



CHATHAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

SOP-OPS-032:

EFFECTIVE: 03/10/20

COLLECTION AND PRESERVATION OF EVIDENCE

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) is to establish responsibilities for officers, investigators, and the community resource officers, in the processing of crime scenes. And to establish guidelines for the proper documentation, collection, packaging, and submission of physical evidence to the property room and the crime scene laboratory. And to consider the legal dimension of the use of physical evidence.

POLICY:

The proper documentation, collection, preservation, and submission of physical evidence to Crime Scene laboratories may provide the critical information of any successful investigation. Through evidence located at the scene, suspects are developed or eliminated, investigative leads are established, and theories concerning the crime are substantiated or disproved. The officer or investigator must always be aware that any physical evidence collected might someday have to be presented in court; therefore, it is imperative that each crime scene is processed so as not to overlook, contaminate, or destroy evidence. Physical evidence appears in many shapes, sizes, and forms, thereby necessitating various recovery, preservation, and submission techniques. Preparations shall be made to identify, collect, and package the evidence so that it shall not be changed in form and value when it reaches the laboratory. The collection of the evidence shall include the maintenance of a chain of custody to ensure that it is presented to the court professionally and in compliance with the law.

PROCEDURE:

I. INITIAL CRIME SCENE FIELD OPERATIONS

A. Response

1. The first officer to arrive at the scene of a crime or other law enforcement incident, including traffic accidents, is responsible for the following actions as they may apply to the situation:
 - a. Parking well away from the scene until the boundaries of the scene can be established.
 - b. Covering the most likely avenues of escape.
 - c. Locating and providing necessary assistance to any victims.
 - d. Searching the scene for suspects and broadcasting a description.
 - e. Determining the actual scene and taking charge of protecting it, preserving evidence, and keeping witnesses present. This may include assigning officers to protect the scene and/or specific items identified as evidence from intrusion.

- (1) Officers will approach and enter scenes tactically, while keeping in mind that evidence appears in all forms and will refrain from touching, moving, or collecting evidence to the greatest extent possible, within reason.
 - f. Notifying the communications center of the need for any additional help.
 - g. Initiating and maintaining a crime scene log, which will list the names of every person who enters or exits the crime scene.
 - (1) This will be done through a single entry/exit point.
 - h. Completing an incident report.
 2. The primary patrol officer assigned the call is in charge of the scene. He or she shall direct all personnel assigned to assist until the arrival of supervisory personnel or CID Personnel.
 - a. All unauthorized and unnecessary personnel must be excluded from the scene. This may include police officers, firefighters, paramedics, and witnesses.
 - b. Crime scene tape, ropes, signs, and CCPD personnel should be used to maintain a perimeter and preserve all parts of the crime scene.
 - c. No portion of a major, Part I, crime scene shall be released without the approval of a Criminal Investigation Division Supervisor.
 - d. The only photographs of the crime scene which will be taken by responding officers will be those necessary to document perishable evidence. Any photographs taken will become the property of CCPD and subject to all evidence collection rules.
 - (1) The photos/images will be transmitted to the Crime Scene Unit via email before the end of shift. The phone does not need to be submitted.
- B. Evidence Integrity
 1. The integrity of physical evidence will be protected by:
 - a. Securing the crime scene and not allowing entry until a Crime Scene Investigator or Criminal Investigator has arrived and assumes responsibility on major part one crime scenes.
 - b. Limiting the actual number of personnel entering a crime scene to the bare minimum needed to process it thoroughly.
 - c. Extending the security area immediately beyond the fringes of the incident.
 - d. Avoiding touching, handling, or stepping on anything until the entire scene has been documented and analyzed.
 - e. Keeping in mind that nothing is too small or too insignificant to have investigative value.
 2. The objectives of collecting evidence are as follows:
 - a. To determine the facts of the crime.
 - b. To identify the suspect(s) and link him/her to the scene.

- c. To aid in the arrest and conviction of the suspect(s).
 - d. To prove or disprove a fact in contention.
3. The Criminal and Crime Scene Investigators should perform or direct the search. They will:
 - a. Develop a search plan.
 - b. Photograph and sketch discovered evidence before handling.
 - c. Conduct a search regardless of apparent adversaries.
4. Evidence shall be collected as follows:
 - a. Preserve discovered items for crime scene processing, fingerprints, ballistics, etc.
 - b. Package discovered items to preserve possible latent and/or DNA evidence for future analysis as well as to minimize cross-contamination.
 - c. Mark, seal with evidence tape, and initial all evidence and containers.
5. Evidence shall be marked as follows:
 - a. Package and label evidence immediately to ensure its proper identification later.
 - b. Each piece of evidence must be marked when it is removed from its original position.
 - c. Identify each item and its location in the scene. This information will be in the investigator's notes as well as the report.
6. The chain of custody shall be maintained as follows:
 - a. Limit the number of individuals who handle the evidence to as few as possible.
 - b. Record the name of the individuals who handle the evidence in the chain of custody section on the property and evidence form.
 - c. The original Property and Evidence form will be turned in with the property and evidence when it is logged into the property room.
 - (1) The original Property and Evidence form will be maintained and utilized by Property Room Personnel to document the change of custody of said property and evidence.
 - (a) Property and evidence shall be documented (on the original Property and Evidence form) when it is removed from, examined, or returned to the Property Room.
 - (2) If the evidence is turned in directly to the GBI Crime Lab, without going to the Property Room first, then an original evidence sheet will be completed and turned into the Property Room. The chain of custody section will indicate that the evidence was given directly to the GBI Crime Lab.
 - (a) This evidence sheet will be turned into the Property Room immediately after transferring the evidence to the GBI Crime Lab. This will allow proper documentation as to the evidence's current location, by Property Room Personnel.

- (3) Copies of the original evidence form should accompany the evidence when it is signed out.
 - (a) If additional transfers of custody or examines occur, they will be documented on the copy, in the chain of custody portion of the form. When the evidence is returned to the Property Room, the copy will be attached to the original Property and Evidence form, for the chain of custody purposes.
- d. Never assume the evidence which is returned is in the same condition or state in which it was found.
 - (1) Verify packaging, markings, and properly sealed with evidence tape (if applicable).
- C. The integrity of witnesses shall be ensured as follows:
 1. Isolate potential witnesses.
 2. Obtain identities of potential witnesses and where they were at the time of the alleged incident.
 3. Obtain the first reactions of witnesses.
 4. Collect witnesses' statements.
 5. Allow witnesses to give a full statement free of outside influences.
 6. Allow witnesses the opportunity to record and sign statements.
 7. Never lead witnesses or attempt to "help" them recall information.

II. CRIME SCENE UNIT RESPONSE

- A. Qualified Crime Scene Investigators shall be available on a 24-hour basis to process a Major Part One Crime scene.
- B. When the immediate services of a Crime Scene Investigator are required, personnel with these skills should be notified as soon as possible.
- C. In many cases, the implementation or continuation of the investigative process should await the completion of certain aspects of the Crime Scene Investigator's work. It is important that a Crime Scene Investigator be notified to coordinate his or her arrival at the scene and provide instructions to on-scene personnel on how to proceed until he or she arrives.

III. CRIME SCENE PROCESSING

- A. Guidelines
 1. Once the first officer(s) to arrive releases a crime scene, the assigned Crime Scene Investigator is ultimately responsible for the activities conducted at the crime scene. They have the experience in crime scene processing and shall be held accountable for actions taken at the crime scene.
 2. Crime Scene Investigators shall have access to personnel, equipment, and supplies used for processing scenes to include, but not be limited to the following purposes:
 - a. Photography and/or Video Recording.
 - b. Sketches.
 - c. Processing and recovering of latent fingerprints.

- d. Documentation and recovery of impressions.
 - e. Collection and preservation of physical evidence
 - (1) Each Crime Scene Unit Investigator shall be responsible for ensuring their vehicle is properly equipped at all times with a sufficient number of supplies and equipment during their tour of duty.
 3. A cursory search by the assigned Crime Scene and Criminal Investigator shall begin upon their arrival. The search will be minimally invasive, and nothing will be touched or moved.
 4. The established perimeter of the crime scene must be photographed and evidence in the crime scene documented by sketch as to location and relationship to other relevant items within the scene.
 5. The crime scene must be sketched, based on correct measurements, to pinpoint the location of evidence in the crime scene. The sketch should complement the video and photographs.
 6. Methods used for processing crime scenes should not be undertaken until all crime scene photographs, sketches, measurements, and written documentation has been completed.
 7. When searching a crime scene, the collection of evidence that could be destroyed or lost should be given first priority.
 8. The basic rules and requirements of evidence and photographs are:
 - a. Identify each item of evidence and photograph.
 - b. Describe the exact locations of where each piece of evidence was found.
 - c. Demonstrate the proper chain of custody from the time of collection until presented in court.
 - d. Describe any changes that have occurred between the time of collection and presentation in court.
 - e. Take the necessary precautions to prevent evidence from being changed, modified, or affected by a cross-exchange of trace evidence except:
 - (1) Normal changes that some biological materials shall undergo.
 - (2) Unavoidable changes that weather conditions may cause.
 - f. Be able to testify that the photographs accurately depict the crime scene at the time they were taken.
 - g. Always use the appropriate camera lens.
 - h. Photographs must precede the collection of evidence. The only exception of the possibility of evidence destruction.
 - i. All homicides shall be video recorded, and all other cases shall be video recorded on an "as needed" basis, to be determined by a Crime Scene Investigator.
- B. Observations
- (a) Observations at the crime scene must be recorded to include visual details, lighting, and weather conditions.

- (b) If there is a deceased body present, a detailed description of features, wounds, clothing, jewelry, scars, and tattoos shall be made.
 - (c) A crime scene sketch shall be prepared to include all pertinent measurements.
 - (d) The crime scene shall be methodically processed for evidence.
 - (e) All evidence pertaining to the crime shall be logged and collected.
- C. Preliminary Examination
- (a) No entry shall be made until both the Crime Scene and Criminal Investigator arrive, and a cursory survey can be done.
 - (b) If necessary, Patrol units shall be utilized for Crime scene security.
 - (c) Only those individuals who are investigating the crime scene are authorized to be in the crime scene area.
 - (d) All unauthorized individuals shall be kept out of the crime scene area until the crime scene is released.
 - (e) The names of individuals permitted access to the crime scene shall be recorded on a crime scene access log.
 - (f) If the crime scene search requires a lengthy investigation, an area close to the crime scene should be designated as a collection point for trash generated in a search and for storage of equipment not in use to help avoid contamination of the crime scene.
 - (g) After the photographs are taken, measurements and a rough sketch of the crime scene must be made showing all pertinent items of evidence.
 - (h) Any additional evidence discovered on the detailed search must be photographed and added to the sketch.
- D. Collection of Evidence
- (a) The Crime Scene Investigator shall handle the collection of all evidence at major part one (1) crime scenes. Criminal Investigative Division personnel may assist in directing the Crime Scene Investigator during the collection of evidence at the major part one (1) crime scenes.
 - (b) For crime scenes of lesser complexity, the collection, latent developing, and logging of evidence shall be the responsibility of patrol precinct personnel.
 - a. Availability of Patrol personnel trained to process crime scenes of lesser complexity may be an issue during peak times of Patrol activity or in the absence of such personnel on any given Watch. If there are no available Patrol personnel to process a scene, the following response shall be provided:
 - i. Place the assignment on an assignment log, via Dispatch on the Records Channel – for the next available Watch.
 - ii. Place the assignment on an assignment log, via Dispatch on the Records Channel – for an investigator to process as soon as available.
 - (c) After being processed, all items collected shall be submitted to the property room for safekeeping and/or evidentiary purposes. All property must be logged in to agency records as soon as practical to preserve the chain of evidence.

Additionally, all property must be placed under the control of the property and evidence control function before the officer ends his/her tour of duty

- (d) All property items shall be placed in an appropriate package/container, sealed with evidence tape, and marked with the initials of the Crime Scene Investigator, Criminal Investigator, or police officer who collects the evidence.
- (e) The transfer of custody of physical evidence shall be documented on a Property and Evidence Form (CCPD Form 1024) and in Records Management System.
 - a. The record of the transfer of physical evidence shall include the following:
 - i. Item(s) being transferred.
 - ii. Date and time of transfer.
 - iii. The person's name and PR# of whom the property is being transferred to or received from.
 - iv. Reason for the transfer.
- (f) A Crime Scene Unit Technical Service Request CCPD Form 1027 shall be completed and forwarded to the Crime Scene Unit. A "To Be Processed" sticker affixed to the evidence or evidenced sheet, should it be necessary for the Crime Scene Unit to process the evidence.
- (g) The evidence shall be retrieved by a Crime Scene Investigator, processed, and returned to the property room with the Property and Evidence Unit, maintaining custody of the original property form.
- (h) Individuals who examine any item of evidence shall document their examination in the chain of custody portion of the evidence form with the item number(s), date, name, and reason for examination.
- (i) All latent print cards collect by patrol precinct personnel will be;
 - a) Turned in prior to the end of their shift,
 - b) Placed in the (MARKED) wall-mounted lockboxes, which are located at each of the precincts.
 - c) Documented in the Crime Scene Latent Evidence Log Book. All required information will be completed in the logbook prior to placing the latent print cards in the lockbox.

IV. PERISHABLE EVIDENCE - Perishable evidence is defined as fresh blood, blood-stained objects, other physiological stains and tissue, and biological materials. When collecting perishable evidence from a crime scene, the following procedures will be used:

A. Fresh blood (wet specimen):

- 1. Fresh (wet) blood will be collected using saline, placed in a sterile glass vial, capped or stopped, sealed, marked, tagged, and placed in the property room. All items for blood typing must be refrigerated or submitted to the Crime Lab as quickly as possible. Heat, humidity, and sunlight have destructive effects on blood and will not only affect ABO groups but will destroy the weaker antigen systems and enzyme groups.
- (2) Blood samples taken from living victims and suspects will be placed in a proper container, accepted by the GBI State Crime Lab. Properly seal and label the tube with the suspect or victim's name, date, name, or initials of the detective

and the doctor or medical technician who draws the sample. Keep blood samples refrigerated. DO NOT FREEZE. Blood samples must be delivered to the Crime Lab as soon as possible.

- (3) To obtain maximum value from blood and bloodstain evidence, the crime lab must have a sample of known blood from both the victim and the suspect. This is necessary in cases where there is only a very small stain because of the types and sub-types of blood. This must be determined in order to select the systems to be run on case material, which will provide the greatest population differentiation and distribution.

B. Dry blood:

1. Whenever possible, the entire object that has the bloodstain on it should be submitted. When the bloodstain is located on a wall, floor, or other objects that cannot be submitted, one of the following procedures should be utilized:
2. For blood stains appearing on fixed objects or on an object too bulky to transport to the laboratory, the Crime Scene Investigator will cut off that portion of the object bearing the stain, if possible. Bloodstains on objects which cannot be cut, for example, concrete floors or metal safes, may be scraped and the scrapings placed into the proper container or onto a clean piece of paper. The paper will then be folded carefully and placed into a container.
3. When a large amount of stained material is present, the easiest technique is to scrape several large flakes into a small box or proper container and label the container appropriately;
4. When the stain is small, the fiber or swab technique should be used. Cut 4 to 6 gauze fibers 1/2" long from a gauze pad. Moisten the fibers with distilled water from an Adi-pak and swab. Swab the bloodstains with the fibers, concentrating the stain on the fibers as much as possible.
5. The fibers/swabs should be air-dried in a secure location before sealing, marking, and packaging them. The dried fiber samples do not require refrigeration.
6. For blood stains appearing on porous objects such as wood or earth, the bloodstain, as well as a portion of the material upon which the stain appears, should be placed in a clean container, labeled on the outside and sealed to prevent loss through leakage.

C. Bloodstained materials:

- (a) Bloodstained articles should not be packaged for submission to the State Crime Lab until they have thoroughly dried at normal room temperature or in an approved drying chamber.
- (b) A clean paper will be placed under the drying object to catch any falling trace evidence. When the object is dried and ready for packaging, the paper should be carefully folded to secure the trace evidence and placed in the wrapping with the article in a paper bag. Multiple items must be packaged individually to avoid contamination, and the bag should be labeled.

D. Other stains, tissues, or biological material:

1. Other types of stains can be collected using the same procedures as previously described for wet and dry blood.

2. Articles bearing semen stains will be placed between sheets of paper, cardboard, or similar material and then secured in such a manner that cross-contamination is avoided. Semen stains should be allowed to dry before being packaged.
 3. All other body fluids, including saliva, urine, perspiration, pus, human milk, nasal mucous, and tears, will be handled with the same precautions as blood and semen.
- E. Body tissue:
1. Body tissue must be collected and placed in a sterile glass bottle in saline solution, capped or stopped, sealed, marked, tagged, and submitted to the property room.
- F. Other biological material:
1. If not air-dried, it must be refrigerated after being marked, sealed, and tagged.
- G. Other bodily fluids:
1. Seminal fluid which is deposited outside the body on sheets, garments, furniture, etc., is excellent scientific evidence. If seminal stains are present on bed clothing, these should be collected for examination. Do not collect the mattress pad unless there is no sheet on top of the pad. If seminal stains are still wet, these stains should be circled just outside the boundary of the stain and noted to the crime Lab serologist who receives the case.
 2. Dried semen on immovable objects should be scraped carefully using a razor blade onto a sheet of clean white paper, which is then folded into a secure packet to prevent loss of scrapings. If the dried stain is too small or too thin a smear for scraping, it can be absorbed onto a small piece of gauze, which is dampened with prepackaged, sterile distilled water. The gauze should be thoroughly air-dried before packing into a paper bag or envelope. Liquid semen should be wiped onto a clean gauze and allowed to dry.
- H. Hair
1. Hair samples will be placed in a sealable plastic evidence bag and labeled. A minimum of twenty-five (25) randomly pulled elimination hairs is necessary for comparison purposes. Pubic hair should be treated in the same manner. A brush or a comb can be used to obtain some of the hairs for a standard, provided the brush or comb is clean. If combed / brushed hairs are collected, they can be submitted in the same plastic bag with the pulled hair or in a separate plastic bag.
- I. Due to the seriousness of life-threatening diseases being transmitted through bodily fluids and the risks involved with handling these fluids, any time evidence or containers containing bodily fluids being handled by detectives, latex, or nitrile gloves will be worn.

V. COLLECTION OF KNOWN STANDARDS FOR COMPARISON

- A. When the following types of physical evidence are collected from a crime scene, a known standard sample or source must be collected for comparison by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) State Crime Lab:
1. Blood.
 2. Hair.

3. Fibers.
 4. Paint.
 5. Glass.
 6. Wood.
 7. Metal.
 8. Soil.
 9. Tool marks.
 10. Footwear.
- B. The location from which the samples are taken is critical for the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) State Crime Lab and should be documented on the case Criminal Investigator's and Crime Scene Investigator Forensic Technician's report.

VI. DETAILED SEARCH PROTOCOL

- A. Evidence that may be affected by time or the elements shall receive priority.
- B. All major items of evidence shall be photographed, recorded, collected, and examined.
- C. Items shall be collected in a logical order to keep from disturbing the rest of the crime scene and destroying other evidence. Ideally, the progression should be from least intrusive to most intrusive.
- D. Items to be examined for trace evidence shall be removed to an area of cleanliness.
- E. The making of plaster casts or lifting of latent prints from objects to be moved from the crime scene shall be accomplished as necessary.
- F. When a deceased body is involved, the items of evidence between the entrance to the crime scene and the body shall be processed first, and then a detailed search of the body shall be conducted.
- G. After the body has been properly documented and searched, it may then be removed from the crime scene by the authority of the coroner's office. Once the body has been removed, the area beneath shall be photographed.
- H. The processing of obvious evidence can be continued. After processing obvious evidence, the search for and collection of trace evidence is continued.
- I. After the trace evidence has been collected, other items that cannot be removed for processing shall then be checked for latent prints.
- J. Physical evidence standards of all pertinent materials shall be collected.

VII. PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO RECORDING

- A. Photographs and recorded video should include:
 1. The approach to the crime scene, showing address or other identifying items in the photograph.
 2. Surrounding areas of the crime scene.
 3. Close-up photographs of the entrance and exit to the crime scene, or if these cannot be defined, then those that could be most likely used.
 4. Photographs of bloodstains should include overall, medium, or evidence-establishing shots and close-up shots without and then with scales.

5. Photographs of bloodstains, footprints, or tire imprints that are of value, should always include overall, medium and close-ups views without and with a scale.
 6. Photographs of latent prints which cannot be lifted, with and without a scale.
 7. Photographs of damaged areas, if related to the case.
 8. Close-ups of damaged containers that were the target of burglars, such as safes, jewelry boxes, etc.
- B. Photographing the crime scene if a body is involved should include:
1. Overall crime scene of the accident from all four sides of the area.
 2. Photographs of the body from four different views.
 3. Medium or evidence establishing views to show the relationship of certain areas of interest in context with other reliable items in the scene.
 4. Close-up photographs of the body to show:
 - a. Wounds, including a scale to illustrate the size of the wound when appropriate.
 - b. Weapons close to the body.
 - c. Other evidence close to the body as well as the immediate area around the body.
 - d. Photographs of the area that was under the body, after the body is removed.
 - e. If fingernail scrapings and/or gunshot residue swabs are to be taken, the hands of the victim shall be bagged using paper bags, initialed by the bagging officer, and securely attached at the wrist prior to removal from the crime scene.
 - (1) Photograph the hands after they are bagged, showing the evidence tape and identifying marks of the investigator who sealed them.
 - f. The bags used to secure evidence from hands shall be recovered when removed from a victim's body and logged into the Property and Evidence Unit when there is the potential of recovering DNA or trace evidence.
- C. Photographing vehicle fatalities should include:
1. Overall crime scene of the accident from all four sides of the area.
 2. The exact position of the vehicle(s), injured, dead, and objects directly connected to the accident.
 3. Points of impact, marks of impact, and damage to property.
 4. Pavement, road defects, and any obstructions.
 5. Close-up of damage to a vehicle(s).
 6. Photographs of all four sides of the vehicle(s) to include the tag number.
 7. Skid marks, before and after the vehicle(s) has been removed.
 8. Glass, metal, and other associated debris.
- D. Photographing deceased person at the autopsy, when requested, should include:
1. Overall photographs of the deceased entire body, front and back at different stages of undress and in a washed state.

2. Close-ups of the victim's face for identification after being washed.
 3. Overall of all wounds or injuries to show their location on the body.
 4. Close-up photographs of any wounds and injuries without a scale and with a scale.
- E. Photographing live persons should include:
1. Overall photographs around the person, four views.
 2. Photograph of a person's face for identification purposes.
 3. Overall and then mid-range, evidence-establishing, views to show wound location on the body in context.
 4. Close-up photograph of injury without a scale and with a scale.
 5. A witness should be present if the subject to be photographed is of the opposite sex, and the area to be photographed is in a private area.
 - a. Every effort should be made to assign a crime scene investigator of the same gender, for the photographs.
 6. Witnesses will always be present if the subject is a minor.
- F. Any other photographs that are requested by investigators
- G. Items of evidence that are photographed close-up shall be photographed without and then with a measuring device. This is especially important for laboratory examinations and/or comparisons.
- H. Storage of photographic documentation
1. Upon completion of the assignment, the investigator will log the photographs into a database under the Case Report Number.
 2. All photos will be transferred from the photo card to the Crime Scene Unit photo computer or database designed strictly for the storage of photos.
 - a. This computer will be arranged to have two automatic backup systems to ensure the integrity of the photos.
 - b. No photos will be altered or tampered with in any way, from the original taken at a scene.
- I. Storage of Video Documentation
1. Video shot at a scene will not be edited or altered in any manner.
 2. Those officers assigned a camera which saves media to an "SD" media card will download the recorded material to the crime scene photo computer or other department-approved storage databases for future investigative use.

VIII. AUTOPSY ACTIONS:

- A. The Crime Scene Investigator is responsible for the following actions at autopsies when requested:
1. Taking photographs as indicated under the section on photographing deceased persons.
 2. Inked finger, palm, and footprints shall be taken as needed if possible.
 3. A close check of the body for trace evidence can be conducted with the GBI such as:

- a. Fingernail scrapings.
- b. Combing of head and pubic hair regions for foreign hair.
- c. Hair sample standards from all body areas.
- d. Collect any bullets recovered from the deceased.

IX. SKETCHES

- A. There are two (2) categories of sketches, rough and final, that shall be employed depending on the area, items, and location of the items to be shown.
- B. The rough sketch shall be finished on the crime scene.
- C. A final clean sketch shall be completed at the office, utilizing a sketching program.
- D. Triangulation, baseline, or coordinate sketching methods shall be employed depending on the area, items, and location of the items to be shown, the method to be determined by the Crime Scene Investigator.
- E. All measurements shall be accurate and recorded uniformly. An accurate tape shall be used to take measurements unless extreme distances are involved, then a measuring wheel or accurate laser digital measuring device may be used.
- F. Measurements shall be taken so that a correct perspective can be obtained in the final clean sketch.
- G. A sketch should not contain any unnecessary details; it should only show essential elements of a crime scene and their spatial relationships in an uncluttered and concise fashion and indicate evidence collected.
- H. Two or more sketches may be necessary to depict an excessive amount of evidence.
- I. Information that shall be in the sketch legend is as follows:
 1. Name and rank of the preparer.
 2. Date, time, crime classification, and case number.
 3. Address of the crime scene.
 4. Labeled "not to scale."
 5. Indicate north.
 6. A key or legend.

X. LATENT FINGERPRINTS

- A. An attempt should be made to document and/or obtain latent, patent, and plastic fingerprints.
- B. The items and areas to be processed for latent fingerprints shall vary in each instance. They will be determined by the reconstruction process of the crime scene, and will typically be items known or suspected to have been handled by suspect(s), and other unique circumstances of the crime.
- C. ~~Visible~~ Latent prints are those which are not visible to the naked eye or may require the use of oblique lighting. They must be processed to be made visible.
- D. Visible or patent prints are those in which the suspect's fingers or hands have come in contact with foreign substances such as blood, ink, grease, paint, etc. and transferred to a surface. They are visible to the naked eye and can be photographed as is. No

- Processing is necessarily needed; however, they could potentially be enhanced if needed.
- E. Plastic fingerprints are those that have been impressed in soft material and are three-dimensional. They should be sprayed lightly with lacquer or shellac in an upward direction for the spray to fall onto the surface of the fingerprints and allowed to harden for transportation after being photographed.
 - F. Smooth, non-porous items shall be processed with powder on the crime scene.
 - 1. An additional option would be to transport them carefully to the lab for cyanoacrylate fuming; this is situationally dependent and at the discretion of the crime scene investigator.
 - G. Smooth, porous items shall be properly secured and removed for chemical processing.
 - H. The chemical process to be used shall be determined by the surface and the Crime Scene Investigator, processing the item.
 - I. In the case of foreign substance transfer, the fingerprint should be covered with tape and carefully removed for transport after being photographed.
 - J. All unidentified homicide, suicide, and questioned death victims should be fingerprinted prior to their removal from the scene. If this is not possible, prints can be taken at the GBI or the funeral home.
 - K. The Crime Scene Investigator shall be responsible for ensuring that the fingerprints are taken either at the scene of the crime or at the autopsy and/or examination of the body.
 - 1. The Crime Scene Investigator shall log this activity in the Crime Scene Unit call book in the remarks column, noting the name of the victim printed, if known, and the date of birth, if known.
 - 2. Criminal investigations personnel shall check with the Crime Scene Unit personnel prior to the release of a body to verify that the fingerprinting has been completed.
 - 3. Fingerprinting of the deceased should only be done after all other forms of evidence and/or examination have been completed.
 - 4. The fingerprints of the deceased shall be maintained by the Crime Scene Unit when taken.
 - L. Storage of latent prints
 - 1. When a Crime Scene Investigator recovers useable latent fingerprints associated with an investigation, the card will be appropriately marked with all requested information.
 - 2. The call will be logged in the latent case number logbook within the Crime Scene Unit.
 - 3. Each case will be given a sequentially assigned number
 - 4. All useable cards will be filed in the appropriate latent print file for future use.

XI. IMPRESSIONS

- A. Photographs of tire track, footprint, and tool mark impressions shall be obtained.

- B. Photographs will include overall and mid-range views to show the relationship of impressions to the rest of the crime scene.
- C. For close-up views of impressions without and with a measuring device, the measuring device must be along the side of the impression, on the same plane, and not through the impression.
- D. A minimum of four (4) photographs shall be taken of each impression utilizing a flash unit at 12, 3, 6, and 9 o'clock positions.
- E. The flash shall be removed from the camera hot shoe and held at approximately a lighting and shadows to illuminate vial detail.
- F. After photographing, if the impression is a surface impression and is on a movable object, the object shall be collected in the proper method and transported.
- G. If the object is not moveable, a latent tape lift of the print shall be made if possible.
- H. After photographing an impression, a cast of the impression should be made if possible.
- I. On tire or footprint impressions, dental stone or similar substitute shall be incorporated.
- J. On tool marks, a silicone rubber cast material may be used.

XII. DANGEROUS WEAPONS

- A. Firearms involved in major cases should be secured in place and left alone. The Crime Scene Unit will process the scene, collect the evidence, and submit this evidence to the property room.
 - 1. Unless absolutely necessary.
 - 2. Guns shall not be handled by Patrol Officers to "make them safe."
 - 3. No weapon, once moved, will ever be replaced in the scene for the Crime Scene Investigator to document the weapon.
 - 4. Situations which are articulable for an officer to handle a firearm include:
 - a. To prevent it from being removed from the scene by onlookers
 - b. The officer is alone and must attend to other pressing scene issues, leaving the firearm unsecured
 - 5. When an officer must remove said firearm to safeguard it, he or she will articulate in the report what was done and why; the firearm will be handled in such a way as to minimize contamination.
- B. All seized or recovered firearms shall be unloaded prior to entering any CCPD facility.
 - 1. Ammunition removed from a recovered firearm shall be placed in an evidence bag, and the bag shall be placed in the box containing the firearm. Both the firearm and the ammunition shall be listed on the chain-of-custody form.
 - 2. If a firearm is damaged to the point that it can't be rendered "safe," the firearm may be submitted to the Property Room provided that both the packaging and the chain-of-custody form indicate in bold, red lettering that the weapon has not been rendered "safe."

- C. When patrol officers seize or recover a firearm(s), they are required to run a records check through GCIC/NCIC on the firearm(s) and indicate the results of the records check in the incident report.
- D. An E-Trace will be run on crime guns only; these are guns used in the commission of a crime and logged in as evidence. This does not include guns used in a suicide or logged in as safekeeping.
- E. Knives shall be placed in a knife box prior to being submitted to the Property and Evidence function.
- F. Other sharp instruments, razor blades, glass, etc., shall be placed in a clear plastic bag and an evidence envelope that has been clearly marked to indicate that the envelope contains a sharp object(s).

XIII. CRIME SCENE REPORTS

- A. An accurate record of events that transpired at the scene of a crime in connection with the investigation will be made.
- B. It is the responsibility of the person who processed the scene to submit detailed reports describing the sequence of events associated with a scene investigation as related to evidence on the appropriate incident, supplemental, or investigative follow-up report.
- C. Persons who process a scene shall prepare and submit a supplemental report on all cases in which they have some part in an investigation.
- D. Supplemental reports shall contain the following information, at a minimum.
 - 1. The date of the report and the case report number.
 - 2. The reporting officer's name and rank.
 - 3. The type of offense, date and time of occurrence of the original offense, and address of occurrence.
 - 4. The victim's name and address, if listed in the original report.
 - 5. The number of photographs taken and accompanied by a photo log. .
 - 6. All areas and items processed for latent fingerprints with a notation of negative or the number of latent prints lifted from each area or item.
 - 7. An itemized list and description of all evidence or property taken into custody and where items were found.
 - 8. The time dispatched.
 - 9. The time of arrival on the scene.
 - 10. If possible, every person present during the investigation.
 - 11. Actions performed by the Crime Scene Investigator.
 - 12. The names of anyone assisting with measurements, collection of evidence.
 - 13. Actions or information performed or developed in regards to the offense.
- E. Investigators will complete their report in SSI. Other forms that may be applicable are:
 - 1. Crime Scene Technical Service Request (CCPD Form 1027).
 - 2. Georgia Bureau of Investigation Evidence Submission Form.

3. Receipt for Property.
- F. Completed paperwork must be approved by an appropriate Investigations Supervisor or designee.
- G. Traffic Collision Reports
 1. An accurate record of events that transpire at the scene of a traffic collision should be made.
 2. It is the responsibility of the person who processed the scene to submit detailed reports describing the sequence of events associated with a scene investigation as related to evidence on the appropriate incident, supplemental, or investigative report.
 3. The traffic collision report shall contain the following information:
 - a. Date and time of arrival at the scene.
 - b. Location of the scene.
 - c. Name of the victim(s), if known.
 - d. Name of the suspect(s), if known.
 - e. Narrative of the Investigator's actions at the scene.
 - f. The report case number, when known.

XIV. SUBMISSION OF EVIDENCE TO THE LABORATORY

- A. Responsibility
 1. Evidence, other than drugs/narcotics, collected by person(s) processing scenes shall be submitted to the GBI Laboratory by the primary investigator, with the original Chain of Custody sheet being submitted to the Property and Evidence Custodian or designee. Proper procedures for the intended laboratory will be followed.
 2. Drugs/narcotics evidence shall be submitted to the Laboratory by the Property and Evidence Custodian or designee.
 3. Any liquid blood, seminal fluids, physiological stains, or the tissue or biological material of a perishable nature should be refrigerated and submitted to the laboratory for analysis as soon as possible after collection.
 4. Items shall be hand-carried. All transfers of evidence shall be accompanied by a signed receipt to maintain the chain of custody.
- B. Packaging
 1. Persons submitting evidence must receive a log-in user name and password from the supervisor of CCPD's Crime Scene Unit to log into the GBI's Laboratory submission portal on the internet.
 - a. Those using the portal are responsible for logging in and checking the progress/status of the submitted evidence.
 2. The packaging of evidence for the GBI Crime Lab will be in compliance with GBI procedures.
- C. A copy of the request for examination of evidence or transmittal letter, the certified receipt, and the return receipt from the laboratory when returned will become part of the case file.

- D. The written report of the results of the examination shall be made a part of the case file.

XV. TRAINING

- A. As a part of the department's basic training curriculum for police recruits, provided by outside training academies, familiarization in the following subjects will be provided:
 - 1. Potentialities and limitations of the examination of physical evidence;
 - 2. The department's written directives concerning the role of the officer, investigator and evidence technician at a crime scene;
 - 3. Collection methods and procedures for fingerprints, footprints, blood, fibers, and fabrics, weapons, hairs, paint, glass and tool marks, and the requirements for the collection of materials from a known source for comparison purposes;
 - 4. Personal protection from contamination by contact with substances at scenes.
 - 5. Preservation methods for evidence;
 - 6. Maintenance of the chain of evidence (marking, sealing, tagging, receiving);
 - 7. Crime and accident scene photography; and
 - 8. Crime and accident scene records.
- B. The Criminal Investigation Division will ensure that all Crime Scene Investigators are successfully trained in the required tasks associated with their assignment by mandating that each member of the Chatham County Crime Scene Unit is state-certified through GA POST.
 - 1. A new investigator to the unit has two (2) years in which to become certified.
- C. During CCPD's Patrol School, crime scene unit personnel will offer training which prepares new officers to process the scenes of lesser complexity.

BY ORDER OF:

Electronically Approved in PowerDMS on 03/10/2020

Jeffrey M. Hadley
Chief of Police