



GENERAL ORDER Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

Chapter: Operations	Section: 411.18
Subject: Investigations	Topic: Digital Images
Accreditation: ADM 16.01, OPR 02.01	Revised: 10/19/2015
Enacted: 08/26/2015	Last Review: 10/19/2015
	Reaffirmed:
	Review: 08/13/2016

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish policy/guidelines for deputies to obtain digital photographs/images for evidentiary purposes with duty-issued cameras, uploading digital evidence into the DIMS system, and the chain of custody for such digital evidence.

II. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office to establish the Crime Scene Unit (CSU) as the entity responsible for the equipment, training, and storage of all digital crime scene images.

III. TERMINOLOGY

Digital Imaging Management System (DIMS): The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office digital storage system for all digital crime scene photographic evidence.

Secure Digital (SD) Memory Cards: Removable memory cards utilized in digital cameras to store digital photographs/images.

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Field Cameras

1. The Crime Scene Unit (CSU) will train sworn and non-sworn department personnel in equipment and techniques for using digital patrol cameras. Patrol personnel will have access to field cameras for photographing scenes in which ID is not needed. Images taken with a patrol camera shall include a case identifier at both the beginning and the end of the series of images. Deputies will record specific information pertaining to the images taken in their case report.
2. The Technology Section will issue all digital cameras, carrying cases for cameras, and SD cards to the selected patrol deputies.
3. The settings on field cameras are programmed by CSU, and shall not be changed for any reason without prior approval/training.

- a. After deputies have been trained by the CSU, he/she may adjust settings on issued digital cameras to yield best results for unique photography environments.

B. Patrol Evidence/Digital Images

1. All cases shall have an identifier at the beginning and end of the images taken.
 - a. Identifiers/Scales are available for printing on the G Drive under the following folders: Shared Files, CSI, Photo Placard DFS
2. All case images taken, regardless of quality, shall be uploaded into DIMS.
 - a. At no time shall any images be deleted
3. No personal images shall be taken using agency equipment.
4. The CSU is the only provider of official department images. No member may print paper photographs or CD's/DVD's from DIMS.
 - a. No outside photo laboratory shall be used unless it is deemed necessary by CSU.
5. Any images and/or videos taken on an unauthorized camera shall have the memory medium packaged and placed into evidence. These images shall not be transferred into DIMS, and shall not be available for online viewing.
6. Patrol cameras shall not be used to obtain digital images of any evidence requiring forensic comparison by the State Crime Laboratory. This is the responsibility of CSU and/or Identification Technicians.
7. The CSU, Technology Unit, or DIT shall administer DIMS security levels. At no time shall agency members access image files on the DIMS web browser in cases that they are not investigating or assisting with investigations. Member accesses are set by system administrators to allow only for viewing/printing of one's own images that he/she originally took or are investigating.
8. Any photographs, digital images, SD cards, film, or negatives seized at a crime scene are to be considered evidence. These items shall be packaged and turned into the Evidence Section. At no time should any of these items be placed into the DIMS system.
9. All case images should be uploaded into DIMS before the end of the member's shift. If a DIMS upload station is not working at a station, the deputy must respond to the nearest alternate station to upload any digital images into the DIMS system.

- a. Deputies/supervisors are to immediately notify the CSU supervisor with any problems associated with the DIMS system.
- b. All DIMS upload stations are equipped with user instructions.