

# MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

Subject: <b>SUBMISSION OF EVIDENCE AND PROPERTY</b>	General Order: 1102
Effective Date: May 24, 2018 Revision Date: July 31, 2019	Distribution: Sworn Personnel, Quartermaster

## **I. PURPOSE**

This general order establishes procedures for submitting evidence and other property to the Department property system.

## **II. POLICY**

All items of evidence and property found by, or turned over to the care of, Meridian Police Employees shall be submitted to the Department property management system.

Evidence will be submitted in a manner that preserves its evidentiary value. All property will be packaged according to established guidelines.

New      The Property Technician is a position filled by a civilian employee. The Quartermaster is a position filled by a sworn officer. For purposes of evidence handling and submission, their duties are identical and their titles may be used interchangeably throughout this general order.

## **III. PROCEDURES**

### **A. Temporary, Secure Storage**

1. Evidence and other property will be placed in a secure area as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the submitting officer's workday. The temporary secure storage areas are:

- The temporary property lockers attached to the property room
- The evidence refrigerator located in the evidence packaging area
- The property lockers located in the security garage designated for biohazard evidence/property submission
- The drying locker located in the security garage
- The Evidence Barn located at the Service Center.

- New      2. All of the above listed areas shall be secured with a lock. Officers are to ensure the lock to the storage area is engaged after submitting evidence.

- |     |    |  |
|-----|----|--|
| New | 3. | Keys and any other access control methods shall be maintained by the Property Technician. The only personnel that shall have access to keys and other access control methods shall be the Property Technician, the Services Division Commander and the Chief of Police.                    |
| New | 4. | Keys to the lockers must be a type that cannot be reproduced without proper written authorization.   |
| New | 5. | The Property Technician, upon coming on duty, shall remove the property from the sealed locker by using the master key and take it into the evidence storage area. The Services Division Commander or the Chief of Police may perform this duty in the absence of the Property Technician. |

B. Storage Criteria

All items will be placed in the temporary property lockers attached to the property room, except:

1. Bicycles, items too large for the lockers, large quantities of property, and flammable or hazardous materials
  - a. These items will be stored at the Evidence Barn.
  - b. Flammable materials will be stored in the cabinet provided for that purpose. The cabinet will be locked and the key placed in a temporary evidence locker at the station.
2. Biohazard items
  - a. Items requiring refrigeration, such as sexual assault kits, will be stored in the evidence refrigerator.
  - b. Other biohazard items will be placed into the biohazard storage lockers located in the security garage.
  - c. Property that is wet or a biohazard due to body fluids will be placed in the drying locker located in the security garage. The locker will then be locked and the key placed in a temporary evidence locker.
  - d. The procedure for the cleaning and use of the drying locker is contained in Appendix A.

Revised

3. There may be times during the Quartermaster's regular work hours when unusual evidentiary or property items may be submitted directly to the Quartermaster.
4. If the storage lockers are full, the evidence garage is being used, or other unusual circumstances occur, such as the confiscation of a large amount of property, the Quartermaster must be notified to make alternate arrangements. If the Quartermaster is unavailable, contact the Services Division Commander.
5. Motor vehicles being held as evidence which need to be protected for examination should be secured in the vehicle bay of the Evidence Barn. Once the examination is completed, the vehicle will be returned to the owner or placed in the impound lot if still needed as evidence.
6. Evidence from retail fraud complaints will be photographed and returned to the store. The photographs should include price tags and/or UPC codes on packages. Only the photographs will be entered into evidence.

C. Submission of Evidence and Other Property

1. All property and evidence submitted will be processed through the property management system. A description of each item as well as the full names, date of birth, telephone numbers and addresses of all suspects and property owners will be included when items are entered into the system. All items must be submitted no later than the end of the officer's work day.
2. Employees submitting evidence or other property must promptly complete an incident report detailing the manner in which the evidence/property was received.
3. Officers will make every reasonable effort to identify and notify the owner of property so that it may be returned. The owner will be listed in both the property management system and the incident report.

D. Classification of Property

The property management system asks for the officer to enter a process code and a purpose code for each item entered. The process code indicates what the Quartermaster should do with the property and the purpose code indicates why the property is being held.

1. Process codes that should be used and what they mean:
  - a. DSTP: Prepare property for destruction  
Used for all property that is being submitted for destruction. This code allows the Quartermaster to immediately destroy the item.
  - b. HOLD: Hold property for investigative purposes  
Used for items of evidence. These items are kept until authority to release is provided.
  - c. LABP: Prepare evidence for lab submission  
Used for items of evidence being sent to be sent to the lab. These items will be taken to the lab and then stored as evidence after lab analysis.
  - d. RTOL: Send property owner a letter for pick-up  
Used for items of property that may be returned to an owner if one is located. This code allows the Quartermaster to immediately release the property to the owner.
    - The item MUST have an owner assigned to it within the property management system.
2. Purpose codes that should be used and what they mean:
  - a. CONF: confiscated  
Used for items of contraband.
  - b. EVID: evidence  
Used for items that will be retained as evidence.
  - c. FORF: forfeiture  
Used for items being processed for forfeiture.
  - d. FPRO: found property  
Used for items of property (not evidence) when the owner is unknown.
  - e. SKEE: safekeeping  
Used for items of property when the owner is known. This code is used when the officer was unable to return the property to the owner during the shift or the property is being kept temporarily for a specific purpose and the item may be returned once that purpose no longer exists.

**E. Property Labels and Case Report**

- Revised
1. The officer shall print and sign a property label for each item entered into the property management system and a case report for each complaint.
  2. Improperly completed or partially completed entries will be referred to the submitting officer's supervisor for proper completion.
- Revised
3. Property labels are adhesive and will normally be affixed to the property packaging. Some property may not be able to be packaged using standard packaging. Care must be taken when attaching the property label to the property to avoid damaging or destroying the property. These items may have a stringed property tag tied to the item.
  4. Stringed property tags shall include the incident number, date, item number, and officer information
  5. The case report (including any subsequent updated copies) will be forwarded to the officer's supervisor as part of the incident report.

**F. Packaging Evidence and Other Property**

The following "types" of property have been identified as having individual or specific packaging needs. Different "types" of property will be packaged separately from each other.

Property Types

- |                       |                                 |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| ▪ Alcohol             | ▪ Firearms and Ammunition       |
| ▪ Bicycles            | ▪ Jewelry and Precious Metals   |
| ▪ Biological Evidence | ▪ Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs |
| ▪ Currency            | ▪ Perishable Items              |
| ▪ Hazardous Materials | ▪ General Property              |
| ▪ DNA                 | ▪ Latent Prints                 |
| ▪ Vehicles            | ▪ Miscellaneous                 |

1. All evidence shall be packaged in a manner which preserves the condition of the evidence and prevents the introduction of foreign materials.
2. Guidelines for the proper packaging of evidence and other property are detailed in Appendix A of this directive.

## G. Logging Property and Evidence into the Evidence Barn and Impound Lot

1. Items that are not suitable for placement in the property room due to their size, quantity, or flammable/hazardous nature will be secured at the evidence barn or impound lot according to the instructions listed in Appendix A.

Revised

2. When items are placed in the evidence barn or impound lot, a voicemail or email message will be sent to the Quartermaster.
3. The location of where the items were placed must be correctly entered into the property management system.

New

## H. SANE Kit Procedures

1. Officers investigating crimes involving criminal sexual conduct which occurred in the previous 120 hours shall encourage the victim to have a Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examination. Officers shall inform the victim that the examination is free of charge. Officers shall also inform the victim that they have the right to receive a medical forensic examination and have evidence collected even if they do not want to participate in the criminal justice process.
2. The preferred hospital for the examination is Sparrow, though other area hospitals also provide the examination.
3. Officers shall ensure victims have transportation to the hospital for the examination and back from the hospital after the examination is completed.
4. Officers should not be present during the examination. However, if the examination is conducted on a person in custody an officer shall be present when necessary.
5. Hospital staff is responsible for contacting MTPD once the SANE kit is completed and the kit has released to law enforcement by the victim. Once the hospital has contacted MTPD, the kit must be retrieved within 24 hours.
6. If MTPD is notified by another department that they are in possession of a SANE kit in which the crime occurred in Meridian Township, the kit shall be picked up within 72 hours.
7. Once a kit is collected from a hospital or another agency, the receiving officer shall:

- a. Transport the kit directly to MTPD
  - b. Enter the kit into the property management system and submit the kit into evidence through a two way locker
  - c. Notify the originating or investigating officer that the kit has been submitted to evidence
  - d. Submit a supplemental report documenting the receipt of the kit and submission into evidence
8. All SANE kits will be tracked using the State of Michigan Track-Kit online portal. The Track-Kit portal allows victims to track the status and location of their SANE kit online. Hospital staff is responsible for barcoding and entering kits into the portal when received.
9. The Track-Kit portal will be monitored by the Division Commanders, the Investigations Unit Sergeant, and the Quartermaster. The Quartermaster shall be responsible for updating the status of a SANE kit in the Track-Kit portal.
10. Officers shall not withhold the barcode numbers nor the passwords from victims for the victim's personal kit. Officers will not share barcode numbers or passwords with anyone but the victim or others needed for the criminal justice process.
11. SANE kits shall be submitted to the MSP Crime Lab within 7 days of receipt using the procedures set forth in section H of this general order.
12. All SANE kits shall be stored and preserved in evidence in accordance with MCL 770.16.
13. If MTPD intends to destroy or dispose of any SANE kit evidence before the expiration for the limitation period the victim shall be notified in writing at least 60 days before the evidence is destroyed or otherwise disposed of in accordance with MCL 752.935.

#### **IV. CANCELLATIONS**

None

Authorized by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Plaga', written over a horizontal line.

Ken Plaga, Chief of Police

Index as:

Packaging Evidence  
Packaging Instructions – Evidence and Property  
Property Classification  
Property Receipt Form  
Submission of Property and Evidence  
Standard 4.2.3  
Standard 4.3.1

*Application: This directive constitutes department policy, and is not intended to enlarge the employer's or employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims insofar as the employer's or employee's legal duty as imposed by law.*



**APPENDIX A****SUBMISSION OF EVIDENCE AND PROPERTY****Packaging and Submission Instructions**

***Note: Each of the "types" of property listed below must be packaged separately from the other "types" of property. All containers, except for heat sealed plastic, will be sealed with evidence tape.***

**ALCOHOL**

1. Misdemeanor and Civil Infraction Alcohol Violations (MIP, open intox etc.): the containers will be poured out at the scene and returned to the owner. The in-car camera system can be used to photograph the evidence.
2. Felony Offenses or Extraordinary Cases: the contents of any opened containers will be placed into a sealable storage container and both this and the empty container will be placed into evidence. The original container may be used if it is able to be resealed.

**BICYCLES and other BULK PROPERTY – Off-Site Storage**

Property that is too large, or too numerous to secure in the usual storage lockers will be secured in the Evidence Barn, located at the Service Center.

1. Bicycles will be secured with a cable and lock in the entrance vestibule of the barn.
2. Other items shall be placed in the vehicle bay of the barn. The overhead door and the entrance door will both be secured. Once secured, entry will only be by evidence room key.
3. A property label will be attached to the property. A string property tag may be used to assist in attaching the property label to the property.
4. Property labels that cannot be attached to the property will be submitted directly to the Quartermaster instead of attaching them to the property. In this case a string property tag must be completed and attached to the property.
5. For bicycles, the property management system entries will include the make, model, color, style (boys/girls), number of speeds, and serial number. If a bicycle license is attached, the number and issuing jurisdiction must also be noted.

6. A voicemail or email must be left for the Quartermaster so that the property can be moved into the secured area of the Evidence Barn.

#### BIOHAZARDOUS PROPERTY

Blood, semen, CSC kits, sharp objects, etc.

1. A biohazard label will be affixed to each package containing biohazard materials.
2. If dry, each item of property with potential biological stains will be packaged in a separate paper bag and then placed into a larger paper bag for storage.
3. If wet, the property must be air dried prior to packaging. A drying locker is available in the security garage for that purpose. The locker must be locked and the key placed in a temporary evidence locker. The Property label will then be forwarded to the Quartermaster's mailbox.
4. Drying Locker Procedures:
  - a. Line the bottom of the drying locker with butcher paper to catch any possible trace evidence.
  - b. Use only new, plastic hangars to hang items.
  - c. Turn the motor on. A green light will appear and the motor will start.
  - d. Do not adjust any other knobs on the locker.
5. Once the property is dry, the submitting officer is responsible for obtaining the key from the Quartermaster, removing the property from the drying locker, packaging it, and placing it into a temporary evidence locker. The butcher paper will also be submitted into evidence. The officer will notify the Quartermaster when the drying locker is empty and the Quartermaster will clean the locker.
6. The lab will not accept syringes. Any liquid inside a syringe must be placed in another container for submission to the lab. Sharps items will generally not be kept as evidence and will be disposed of in a container provided for that purpose. Syringe needles, razor blades, etc. will be placed in a sharps container.
7. Specimen Collection Kits - When an officer obtains a blood or urine specimen using a kit provided by the Michigan State Police and analysis is required, the following steps will be followed:

- a. The kit will be sealed according to the kit instructions.
- b. A property label will be completed and attached to the bottom of the kit.
- c. Complete the return address area and include the officer's name
- d. Blood specimens will be placed in the Temporary Property Lockers. Urine specimens will be placed in the evidence refrigerator.

(The Quartermaster will transfer or arrange transfer of the specimen to the MSP lab.)

8. Criminal Sexual Assault Kits - will be placed in evidence. The property label will be affixed to the bottom of the kit. The Quartermaster will transfer the kit to the MSP laboratory.

## CURRENCY

Cash, coin, bank notes, etc.

1. If the currency has specific evidentiary value (i.e.; money with recorded serial numbers or dye pack stained money) then it will be kept in the evidence room.
  - a. Currency stored in the evidence room is packaged in heat sealed plastic so that the currency is visible. The property label is placed directly onto the plastic.
  - b. The submitting officer as well as the officer providing the secondary count will sign and date the heat seal to show integrity of the package.
  - c. All other currency is packaged in an evidence envelope. This currency is turned over to the Township Treasurer for safe keeping by the Quartermaster.
2. All currency shall be counted by the submitting officer and another person. The quantity of each different denomination of currency and the total amount submitted shall be written on the outside of the package. The officer and the witness will both sign the package next to the total amount.
3. Checks, counterfeit money, or other paper evidence will be submitted to the temporary evidence lockers and protected for latent print examination when appropriate. A photocopy of the document will be submitted with the Incident Report for the benefit of the Investigator.

New

## DNA

1. Items of evidence with suspected DNA on them must be dry before they are packaged. These items will be packaged in an evidence envelope.
2. DNA swabs are only collected and submitted by trained CSI personnel. These items will be packaged in an evidence envelope.

## FIREARMS

1. Firearms will be unloaded whenever possible. If a firearm cannot be unloaded, a highly visible warning will be attached to the firearm declaring that it is still loaded. It must also be placed in the temporary storage lockers with the muzzle facing away from the evidence room to protect the Quartermaster.  
**\*\* A voicemail and email will be left informing the Quartermaster of the loaded weapon. \*\***
2. Firearms will be placed in the boxes provided for that purpose. If a loaded firearm is placed into a box, that container must also be conspicuously marked.
3. Each firearm must have an individual property label completed for it. Property labels are placed onto the storage box, not the firearm. If no box is available, a string label may be used to attach the property label.

New

4. Ammunition must be packaged separately from any firearm.

## GENERAL PROPERTY

Property which does not fall into one of the other property types.

1. General property will be packaged unless the size or shape of the item prevents packaging. If no package is used then the officer should not affix the property label to the property if this will cause damage. A string label may be used to attach the property label.

## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Explosives, fireworks, flammable gas & liquids, and compressed gas.

1. **CAUTION:** *Explosives, other than commercially produced ammunition, should not be placed in any storage locker nor brought to the police facility. Explosives and items that are unstable or present a danger to the transporting officer will not be moved by the officer. Instead, the officer will notify the on duty supervisor to contact the Fire Department, bomb squad, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Natural Resources or other appropriate agency for assistance.*

2. Hazardous materials will be placed in the flammable storage cabinet located in the Evidence Barn.
3. The cabinet will be locked and the key placed into a temporary evidence locker. The Quartermaster will transfer the evidence to the secure area of the barn.
4. Commercially produced fireworks.
  - a. Destruction:  
When commercially produced fireworks are submitted for destruction, they shall be destroyed in the presence of the supervisor. The packages will be ripped open and submerged in a container of water that will be provided at the evidence barn. The officer should ensure that any wrappers or coverings that would prevent the firework from absorbing water are removed. The Quartermaster will dispose of the fireworks after they have soaked.
  - b. Evidence:  
When commercially produced fireworks are needed as evidence, a photograph will be taken of the fireworks and the wrapper from the fireworks will be removed. The photograph and wrapper will be placed into evidence and the fireworks will be destroyed as described in 4.a. above.

#### JEWELRY AND PRECIOUS METALS

- Revised
1. Jewelry or valuables will be submitted in heat sealed plastic so that the items are visible and available for inspection without opening the package. The property label is placed directly on the plastic and the heat seal will be signed and dated by the officer to show integrity of the package.

#### KNIVES

1. Knives which are unsheathed and which do not fold closed will be placed in a box provided for that purpose. Folding knives will be taped shut and placed in an evidence envelope.
2. Multiple knives may be packaged in the same box provided it does not affect the integrity or identity of the evidence and they are related to only one suspect.

#### DIGITAL MEDIA

- Revised
- Digital Media may be retained in evidence saved to a digital media (DVD, Blu-Ray, Flash Drive, Hard Drive, etc.) or uploaded to the digital cloud.

## Revised 1. Digital Photographs

- a. Digital photographs taken with a Department camera will have the memory card submitted to the Quartermaster for upload to the digital cloud. The memory card will be placed in a small white envelope with the report number written on the envelope.
- b. The officer will enter the item into the property management system as Digital Media, packaged as a Digital Media item.
- c. The property label will be placed onto an index card and placed in the Video mailbox.

## Revised 2. Digital Video

- a. Video captured by department video systems (surveillance, interview rooms) will be downloaded to DVD by the Quartermaster.
  - The Officer will enter the item into the property management system as a DVD with the type of video listed in the description.
  - The property label will be placed onto an unsealed evidence envelope. The Quartermaster will seal the envelope once the DVD is created.
- b. Video captured by department video system (body worn camera, in car camera) will be uploaded to the digital cloud by the Quartermaster.
  - The Officer will enter the item into the property management system as Digital Media with the type of video listed in the description.
  - The property label will be placed on an index card and the placed in the Video mailbox.
- c. An email request must accompany any digital media that is to be retained for evidence. The e-mail must include:
  - REPORT NUMBER:
  - INCIDENT DATE: MM/DD/YY
  - INCIDENT TIME:
  - INCIDENT TYPE:
  - LOCATION: Street Address
  - SUSPECT: Name, Race/Sex, DOB
  - BWC: Officers Names
  - FLEET: Officer's name and vehicle number
  - PHOTOGRAPHS: Number of photographs

- OTHER DIGITAL MEDIA: Cell phone video, DB or Patrol Room Interview, Booking, etc.
- 911 RECORDING: CAD call number

## NARCOTICS/DRUGS

**\*\*\*FENTYNOL - ALL OFFICERS WILL TAKE PROPER PRECAUTIONS WHEN HANDLING SUSPECTED FENTYNOL OR ITEMS WITH POSSIBLE FENTYNOL CONTAMINATION\*\*\***

- Revised
1. All drugs stored in the evidence room are packaged in heat sealed plastic so they are visible. The property label is placed directly onto the plastic. Once the plastic is heat sealed, the Officer will sign and date the heat seal to show integrity of the package.
  2. Pills will be counted and the description and total number of pills will be written on the package, listed in the property management system, and documented in the incident report.
  3. Other drugs will be weighed prior to packaging AND after heat sealing. Both weights will be written on the package, listed in the property management system, and documented in the incident report.
  4. Multiple items of the same type (IE; baggies of marijuana) taken from the same person should be placed into a single heat sealed plastic bag, not heat sealed individually.
  5. Quantities or sizes that cannot be packaged in heat sealed plastic may be packaged in other ways.
  6. Drugs should not be packaged with paraphernalia unless submitted for destruction.

*Note: Live plants, such as marijuana or any plant material that is not dry, shall be packaged in paper bags, not plastic.*

## PERISHABLE PROPERTY

Subject to quick deterioration or spoilage

1. Perishable property that is evidentiary will be photographed and released to the owner, whenever possible. Documentation, such as labels off the perishable property, may be removed and submitted as evidence along with the photograph(s).

2. Perishable property stored in the biohazard evidence refrigerator will only be returned to the owner after the owner signs a waiver acknowledging that the property may be contaminated.
3. Perishable property should not be taken for *safekeeping* when other reasonable disposition can be arranged.

## PRINTS

1. Latent Prints
  - a. Latent print lifts will be packaged and a completed lab request sheet will be attached to the outside of the package with a paperclip. All latent prints are taken to the lab for processing and are not held in the evidence room.
2. Elimination Prints
  - a. Elimination prints must be entered as a piece of evidence before they can be sent to the lab. All of the elimination prints from one case may be packaged together.

## VEHICLES

1. Vehicles that do not require CSI processing.
  - a. Secure the vehicle in the impound lot
  - b. Enter the vehicle in LEIN as impounded
  - c. Enter the vehicle in the property management system as impounded
  - d. Start a file for the vehicle (in the milk crate in evidence room)
  - e. Attach a copy of the report to the yellow impound sheet
  - f. Fill out a blue card for the vehicle (in the milk crate in the evidence room)
  - g. Place the manila folder, which should contain the blue card, copy of the report, and the yellow impound sheet in the milk crate.
  - h. Send the Quartermaster an email that the vehicle is in the impound lot and if there are any special instructions for the release of the vehicle.



## 2. Vehicles that require CSI processing.

## a. If processing can be completed immediately:

- Have the vehicle processed
- Secure the vehicle into the impound lot. Follow above instructions for entering vehicle into property management system

## b. If processing cannot be completed:

- Place the vehicle in the vehicle bay of the evidence barn.
- Close the overhead door and secure it by placing the slide lock through the door track so that the door cannot be raised.
- Lock and secure the door leading to the vestibule area. Further access to the bay will then be gained only by an evidence key.
- Send an email to the Investigations Unit Supervisor and the Quartermaster notifying both that the vehicle was placed in the vehicle bay and needs to be processed.
- Once the garage has been secured, any entry to the area must be recorded in the property management system.
- Follow above instructions for entering vehicle into property management system.

New