

 Policy and Procedure		Policy Number 5.08
Chapter	Administrative Support Services	Approved By: Robert L. Ticer, Chief of Police
Article	Inspections, Audits, and Inventories of Property and Evidence	
Effective Date: January 29, 2018		

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline procedures which enhance the integrity of the system for handling all property and evidence controlled by the Loveland Police Department.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Department to maintain a high degree of evidentiary integrity over agency controlled property and evidence through periodic and documented inspections, audits, and inventories.

DEFINITIONS

An **audit** is a sampling and accounting of the selected pieces of property held by the Property and Evidence section.

An **inspection** A formal review of the physical security and condition of the storage components and equipment of the property and evidence storage areas, tracking system, procedures, policies, and processes of the Property and Evidence unit.

An **inventory** is a complete accounting of the items physically in Department storage areas and those that the computerized property and evidence system indicates are under the control of the Department.

The **vault** is a separate storage area which houses high-risk property including money, precious metals, jewelry, firearms and drugs.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Each of the activities outlined below is an independent procedure and may not be combined or substituted for another. Furthermore, whenever possible, the activities for each of these procedures should be conducted by a different person/position within the LPD.

All inspections, audits and inventories will be conducted with someone in the Property and Evidence chain of command present. The associated findings will be documented and forwarded in a report to the Chief through the chain of command.

Inspections

There are two types of Property and Evidence inspections that will be conducted within the Department; Semi-Annual and Unannounced. The Inspector will use the Loveland Police Department Property and Evidence Inspection Form for both.

- **Semi-Annual** : <CALEA 84.1.6 (a)> Semi-annually, the Support Services Division Commander, or designee, will conduct an inspection of the property room. This inspection should determine, at a minimum
 - whether the property and evidence storage areas are maintained in good physical condition,





- whether the property and evidence storage areas are sanitary and orderly;
 - whether policies and procedures are being followed;
 - whether stored items are secure and protected from damage or deterioration;
 - whether there is accountability of the stored items (audit of 20 items); *and*,
 - whether property no longer having evidentiary value is promptly and properly disposed of or returned to the rightful owner.
- **Unannounced:** <CALEA 84.1.6 (d)> At least annually, the Chief will perform, or direct that an inspection is performed of the evidence and property section that hasn't been prearranged with the Property and Evidence technician. This inspection is meant to be less intrusive than the Semi-Annual Inspection. It should be a brief inspection of the conditions and order of the evidence room and random check of items to ensure their proper location and accountability.

Audits

The purpose of the audits is to ensure the continuity of custody and not to require the accounting of every single item of property/evidence.

Each audit must be two-tailed. For the purposes of this section, two-tailed auditing is accomplished by:

- *Tail one* – Creating a random list of items from the electronic property and evidence system and using that list to verify that each item is physically where the system shows that it is stored.
- *Tail two* – Selecting items to verify that the system shows that the item is where the auditor found it.

The sample size used in the audit should be sufficient to ensure the integrity of the system and the accountability of property/evidence. Each department auditor will use the applicable Appendix either K or I of the current CALEA *Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies* as a guide to achieve a statistically significant representative sample for the two audits described below.

The following two types of audits will be conducted.

- **Annual Audit** <CALEA 84.1.6 (c)> The annual audit of the evidence room shall be conducted by a supervisor not routinely or directly connected with control of the property and evidence function. The individual conducting the audit will hold at least the rank of sergeant. The annual audit will be done in accordance with CALEA's Appendix K; however, the LPD auditor will complete a two-tailed audit of 200 items; 100 for high-risk property and 100 from general evidence. The auditor will audit 50 items from the evidence tracking system to shelf and 50 items from shelf to the evidence tracking system. The auditor will report the process used and findings of the audit in a report to be given to the Chief through the chain of command. The report must include an accounting of each item checked, each discrepancy found, and any available explanation for the discrepancy.
- **Change in Evidence Custodian Audit** <CALEA 84.1.6 (b)> An audit of property and evidence will occur whenever the property and evidence custodian is assigned to and/or leaves the position. The audit will be conducted jointly by the newly designated property and evidence custodian and a designee of the Chief to ensure that records are correct and properly annotated. This audit will be



an inventory of the vault as well as a statistically significant accounting of all other items held in property and evidence storage areas using CALEA Appendix I.

An example of this type of audit is to determine the total number of pieces held by the Department from the property and evidence software. If the total number of pieces held by the Department is between the defined values in Appendix I for pieces held, choose the next highest number. For example, if the total number of pieces held is 22,222 items, round up to 25,000.

Refer to Appendix I to determine the required sample size. Half of the sample size shall be used for Tail One and the other half for Tail Two.

Based on the “total number of pieces held” in this example, Appendix I requires an overall sample size of 1,023 items. The sample size for each Tail would be 512 items.

Tail One – The Property and Evidence Technician will generate a randomized report(s) from the property and evidence software to identify one-half of the items from the vault and one-half of the items from other evidence storage areas. Based on the above example, this is 256 items selected from the vault and 256 items selected from other evidence holding areas.

Tail Two – The auditor will select one-half of the items from the vault and one-half of the items from other evidence holding areas. Based on the above example, this is 256 items selected from the vault and 256 items selected from other evidence holding areas. The Property and Evidence Technician will verify that the selected items are in the system designated location and will create a printout of the items checked. The auditor will report the process used and findings of the audit in a report to be given to the Chief through the chain of command. The report must include an accounting of each item checked, each discrepancy found, and any available explanation for the discrepancy.

Inventory

An inventory will be conducted at any time as directed by the Chief or when an Annual or Change in Evidence Custodian Audit produces discrepancies exceeding a four percent error rate.

