

	<b>STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE</b> <small>State Form 39870 (R/S-06)</small>	Reference Number <b>LAB-001</b>
	Subject <b>Evidence Submission Requirements - Use of Property Record &amp; Receipt Form</b>	
	Special Instructions Replaces LAB-001 dated November 16, 2023	Effective Date <b>October 11, 2024</b>

## **I. PURPOSE**

Establishes a formal procedure for the proper submission of evidence seized in furtherance of a criminal matter, as well as property which is found, recovered or held for safe-keeping and is not in furtherance of a criminal matter, with a completed Property Record and Receipt (PRR) form.

## **II. POLICY**

Department employees who seize evidence\* or recover property shall properly secure the items and complete a PRR form. All transfers of custody of evidence or recovered property shall be recorded and documented on a PRR form. However, evidence and recovered property which has been submitted to the Laboratory Division for storage or analysis and is subsequently under the control of a property officer shall be tracked using the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS).

\*NOTE: Exempted from the guidelines in this Standard Operating Procedure are chemical waste products associated with the clandestine manufacture of controlled substances (refer to [INV-023](#)), and disposal of explosives or related materials (refer to [SOC-011](#)).

## **III. DEFINITIONS**

A. EVIDENCE – shall (for the purposes of this procedure) be inclusive of both items seized in furtherance of a criminal matter as well as held property (found, recovered or safe-keeping of items).

B. LABORATORY TEMPORARY EVIDENCE STORAGE LOCATION – shall (for the purposes of this procedure) be evidence storage locations managed by the Laboratory Division (lockers, cabinets, rooms, refrigerators, etc.) at approved department or non-department facilities and used for the purpose of temporarily storing items of evidence in a safe and secure manner until the items can be entered into LIMS and placed into District storage locations by property officers. Locked Laboratory Temporary Evidence Storage Locations shall be unlocked and accessed only by a property officer.

C. PROPERTY OFFICER – shall (for the purposes of this procedure) include Crime Scene Investigators, Laboratory Evidence Specialist, District Evidence Specialist, Crime Scene Investigations Supervisors, Laboratory Managers or other laboratory personnel as designated by the Laboratory Division Commander having the necessary permissions to manage items of evidence.

D. TEMPORARY EVIDENCE HOLDING AREA – shall (for the purposes of this procedure) be defined as the trunk or other secure area of the officer’s issued department vehicle, or a cabinet, safe, room, etc. specifically located at a department facility which can be locked where the items may be safely and securely stored in a temporary fashion. A temporary holding area is not managed by the Laboratory Division and shall be accessible only to the affected officer.

#### **IV. PROCEDURE**

A. When an employee seizes or recovers any evidence, the employee shall properly package and seal the item, inclusive of required identification markings, in accordance with Laboratory Division Policies and Physical Evidence Bulletins. Evidence shall be properly documented on a PRR form.

B. The PRR shall be utilized and submitted in a typed PDF format. However, during exigent circumstances when a computer is not available, a legible hand-written PRR form using the PDF version will be accepted.

1. The completed PRR form shall be emailed to the property officer using the dedicated email address assigned to the District facility associated with the submission (the email addresses are noted in "Exhibit A" at end of this procedure), and the signed chain of custody portion of the PRR shall be delivered to the property officer with the submitted items or placed and secured within an approved Laboratory Temporary Evidence Storage Location with the submitted items.

2. The property officer shall maintain an Officer's Evidence Log for all evidence submitted by Department employees from the submitted PRR forms.

C. The employee making the seizure or recovery shall deliver the item directly to the property officer or place and secure the item within an approved Laboratory Temporary Evidence Storage Location with the completed chain of custody portion of the PRR as directed below, unless the item has been properly disposed of and recorded on the PRR form. Any item determined to be improperly packaged, sealed, marked or improperly documented on a PRR shall not be accepted by a property officer until the submitting officer has made the necessary corrections. All corrections shall be completed within five (5) calendar days upon being notified.

1. All drugs, firearms, jewelry, money, valuables such as precious metals or collectables and items susceptible to deleterious change (e.g., biology samples, etc.) shall be submitted before the employee's shift (tour of duty) ends.

a. There are specific requirements associated with the handling and submission of money and reference shall be made to SOP LAB-010 for further guidance.

b. Jewelry and other valuables, such as precious metals or collectables, shall be photographed as soon as practical and the description of the item on the PRR form shall accurately reflect the condition of the item.

2. All other items shall be submitted within five (5) calendar days from the date of seizure or recovery.

3. Any digital devices or electronic storage media which requires forensic examination by the Laboratory Division Digital Forensics Unit (DFU) shall be delivered for transfer to that Unit within five (5) calendar days from the date of seizure or recovery to the appropriate district temporary evidence lockers. Transfer chain-of-custody information shall be properly documented on the PRR. If a cellular phone is seized that is powered on, the employee shall submit to either a Regional Laboratory or district cellular phone temporary storage locker. The phone shall be placed in the Faraday bag, plugged into the appropriate power cord and the bag shall be plugged in the power cord to the locker. The signature page of the PRR shall be placed in the same locker as the evidence. Legal

authority (e.g., search warrant or consent to search) should also be included. The locker shall then be securely locked and a proper notification to the appropriate property officer shall be made. Only in situations where the examination is needed the same day shall it be transferred directly to DFU personnel.

a. If the item cannot be transferred within the five (5) day period from the date of seizure or recovery, the item shall be delivered to the property officer or placed and secured in an approved Laboratory Temporary Evidence Storage Location within a five (5) day period of time.

b. When a subsequent appointment has been confirmed to deliver and transfer the item, the responsible officer shall request to take custody of the item, not more than five (5) calendar days prior to the appointment, from the property officer and properly document custody on the PRR's chain of custody portion in order to complete the transfer.

c. When the examination of the item has been completed and the officer has been notified, the item shall be transferred to the officer and delivered to the property officer or placed and secured in an approved Laboratory Temporary Evidence Storage Location within five (5) calendar days of receipt, and the transfer shall be properly documented on the PRR's chain of custody portion in order to complete the transfer to secure evidence storage.

D. If impractical to meet any of the above noted submission requirements due to exigent circumstances, unusual levels of workload, etc., a supervisor may authorize an exception to these requirements by extending the time to complete a submission by up to three (3) calendar days.

1. The requesting officer shall contact a supervisor for authorization of an extension, and the contact shall be documented in an email message sent by the requesting officer to the supervisor detailing the need and associated incident number.

2. If the supervisor approves the request, the supervisor shall immediately forward the email chain to the appropriate property officer using the dedicated email address assigned to the District facility associated with the extension to document the approval and the number of days extended (the email addresses are noted in "Exhibit A" at end of this procedure). The supervisor shall, at that point, be responsible to ensure the item is properly submitted within the extension period.

3. When authorizing an extension, the supervisor shall take into consideration safety issues, as well as the potential for harmful change to the item, bio-hazard issues, adequate space and location to temporarily store the evidence, etc., as part of the decision-making process as to the appropriateness of granting an extension.

4. In the absence of a supervisor, the assigned District Duty Officer may approve an extension request by following the procedures noted above. The District Duty Officer shall include the first-line supervisor of the requesting officer in the approval email to the property officer, and the first-line supervisor shall be responsible to ensure the item is properly submitted within the extension period.

5. If any items seized or recovered, regardless of the time period submission requirements, any approved extensions, or if awaiting transfer, etc., are not submitted before the employee's shift (tour of duty) ends, the officer having custody shall be responsible to ensure the security and safety of the items in a Temporary Evidence Holding Area accessible only to the affected officer, as well as the

date, time and location the items are securely stored in a Temporary Evidence Holding Area shall be documented in the narrative of the assigned incident initial and/or supplemental report submitted to the Records Management System (RMS).

E. If the employee making the seizure or recovery can properly make an immediate release of the item, the employee may do so by completing the receipt portion of the PRR form to document the release. The employee shall give the receipt copy of the PRR form to both the person from whom the item was taken, and also to the person receiving the item upon proper release. The completed chain of custody form of the PRR which documents the release is to be given to the property officer when a release is completed.

F. When an item is directly turned over to the property officer, the property officer shall sign the chain of custody portion of the PRR form as the responsible officer. The PRR form shall be emailed to the property officer and be filed by the property officer at the District where the item is being held.

G. A property officer, after receiving an item, the PRR and signing the chain of custody portion of the PRR form, shall scan the documentation, to include any related Request for Laboratory Examination forms, and email the scanned files to the appropriate clerical staff for the documents to be added as an attachment to the associated incident report in the Records Management System (RMS).

H. After receiving an item with the proper documentation, a property officer shall enter the item into LIMS without any unnecessary delay, apply the associated LIMS bar code label, and place the item into an appropriate storage location.

1. While submitted evidence is under the control of the Laboratory Division, the property officer shall use LIMS to track and monitor the items.

2. When items are removed from the control of the Laboratory Division, a copy of the original PRR form and chain of custody portion shall again be used to record and document the chain-of- custody.

a. Upon removal of the items from the Laboratory Division's control, the responsible officer shall not maintain custody of the items for more than five (5) calendar days without having approval from a supervisor.

b. The approving supervisor for an extended retention of custody shall ensure any additional time is necessary for investigative and/or court purposes prior to approving, and the supervisor shall make email notification of the decision, including the number of days extended up to three (3), to the appropriate property officer using the dedicated email address assigned to the District facility associated with the extended custody (the email addresses are noted in "Exhibit A" at the end of this procedure).

I. When an item requires laboratory analysis, the submitting or investigating officer shall, in addition to a PRR, complete a Request For Laboratory Examination form in a typed PDF format and email the completed form to the property officer using the dedicated email address assigned to the District facility associated with the item submission. The completed Request for Laboratory Examination form shall be subsequently emailed by the property officer to the receiving Regional Laboratory prior to delivery of the item for analysis.

J. Items requiring laboratory analysis may be submitted to the receiving Regional Laboratory in one of three ways:

1. By the property officer, after scheduling a transfer appointment with the receiving Regional Laboratory; or

2. By the employee making the seizure or recovery, with approval of a supervisor and Laboratory Manager, and after scheduling a transfer appointment with the receiving Regional Laboratory; or

3. Certain types of evidence may be approved for mailing to a Regional Laboratory for analysis, but the items shall be in a secure package and sent by either United States Postal Service (certified or registered mail) or by a commercial delivery service with traceable shipping. Intra- Departmental mail shall not be used for delivery of items.

a. If the items are being mailed by someone other than the property officer, the applicable Laboratory Manager shall be contacted for approval and also for specific directions.

b. The inner containers of any parcel for mailing shall be marked, sealed and placed in a plain outer container or securely over-wrapped in plain paper. The outside wrapper or container is to be free of any markings which would indicate the nature of the contents.

K. The person receiving and taking custody of an item at a Regional Laboratory shall be responsible for completing all applicable LIMS entries associated with the receipt and storage of the item without any unnecessary delay.

L. Motor vehicles and motor vehicle parts shall not routinely be stored at any Department evidence storage facility. Storage of motor vehicles or motor vehicle parts shall be processed in accordance with SOP ENF-008 or a location approved by the applicable District Commander.

M. Upon proper disposition of all items listed on a PRR form, the original PRR form and any associated copies shall remain on file with the appropriate property officer. When the property officer of venue processes a completely disposed PRR form, the property officer shall scan the documentation and email the scanned file to the appropriate clerical staff for the documents to be added as an attachment to the associated incident report in the RMS.

N. This procedure is to be used in conjunction with all relevant Department regulations, rules, policies and procedures.

Exhibit A: Dedicated Email Addresses for District Evidence Storage

<b>District</b>	<b>Dedicated Evidence-Related Email Address</b>
District 13 Lowell	<a href="mailto:lr13evidence@isp.in.gov">lr13evidence@isp.in.gov</a>
District 14 Lafayette	<a href="mailto:d14evidence@isp.in.gov">d14evidence@isp.in.gov</a>
District 16 Peru	<a href="mailto:d16evidence@isp.in.gov">d16evidence@isp.in.gov</a>
District 21 Toll Road	<a href="mailto:d21evidence@isp.in.gov">d21evidence@isp.in.gov</a>
District 22 Fort Wayne	<a href="mailto:fwr22evidence@isp.in.gov">fwr22evidence@isp.in.gov</a>
District 24 Bremen	<a href="mailto:d24evidence@isp.in.gov">d24evidence@isp.in.gov</a>
District 33 Bloomington	<a href="mailto:d33evidence@isp.in.gov">d33evidence@isp.in.gov</a>
District 34 Jasper	<a href="mailto:d34evidence@isp.in.gov">d34evidence@isp.in.gov</a>
District 35 Evansville	<a href="mailto:er35evidence@isp.in.gov">er35evidence@isp.in.gov</a>
District 42 Versailles	<a href="mailto:d42evidence@isp.in.gov">d42evidence@isp.in.gov</a>
District 45 Sellersburg	<a href="mailto:d45evidence@isp.in.gov">d45evidence@isp.in.gov</a>
District 51 Pendleton	<a href="mailto:d51evidence@isp.in.gov">d51evidence@isp.in.gov</a>
District 52 Indianapolis	<a href="mailto:d52evidence@isp.in.gov">d52evidence@isp.in.gov</a>
District 53 Putnamville	<a href="mailto:d53evidence@isp.in.gov">d53evidence@isp.in.gov</a>