherwise prone to sneezing or coughing.
- 2) Avoid touching anything, such as opening doors or windows, or using the telephone at the crime scene, unless absolutely necessary. These actions may contaminate valuable DNA evidence. If you must, for example, close a window because rain is pouring into the crime scene, DOCUMENT the actions taken to prevent contamination such as the application of latex gloves prior to closing the window. While documenting evidence at the crime scene, officers shall include descriptions of whether evidence was found wet or dry. An example of this documentation would include blood spatters.

b. DESIGNATION OF PERSONNEL AUTHORIZED TO COLLECT DNA EVIDENCE

Officers, Forensic Evidence Team members (FET), and Crime Scene Investigators (CSIs) are authorized to collect and process DNA evidence at crime scenes within the city limits of Columbia. This evidence might potentially be submitted to the crime lab for analysis. Officers and CSIs who have received advanced training in collecting DNA evidence should be used when readily available.

- 1) Unless exigent circumstances exist that would significantly alter, destroy, or render evidence uncollectible, homicides or serious incidents (*e.g.*, assaults, sex offenses, etc.) that have the potential to become homicides should be processed by CSIs or FET members, whenever available.

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

- 2) A Department supervisor or Watch Commander may choose to request FET members or CSIs for other incidents, if it is determined that a particular crime scene merits a greater level of processing expertise or may require evidence collection personnel to be on scene for an extended period of time.
 - 3) In some cases, members of a federal, state or regional law enforcement agency may be deemed more qualified or as having jurisdiction for the processing of a particular crime scene.
- c. ASSESSMENT OF DNA CRIME SCENE BY PROCESSING OFFICER/EMPLOYEE

When conducting a crime scene assessment, the processing officer shall do the following.

- 1) Talk to the first responding officer regarding their observations and activities.
- 2) Determine the entry and exit points to the crime scene.
- 3) If a crime scene perimeter is established, assure that documentation is made of every person who enters and exits the crime scene.
- 4) Evaluate any bio-hazardous safety issues that should be considered.
- 5) Identify possible locations and sources of DNA evidence.
- 6) Thoroughly document the scene and all evidentiary items with photographs.
- 7) Document if evidence is wet or dry when discovered.
- 8) Document any bloodstain patterns, with reference points, before collection.

d. COLLECTION

Because extremely small samples of DNA can be used as evidence, greater attention to contamination issues is necessary when identifying, collecting and preserving DNA evidence. DNA evidence can be contaminated when DNA from another source is mixed with DNA relevant to the case.

1) General Guidelines

The following general guidelines should be followed when dealing with DNA evidence in order to prevent contamination of the evidence.

- a) Wear double gloves and change the top pair often. Double-gloving best protects an officer/employee from bio-hazardous materials at the scene. Double-gloving can also prevent the inadvertent contamination of evidence. By retaining a single pair of gloves against your skin and changing only the top layer, there is a reduced risk of contamination.
- b) Use disposable instruments, or clean reusable instruments thoroughly before and after each sample is taken to prevent contamination.
- c) Air-dry wet evidence thoroughly before packaging to prevent mold from forming.
- d) To prevent degradation, place evidence in breathable, new paper bags or boxes. DO NOT USE PLASTIC BAGS.
- e) Seal packages with evidence tape. Avoid using staples in evidence packaging as there is a risk of contamination if a person is cut on a staple while unpacking evidence.

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

- f) Do not touch the area where you believe DNA exists.
- g) Do not touch your face, nose, hair or mouth when collecting and packaging evidence.
- h) Do not sneeze or cough near evidence. If you are prone to sneezing or coughing, a face mask should be worn.

e. COLLECTION AND PACKAGING PROCEDURES FOR DNA EVIDENCE

The following general procedures shall be followed for collecting and packaging DNA and other biological evidence.

- 1) The entire item can be collected and submitted when reasonable, based on the circumstances and nature of the crime.
- 2) A clean or disposable razor blade or scalpel may be used to extricate an entire or partial area when needed.
- 3) Use a new or clean razor blade or scalpel to cut out a control sample.
 - a) Control samples are swabbings or cuttings from unstained, adjacent fabric or materials that are used by the laboratory in the analysis of DNA evidence. Controls should always be documented, collected and submitted to the laboratory. Controls are taken to allow the laboratory to evaluate the potential impact of any substances that could affect the DNA sample during testing.
- 4) If cutting is not appropriate to collect evidence, new swabs can be used.
- 5) All potential DNA evidence submitted to the Department's evidence custodian shall be clearly marked "TO BE RETAINED FOR POSSIBLE DNA ANALYSIS" by the person submitting the evidence. Any evidence deemed to be a potential biohazard should be marked accordingly with a "BIOHAZARD" label.

f. STORAGE OF DNA EVIDENCE

All DNA evidence or items submitted for possible future DNA analysis, if stored at the police station, shall be maintained by the Department's evidence custodian in a controlled environment to reduce the likelihood of deterioration of the evidence.

g. TRANSPORTATION

Whenever possible, to prevent cross contamination, DNA evidence should be transported from a scene by the officer who collected the item of evidence. When transporting evidence from a scene, officers shall ensure that the chain of custody is maintained and documented if custody is transferred to another person. DNA evidence should be transported to the station and/or laboratory in a timely manner. When transporting biological evidence, officers must be aware that direct sunlight and warmer conditions may degrade DNA. Officers shall avoid storing evidence in places that may get hot, such as the trunk of the police car. To best preserve DNA evidence, store in a cold environment.

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

h. OFFICER SAFETY

The handling of DNA evidence in certain forms can pose health risks to the police officers collecting and submitting the evidence. Biological material can contain pathogens such as hepatitis, syphilis, tuberculosis, gonorrhea, measles and HIV. Officers shall assume that all stains, wet or dry, are potentially infectious. To protect yourself from biohazards and to protect the evidence from becoming contaminated, officers shall do the following.

- 1) Use personal protective equipment (PPE) such as eye protection, mask and gloves.
- 2) Use new gloves for each piece of evidence.
- 3) Use clean or new implements to manipulate each sample collected.
- 4) Minimize contact with the sample (use a swab or forceps, etc.)
- 5) If possible, allow evidence to dry before packaging.
- 6) Collect and package evidence separately.
- 7) Do not fold together a bloodstained garment.
- 8) AVOID DIRECT CONTACT with the evidence sample.
- 9) The following can cause exposure to infectious materials:
 - a) Accidental needle contact;
 - b) Contact with broken skin;
 - c) Aerosols (spray);
 - d) Mucosal contact (eye, nose and mouth);
 - e) Contact with any surface that has not been adequately cleaned;
 - f) Hand to mouth activity (the most common route to infection). Do not eat, drink, or smoke within a crime scene;
 - g) Unclean hands. Hands should be washed/sanitized as soon as possible after removing gloves; and
 - h) Contaminated PPE. All PPE shall be disposed of properly in biohazard bags, containers or sharps container as applicable.
- 10) Officers/employees should use extreme caution in dealing with biological evidence and follow proper safety precautions.

i. SUBMISSION TO LABORATORY

DNA evidence will be submitted to the MSHP Crime Laboratory or other authorized crime laboratory facility following normal submission procedures. Officers/employees will note on their evidence sheet/request forms that DNA tests are requested.

j. TRAINING

All officers receive general basic training in the collection of evidence to include DNA evidence. FETs and CSIs receive advanced training (either internally or from an external source) as part of their assignment. All employees, especially FET members and CSIs are

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Special Order

EVIDENCE COLLECTION, PRESERVATION AND SCENE INTEGRITY

encouraged to attend internal and external training from reputable training providers to stay current on new trends in crime scene processing technology.

5. CRIME SCENE PROCESSING EQUIPMENT

- a. The Department maintains crime scene processing equipment and supplies in the Evidence Unit and in the Crime Scene Investigator van. The equipment is available for use by Department personnel who are trained in its use. The following equipment will be maintained by the Evidence Unit for officers/employees to use in the collection and processing of evidence (this is not an all-inclusive list).
 - 1) Paper bags (various sizes)
 - 2) Evidence envelopes
 - 3) Plastic bags (various sizes)
 - 4) Evidence tape
 - 5) Evidence collection tubes
 - 6) Measuring tape/wheel
 - 7) Narcotics detection kits
 - 8) Specialized collection kits (sexual assault, DNA, DWI)
 - 9) Various supplies for collecting latent prints
- b. Individual patrol officers are issued an evidence processing kit which should contain the following items.
 - 1) Fingerprint processing materials (brushes, powder, lifting tape, gloves, blank evidence cards, measuring tape, ruler, etc.)
 - 2) Magnetic fingerprinting kit
 - 3) Crime scene tape
 - 4) Measuring tape/ruler
 - 5) Evidence markers
 - 6) Narcotics "quick test" field kits
 - 7) DNA collection materials
- c. Patrol officers may use point and shoot digital cameras (if issued), body worn cameras or issued cell phones to take photographs or video of scenes and evidence.
- d. CSIs and FET members are issued digital cameras with more capabilities and manual functions to take specialized photographs and use specialized techniques.
- e. It will be the responsibility of the individual officer/employee to keep their evidence processing kit stocked and ready for use.
- f. The Crime Scene Investigators and supervisor will determine a list of items needed in the Crime Scene Investigator van to complete the common daily tasks of the job.
- g. CSIs will be responsible for daily checks of the Crime Scene Investigator van to ensure it is properly stocked with items on the list.
- h. The Evidence Unit supervisor shall ensure that an adequate amount of evidence collection equipment/supplies is available for officers/employees to replace what they have used.