

A. **PURPOSE.** To establish standard guidelines for the submission of custodial property to the Property Management Unit for storage and disposition

B. **PROPERTY TYPE.** This directive applies to all custodial property coming into the possession of the Grand Rapids Police Department or its members except:

1. Motor vehicles shall be turned over to the purchasing agent for storage. Those vehicles taken for evidentiary reasons shall be promptly processed by technicians and thereafter be released to the owner or transferred to the custody of the purchasing agent for storage at the impound lot (motorcycles/moped are considered motor vehicles and shall be treated as such).
2. Dead Bodies. All dead bodies are the custody of the Medical Examiner and storage will be at a place designated by the Medical Examiner's Office.
3. Explosives or quantities of flammable, volatile or otherwise dangerous materials shall be turned over to the Departmental Bomb Technicians or the Department of Natural Resources, whichever agency is appropriate. Incident reports of the case shall contain a record of the disposition of the material.

C. **DEFINITIONS.** Custodial property is property being held for safekeeping, as evidence, or as found property.

1. Property Held for Safekeeping. Custodial property coming into the possession of the Department or its members where ownership is known or unknown and is to be held until its proper disposition can be authorized.
2. Property Held as Evidence. Property coming into the possession of the Department or its members and is to be held as evidence for potential or actual criminal prosecution or civil action.
3. Found Property. Custodial property coming into the possession of the Department or its members, where ownership is known or unknown, and is to be held pending identification, notification and return to its rightful owner.

D. **PROCEDURES**

1. All custodial property shall be submitted to the Property Management Unit for storage without unnecessary delay.

2. Members of the Department shall obtain an incident complaint number and complete an incident report for each submission of custodial property. Subsequent submissions from the same incident shall bear the same incident number.
3. Submission of custodial property shall be entered into the records management system (RMS) and exported to the FileOnQ property management system. All applicable fields shall be filled in completely, (i.e., make, model, serial number, etc).
4. In situations where property is not able to be entered through the RMS, the property shall be entered into the FileOnQ property management system via the desk top client, or Webview version of FileOnQ. All applicable fields shall be filled in completely, (i.e., make, model, serial number, etc).
5. Each item for submission shall be packaged in the authorized packing material provided by the Property Management Unit (PMU). If the item is too large, unwieldy, or odd-shaped for either packaging, the submitting employee shall securely attach a completed blue evidence tag.
6. Packaging of items shall be completed using the following guidelines:
  - a. Custodial property shall not be accepted for storage unless it is properly packaged and tagged. Custodial property not accepted will be returned to the submitting officer for correction. The employee's immediate supervisor will be notified.
  - b. Property management personnel shall make a comparison of the property received and the property documented to ensure that both are consistent to the best of their abilities. If a discrepancy occurs, the property shall not be accepted for storage until the discrepancy is corrected. Inspection for comparison shall not compromise the integrity or security of the packing of the submitted item(s).
  - c. All items shall be packaged using packaging material (envelopes, paper bags, paper wrap, boxes) that is proper for the size of the item.
  - d. All packaged items must be sealed using the authorized evidence seal tape. The evidence seal tape should be placed along the length of the package seam after closing. Sign and place your badge number across the junction of the seal tape and the package.

- e. All items must be completely dry before submitting to PMU for storage. Items may be dried using FSU dry out lockers. Contact a Crime Scene Technician for assistance with this process.
  - f. Biohazard materials shall be clearly marked as biohazard using the stickers provided.
  - g. All items must have a label/tag number which is created through the records management system and/or FileOnQ affixed to the package (never to the custodial piece of property). Only one label/tag shall be used per package.
  - h. Items that are not able to be packaged as outlined in section C5 shall have the label/tag attached to the blue evidence tag along with the label/tag.
  - i. An appropriate storage location for the property shall be determined and a notation made in the FileOnQ property management system.
7. FIREARMS: All firearms (including bb, airsoft, paintball, etc) are to be rendered safe whenever possible. Any firearm not rendered safe shall be prominently and conspicuously marked with the word DANGER in a conspicuous place.
- a. All firearms shall be securely placed within authorized firearm boxes. The firearm should be secured within the box using supplied zip ties.
  - b. Empty magazines should be boxed with the firearm. Ammunition, spent cartridges, and holsters should be packaged separately.
  - c. Firearms not able to be boxed, due to size or shape, should have a blue evidence tag that has the item label affixed to it.
8. MONEY (coins and currency): Money shall be submitted in separate packages from any other submitted evidence bearing the same or other incident number. Money should be submitted separate from wallets, purses, and other containers. A second person must verify the total (exceeding \$100) and initial/badge number the exterior of the package. Totals exceeding \$10,000 shall require the presence of a supervisor in addition to the second person. The supervisor shall also place their initials and badge number on the exterior of the package.

9. **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES:** Controlled substances, i.e., drugs and narcotics, shall be submitted in separate packages from any other submitted evidence bearing the same or other incident number.
  - a. Should be removed from metal/glass containers or other paraphernalia and packaged separately. It is acceptable to leave dry drugs in plastic or paper containers such as zip lock bags, pill containers, and paper folds.
  - b. Should have approximate weight (including supplied packaging) written on outside of the supplied packaging material.
  - c. Must be completely dry before packaging to avoid mold growth.
  - d. For larger controlled substance items that do not fit into the standard size envelopes, other appropriate packaging methods may be needed. This would include placing the evidence into a clear plastic envelope and then heat sealing the plastic envelope.
10. **BICYCLES:** All bicycles or tricycles brought to the Police Department as found property, or recovered stolen and therefore for safekeeping or evidence, shall be taken to the location designated by the Property Management Unit.
  - a. A blue tag shall be affixed to the bicycle containing the label/tag that the officer obtained from FileOnQ after entering the bike information into the records management system.
  - b. If needing to protect areas of the bike for DNA or prints secure the area(s) needed utilizing paper bags, paper wrap, and/or the assistance of FSU personnel.
11. **KNIVES:**
  - a. All fixed blade and mechanical knives shall be secured in supplied knife boxes using zip ties.
  - b. Non fixed blade knives should be closed and placed in an appropriate packaging envelope.
  - c. Knives or swords that are not able to fit in a knife box should have a blue evidence tag with item label/tag attached.

12. JEWELRY: Shall be submitted in separate packages from any other submitted evidence bearing the same incident number and separated from wallets, purses, and other containers.
13. SHARPS ITEMS: All sharps items (needles) shall be placed into a sharps shuttle prior to be packaged in an envelope.
14. FLAMMABLES: All flammable items shall be placed in the fireproof locker located in the Motor Pool after tagging the item with a blue tag containing the property label/tag from FileOnQ.
15. ELECTRONICS (cell phones, computers, etc): Electronics and other similar items should be:
  - a. Packaged individually; only one per package.
  - b. Cell phones should be put into airplane mode and wrapped in tinfoil.
16. SUBMISSION OF PROPERTY:
  - a. All items shall be submitted to one of the following holding areas prior to the end of the officer(s) shift before being maintained by the Property Management Unit. These locations must be recorded in the records management system and/or FileOnQ.
    - (1) Property Management Unit Temporary Lockers
    - (2) Bike Cage
    - (3) Fire Locker
    - (4) Forensic Services Unit
    - (5) Latent Prints
    - (6) Vice Building
    - (7) Bomb bunker
  - b. Items needing to be immediately checked back out for investigative or laboratory purposes may be brought directly to the Property Management Unit by the person submitting it.

c. The investigator assigned the incident shall determine the need for forensic and/or lab analysis on items submitted and make arrangements for completing the needed analysis.

(1) Items submitted for lab analysis will be accompanied by the appropriate laboratory examination request forms.

(2) The investigator will ensure that laboratory examination results are obtained in either written or electronic formats.

17. Custodial property shall not be secured in any way contrary to this directive unless the nature of the item(s) to be secured prohibits compliance.

18. If the nature of the item(s) to be secured prohibits compliance with this directive, the decision of variance shall be determined by a supervisor of the officer obtaining the item(s). The name of that supervisor shall be recorded in the report of the incident.

#### **E. STORAGE OF CUSTODIAL PROPERTY**

1. Property Management Unit personnel shall store and maintain custodial property in a safe and secure manner to allow its condition at disposition to be the same as when it was received.

2. Items requiring added security shall be stored to maintain the necessary security. Items designated as needing added security are:

a. Money

b. Jewelry and gemstones

c. Precious metals

d. Controlled substances

e. Firearms

3. Controlled substances, firearm storage, and money/jewelry areas shall be locked and always secured, except when access is necessary for insertion/withdrawal or inventory of the property held within.

4. Perishable items of custodial property shall be stored in the Property Management Unit refrigerator. Perishable items are not deemed practical for long term storage and should be returned to the owner or otherwise disposed of as soon as authorization can be obtained.
5. Doors of the property storage room(s) shall be always secure except when necessary for the ingress and egress of Property Management Unit personnel. Property Management Unit personnel should always be alert, to ensure that unauthorized persons do not enter the storage area.
6. No member of the Grand Rapids Police Department shall knowingly possess a key or access card to the Property Management Unit Storage area(s) unless authorized by the Chief of Police.

#### **F. TEMPORARY REMOVAL OF CUSTODIAL PROPERTY**

1. When custodial property is temporarily removed from the custody of the Property Management Unit notations shall be made in the FileOnQ property management system containing the following information:
  - a. Date and time of removal
  - b. Signature of person into whose custody the property has been released
  - c. Reason for the temporary release
  - d. Initials and computer or badge number of the person releasing custody
2. When custodial property has been temporarily removed from the custody of the Property Management Unit and is returned for continuation of storage, notations shall be made in the FileOnQ property management system containing the following information:
  - a. Date and time property was returned
  - b. Initials and computer or badge number of person receiving property
3. Returned property shall be stored in the same manner and location as it was stored before the temporary removal

4. If custodial property which has been temporarily removed is not returned to the Property Management Unit within ten (10) days of its release:
  - a. The Property Management Unit supervisor shall be notified. The Property Management Unit supervisor shall inform the commanding officer of the officer into whose custody the property was release and request a reason for the delay.
  - b. If after two (2) working days of notification to the removing officer's commanding officer, no valid reason is given for the delay, then the immediate return of the property shall be ordered. Failure to comply will result in notification to the Internal Affairs Unit and possible disciplinary action against the officer into whose custody the property was released.
  - c. If the custodial property was retained by the prosecution or the court, a receipt for the property shall be obtained by the investigator until the property is returned.
5. All members of the Department shall immediately report to the Property Management Unit supervisor any sign of tampering with the security of any Property Management Unit storage facility, device, or holding area.