

# Greer Police Department

## General Order 930.2 Property and Evidence Control

This order consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY
- III. PROCEDURES
- IV. PACKAGING AND STORING OF PROPERTY AND EVIDENCE
- V. FINAL DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY
- VI. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT RECORDS

By Order of: *Matt Hamby*  
Chief of Police

**July 11, 2023**

CALEA 84.1.1; 84.1.2; 84.1.3; 84.1.5; 84.1.6; 84.1.7

**I. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY**

1. The OSD Commander is responsible for the control and management of all property accepted by or stored in the property room. The OSD Commander is responsible for securing items of property requiring added protection in the high security area of the property room; maintaining an accurate record keeping system for all property accepted by or stored in the property room; and the prompt, authorized disposal of property.
2. The OSD Commander will supervise property custodians who directly perform the above listed duties.
3. The property management system's facilities include:
  - a. Property Room
  - b. Sally Port storage area

**B. Property and Evidence Security**

1. All property, evidentiary, found and in safekeeping, stored by the Greer Police Department will be in designated, secure areas. Officers recovering such property will submit it into the control of property and evidence before the end of that officer's tour of duty unless exceptional circumstances exist that will be approved by a supervisor.
2. Only the OSD Commander and the property custodians have the alarm code to the property room and keys to the property room.
3. The property room will be kept locked and alarmed at all times when not occupied by property custodians.
4. The high security area within the property room will be kept locked at all times except when actually adding items to or removing them from that area.
5. Only the following personnel are authorized to enter the property room:
  - a. Chief of Police
  - b. Bureau Captains
  - c. Division Commanders
  - d. Property custodians
6. In every case, a property custodian will be present when entry is made into the room. The property custodian will log the name of the person, time in and out, and the reason for entering.

7. No property, found, safekeeping or evidence will be accepted by Front Desk personnel. All property must be processed by an Officer or the Evidence Tech. No property designated for exchange between two parties will be accepted by the Department.
8. Vehicles impounded for investigative or pre seizure purposes will be stored inside at the City OC facility within the secured police access-only area. Initial access is limited to supervisor or property custodian card-swipe only at the walk-through doors. Key access to the padlocks on the roll up doors is available at the mailbox just inside the roll up door closest to the office area.

C. Temporary Storage

There are two different methods of properly storing property during times when a property custodian is not on duty:

1. Temporary Storage Lockers

The temporary storage lockers will be utilized to store evidence and recovered property. Officers will, before the end of the shift, log in evidence and found and safe keeping property by completing the required documentation pertaining to the property and place it in a vacant locker along with the documentation. The locker will then be locked until the next work day when the evidence custodian will unlock the locker, transfer the item, note the transfer on the documentation and file the documentation in the appropriate file.

2. Property Custodian Call-Back

This procedure will be utilized whenever the item is too large for the temporary storage lockers; when the lockers are full; or when a large amount of narcotics or currency is taken into custody. The on-duty supervisor will contact the OSD Commander who shall arrange for the immediate property room storage of the item in question.

D. Semi-Annual Inspections

The OSD Commander will conduct semi-annual inspections of the property room. This inspection will determine that proper record keeping, accountability of evidence, proper storage, cleanliness and proper disposal methods are being followed. Any problems found during these inspections will be documented and corrected as appropriate.

E. Property Inventory-New Property Custodian

Whenever a new property custodian is designated an inventory of property will be conducted. This inventory will be performed jointly, by the newly designated and former property custodians and in accordance with Appendix I of the CALEA Standards. All high risk property such as weapons, money and narcotics will be accounted for on an individual basis.

All discrepancies shall be recorded prior to the assumption of property responsibility by the newly appointed custodian. If the error rate is greater than 4 percent, a complete inventory of the high risk property will be performed.

F. Annual Audits

1. The Chief of Police shall be responsible for an annual audit of the property room to ensure that the security, accuracy and integrity of all narcotics, weapons and money are maintained. The Chief will appoint auditors selected from among various supervisors and officers of the Department. No one routinely or directly connected with the control of the property room will serve on the audit.
2. The auditors will inspect the property logs to ensure that all property and evidence have been properly logged and have not been lost or checked out for an unreasonable length of time. The auditors will also ensure that all weapons, drugs and money have been disposed of in the proper manner.
3. The auditors are authorized to open dangerous drug packages in the presence of the property custodian to verify weight/count of drugs and, if necessary, conduct qualitative analysis by a chemist. These packages will then be resealed in the presence of the property custodian. A notation will be made on the property log of the inspection, including the date opened and person inspecting.
4. The auditors are authorized to open, in the presence of the property custodian, packages containing money to verify contents and amount of cash. The package is to be resealed in the presence of the property custodian. A notation will be made on the property log of the inspection, including the date opened and person inspecting.
5. The audit should be a significant representative sampling of property including high-risk items. A complete report of the findings of the auditors will be forwarded to the Chief of Police upon conclusion of the audit.

G. Unannounced Inspections

The Chief of Police or his designee will conduct an unannounced inspection of the property room and property storage areas annually. This inspection does not necessarily have to be comprehensive, may inspect any area of property operations and will include a random comparison of records with physical property present in the property room.

H. Access to Property Storage Areas

Temporary Storage Areas- The temporary storage areas include the evidence lockers and the drop box. Once locked, access to the lockers and drop box is restricted to property custodians.

The bicycle storage area may be accessed by supervisory personnel to allow officers to place bicycles and mopeds in storage. Motorcycles will be stored at the tow company and not ordinarily placed behind police headquarters. The bicycle storage area will be kept secure at all times. Property placed in any storage area must conform to the standards and procedures as outlined in this General Order for the receipt of property/evidence.

I. Increased Security

Additional security measures must be taken when money, items having a very high monetary value (jewelry, etc.), dangerous drugs, narcotics or weapons are to be stored in the property room.

1. Money

- a. All money submitted to the property room will be sealed in a container, properly marked, and tagged separately. The tag must identify the amount of money, with the count verified and initialed by the submitting officer and supervisor.
- b. Money not properly packaged or tagged will not be accepted into custody of the property room. A Patrol or CID supervisor will be notified to correct any problems with packaging or tagging of money.
- c. Money submitted to the property room when a custodian is off duty will be placed into the drop box when all other procedures relative to the money have been completed.
- d. The property custodian will not open sealed packages to verify contents or amount but will note that it has been properly packaged and tagged.
- e. Money submitted to the property room, once logged in, will be placed in the high security area of the room.

2. Precious Metals or Gemstones

Precious metals or gemstones, once logged in, will be stored in the high security area.

3. Dangerous Drugs

- a. All dangerous drugs (including, but not limited to, narcotics, hallucinogens and narcotic implements) submitted to the property room as found property, confiscated property or evidence will be sealed in a container. Each container will have a separate property tag.
- b. During hours when a property custodian is not on duty, all dangerous drugs submitted as found property, evidence, confiscated property or contraband will be placed in the drop box by the submitting officer. On the following work day, the property custodian will open the drop box and log the property into the property room.
- c. The property custodian will not open the sealed container but will only note that it has been properly sealed, weighed or counted.
- d. The property custodian will not open any sealed containers of dangerous drugs submitted to the property room.
- e. Once properly logged, dangerous drugs will be stored inside the high security area of the property room.

4. Weapons

- a. All weapons submitted to the property room will be made safe by unloading and will have a separate property tag.

- b. Weapons submitted to the property room when the property custodian is off-duty will be placed in the temporary storage locker. If the size of a weapon precludes use of the storage locker, the property custodian will be called back to secure the weapon in the property room.
- c. All weapons will be checked through NCIC for stolen by the submitting officer.
- d. Weapons will be stored in the high security area of the property room.
- e. All firearms seized by the Greer Police Department are subject to NIBIN (National Integrated Ballistic Information Network) testing. Examples of these are firearms recovered by law enforcement that were illegally possessed, used in a crime, or suspected by law enforcement officials to have been used in a crime. If the firearm is operable and meets the following criteria it is subject to being tested;
  - 1. semi-automatic pistols including .22 caliber and larger
  - 2. semi-automatic rifles
  - 3. 12guage pump-action shotguns or semi-automatic shotguns
  - 4. Long guns that use handgun ammunition
  - 5. Revolvers .22 caliber and larger

After a firearm has been tested and or the firearm has an indicated positive hit on NIBIN, it is subject to being held for up to three years. In addition to the above listed criteria, if a firearm is seized and has a nexus to documented gang activity or a documented gang member the firearm is subject to being held for up to three years after the NIBIN testing has been completed.

J. Handling Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs

- 1. The submission and storage of narcotics and dangerous drugs in the property management system will follow procedures outlined in Section III.I.3 of this order.
- 2. In addition, the following container inspection, quantity and quality control measures are in place:
  - a. Scales are in the Roll Call Room. Officers will weigh all evidence submitted for storage or processing. The substance will be weighed by the submitting officer in the presence of a supervisor. All weights should be performed as accurately as possible and shall only be used as a quality control measure and not as an exact weight for evidentiary purposes.
  - b. Pills and capsules shall be counted in addition to being weighed. Both the weight and count will be noted on the property tag.
  - c. Exceptions to weighing narcotics and dangerous drugs are permissible when auditing evidence that is officially sealed. In these cases, the evidence will be weighed in their packages and the weights compared to the original, taking into account losses in quantity due to testing at the SLED lab or other forensic procedures.

- d. At the periodic audit, all containers of narcotics and dangerous drugs should be inspected for tampering as a safeguard against substitution of materials having the same weight.

K. Perishable Evidence

A refrigerator is located in the property room to keep perishable items such as rape kits, urine samples and blood specimens preserved.

**IV. PACKAGING AND STORING OF PROPERTY AND EVIDENCE**

All property and evidence will be packaged and stored according to established procedure. An incident report outlining the circumstances surrounding the property being in police custody will be completed and the property stored in the proper facility before the end of the officer's shift. The following procedures apply to the preparation of property and evidence for storage in the property room:

A. Liquids

- 1. Flammable liquids will be stored in sealed containers and will not exceed one gallon in size. An evidence tag will be completed and attached to the container.
- 2. All non-flammable liquids should be placed in sealed containers and the container placed in a plastic evidence bag. No liquids, flammable or non-flammable will be stored if they cannot be sealed.
- 3. No other evidence will be placed in the same bag as the liquid.

B. Drugs

- 1. Drugs are to be placed in plastic baggies, a stick on evidence sticker will be filled out and placed on the baggie which will then be heat sealed.
- 2. Once sealed, the baggie will be weighed for quality control purposes. The weight will be placed on the evidence sticker. Sign your name, the date and time over the seal.
- 3. Drugs in pill or capsule form will be counted and weighed. The count and weight will be noted on the bag.
- 4. If the drugs have been field tested, the test kit is not to be stored with the drugs.
- 5. Drug paraphernalia will be packaged separately from the drugs.
- 6. When sending the drugs to Greenville County Lab, fill out a Department of Community Services Request for Laboratory Analysis Form.
- 7. Place baggie and Forms, back to back, into a larger plastic bag and seal. This bag is then placed in a manila envelope along with a Property and Evidence Form and the Code 5. Print the case number, agency, suspect's name officer's name and the charge in the upper right hand corner

C. Weapons

1. All weapons must first be made safe. If a weapon is jammed or cannot be unloaded or checked to ensure it is unloaded, a supervisor will be notified immediately.
2. Semi-automatic type weapon will have the slide locked back and the magazine removed. Revolvers should be stored with the cylinder open. Rifles and shotguns will be stored with the bolt or breech open.
3. All firearms will be checked through NCIC and the NCIC print-out will be stored with the firearm.
4. An evidence tag will be placed on the weapon and secured with a plastic tie, wire or string.
5. Knives and other sharp objects will be stored in an appropriate sharps container designed for that purpose.

D. Bloody Clothing/Fabrics

1. Items will be air-dried before packing and storage. The evidence custodian will assist with this process.
2. **After drying**, the item of clothing or fabric will be packaged in a paper bag. The paper bag will be placed in a red biohazard bag and labeled with an evidence tag.

E. Sexual Assault Evidence

1. The trace evidence associated with sexual assaults will be collected during the medical examination by using a SLED sexual assault kit and will be turned over to an investigator.
2. The entire kit will be stored in the property room refrigerator until transmittal to SLED.

F. Documents

1. Documents are to be placed in a paper or glassine envelope. The document should be handled with care and preserved for fingerprint examination. Documents are to be placed one document per envelope.
2. Documents will not be stapled, paper clipped or taped to anything as destruction of evidence may occur.

G. Shoplifting Evidence

1. When the owner of shoplifted items is known, the property will be photographed and returned to the owner.

H. Money

1. Any seizures of money over \$1,000.00 require the immediate notification of the property custodian.

2. Money taken into evidence or otherwise placed in the custody of the Police Department will be jointly counted and sealed by the seizing officer and his/her supervisor.
3. Any unusual markings on the currency will be noted and, if possible, photographed.

I. Confiscated Property

Collection, reporting, packaging, preservation and storage of confiscated property will follow the same procedures established herein for evidence.

J. Found Property

- a. Collection, reporting, packaging, preservation and storage of found property will follow the same procedures established for evidence.
- b. The officer recovering the items will conduct a follow-up investigation, making every effort to identify the rightful owner and will detail the results of the investigation to the property custodian by supplemental report. If an object cannot be returned to its rightful owner, it will be subject to sale or destruction.

K. There are several different types of packaging materials that can be used. They include plastic bags, paper bags, evidence tags and sharps containers. The packaging material should come as close as possible to fitting the object for neatness and ease of storage.

J. Evidence may be removed from storage for court and/or investigative purposes. The required notations and signatures will be completed to preserve the chain of custody. Evidence will be returned to storage by the officer who removed it. Evidence being returned when a property custodian will follow the same procedures established herein for new evidence.

L. In all cases involving the seizure, recovery or other taking of property into the custody of the Police Department, a written incident report will be completed detailing the circumstances surrounding the property and turned in before the end of the officer's tour of duty.

**V. FINAL DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY**

A. Officers have the ultimate responsibility for authorizing disposal of the evidence they have placed in storage. In arrest cases, officers are responsible for requesting court disposition of the evidence in those cases. In cases which do not go to court, the officer may authorize disposition. A supplement will be submitted before the items are released or disposed of. A copy of the supplement will be provided to the property custodian.

B. Final disposition of evidence is mandated by statute, specific court order or Departmental policy. Items of no value and contraband will be destroyed. Items of value will be returned to the rightful owner if ownership can be established. Items of value for which ownership cannot be established will be sold at public auction.

C. Evidence will be disposed of at periodic intervals, depending upon the type of case. In major cases, the officer will be advised of the intent to dispose of the property by issuance of an Evidence Disposal Form. Upon receipt, the officer will review the case and determine the need for continued retention. If the evidence is still needed, the officer will return the form justifying the continuing retention. If there is no further need, the officer will approve disposal and return the form to the property custodian.

1. In cases closed by arrest, evidence will be returned to its rightful owner or otherwise disposed of according to established procedure within six months of final court disposition, including any appeal period.
2. Evidence collected in unsolved cases will be periodically reviewed by the property custodian and a determination made on a case by case basis regarding retention or disposal. In all unsolved cases involving violent crimes against persons, the solicitor's office will be consulted regarding further retention of evidence.
3. In cases of unsolved murder and first degree criminal sexual conduct, the evidence will be retained indefinitely and will not be subject to review for disposal.
4. License tags collected in arrests for traffic offenses will be destroyed after the date the tag expires without officer notification.
5. Found contraband will be destroyed after ten days without officer notification.

D. Owner Notification

The property custodian will notify the owner of property prior to disposal. Notification will be accomplished through a first class letter sent to the last known address. If the owner does not respond in 30 days, the property will be forfeited to the City of Greer for disposal as deemed appropriate.

## VI. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT RECORDS

The OSD Commander, serving as the Department Property Custodian, shall maintain a computerized records system which reflects the location of all property stored in the property room; date and time of receipt or release; character, type and amount of property; chain of custody of the property through it's final disposition; and dates and results of all inspections and inventories of property and records.

A. Property Room Computer Log

1. All found, recovered and evidentiary property submitted to the property room will be logged into the appropriate computerized property log by the property custodian.
2. The Drug and general evidence entries will contain the following information on each item logged in:
  - a. Date
  - b. Case number
  - c. Description of evidence
  - d. Unit number of submitting officer
  - e. Court of jurisdiction
  - f. Suspect name
  - g. Final Disposition

3. The firearms entries will contain the following information on each item logged in:
  - a. Date
  - b. Make
  - c. Caliber
  - d. Serial number
  - e. Case number
  - f. Court of jurisdiction
  - g. Suspect name
  - h. Final Disposition

B. Property Tag

1. The property tag will be completely filled out and attached to all evidence packages.
2. If the property is not evidence, the word evidence will be crossed out and replaced with the appropriate description, i.e., found property, contraband, etc.

C. Property Report

The Greer Police Department Property Report will be completed whenever property of any kind comes into the custody of the Department. This report and the related incident report will, in all cases, be completed and submitted for supervisory review before the end of shift.

1. The Property Report will be utilized to document the chain of custody.
2. Final disposition will be documented on the Property Report.
3. The Property Custodian will maintain all Property Reports on file in the Property room.
4. Officers are prohibited from storing property or evidence in their personal desks, vehicles, lockers, homes, or other places that are not secure and would interrupt the chain of custody.
5. Personal use of any property of evidence is strictly prohibited.