



Seattle Police Department Policy Manual



7.090 – Photographic Evidence

Effective Date: 11/01/2021

This manual section applies to photos and videos created and received by employees in the course of their duties.

This manual section does not apply to [in-car and body-worn video](#), [holding cell and security video](#), or [recorded statements](#).

This manual section is divided into the following policies:

POL-1 General Photo and Video Evidence

POL-2 Photos and Videos Created by Employees

POL-3 Photos and Videos Received from Outside the Department

POL-4 Access and Use of Photo and Video Evidence

7.090-POL-1 General Photo and Video Evidence

This policy outlines general requirements regarding photo and video evidence.

1. Employees Will Store Digital Photo and Video Evidence in Evidence.com

Evidence.com is the standard storage location for digital photo and video evidence. Employees will upload photo and video evidence into Evidence.com unless a technical issue prevents upload.

Exception: The Latent Print Unit may continue to store images in the Digital Evidence Management System (DEMS) until fully transitioned to Evidence.com.

2. All Photos and Video Require an Event Number

Employees will add the event number and category to all photos and videos uploaded.

3. Employees Will Verify Photo and Video Uploads

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Employees will visually verify the successful upload of photos and videos into Evidence.com.

7.090-POL-2 Photos and Videos Created by Employees

This policy applies to photos and videos created by department employees in the course of their duties.

1. Employees Will Not Create or Store Photo or Video Evidence on Personal Devices

2. Employees Will Use Department-Issued Equipment to Capture Photo and Video Evidence

The Photo Unit will evaluate department devices to ensure they produce still images that meet evidentiary standards.

3. Employees Will Use Axon Capture to Take Evidentiary Photos on Issued Smartphones

Employees will use the Axon Capture mobile application to gather evidentiary photos on department smartphones.

Exception: Employees may take photos or video using the phone's native camera application or a legacy department camera only if exigent circumstances prevent the use of Axon Capture. The employee will contact Seattle IT as soon as feasible to resolve access issues with Axon Capture.

4. Employees May Use Digital Single-Lens Reflex (DSLR) Cameras

DSLR cameras take higher resolution images which may be better suited for documenting some forensic evidence such as:

- Type III use of force injuries
- Latent fingerprints
- Tire tread impressions
- Footwear impressions
- Tool marks

Not all employees have received training and have been assigned DSLR cameras. If a DSLR camera is not available on scene, a

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responding sergeant or detective may contact on-duty CSI or Photo Unit personnel for assistance.

If no on-duty personnel with a DSLR are available, employees may use Axon Capture.

5. Employees Will Not Alter Original Photos or Videos

Employees will not alter original photos or videos before upload to Evidence.com for storage.

Employees may only manually delete original photos and videos from a department device after confirming successful upload.

7.090-POL-3 Photos and Videos Received from Outside the Department

This policy applies to photo and video evidence received from entities outside the department such as victims, witnesses, businesses, and outside agencies.

1. Employees May Accept Photos and Videos in Digital or Physical Form

Employees may accept photos and videos from outside the department in the following ways:

- Employees may use Axon Citizen to send a link to upload photos and videos directly to Evidence.com. See 7.090 TSK-3.
- Employees may upload photos and videos received via link or email attachment into Evidence.com. See 7.090 TSK-4.
- Employees may receive photo or video files on physical media such as a USB drive, CD/DVD, etc. In this case, employees may use the import features of Evidence.com to upload the files. Once the files are uploaded, employees will submit the physical media, containing the original files, into evidence. See 7.090 TSK-4.

7.090-POL-4 Access and Use of Photo and Video Evidence

This policy applies to all employees when accessing stored photo and video evidence.

1. Employees Will Only Access and View Photo and Video Evidence for Official Business

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Employees will only view photos and video for official business and note their purpose for viewing in Evidence.com.

Employees will refer members of the public who wish to view photo or video evidence to file a public disclosure request.

2. Employees May Create Temporary Working Copies of Photos and Video After Upload

Employees will not alter original photos or video.

When necessary, basic enhancements using the tools and features within Evidence.com can be made to working copies to enhance a photo or video's brightness, contrast, cropping, trimming, or rotation.

Evidentiary digital image or video processing techniques performed outside of Evidence.com for forensic or courtroom or public presentation purposes will be documented. The results will be presented as a processed version(s) and stored in Evidence.com.

Employees may contact the Photo/Video Units for assistance.

3. The Photo/Video Units Control Restriction, Retention, and Disposition of Photos and Video

To restrict access to photo or video evidence, the lead investigator or a supervisor from the investigating unit will email a Photo/Video Unit Supervisor to provide the report number and a list of employees who may access the restricted digital evidence.

7.090-TSK-1 Submitting Photographic Evidence Via Axon Capture on Evidence.com

When submitting photos to Evidence.com via Axon Capture, the **employee**:

1. **Opens** the Axon Capture mobile application on a department-issued smartphone.
2. **Captures** photographs.
3. **Uses** Axon Capture to tag and associate the report number using YYYY-##### format.
4. **Assigns** appropriate category to photographs.
5. **Verifies** photographs are successfully uploaded to Evidence.com.

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6. **Documents** in the report that photographs were taken with Axon Capture and uploaded into Evidence.com.

7.090-TSK-2 Employees Troubleshooting When Axon Capture Fails to Upload Images

When Axon Capture fails to upload images, the **employee**:

1. **Checks** that the smartphone has a cellular signal or is connected to secure Wi-Fi.
2. **Verifies** that Axon Capture is logged into seattlepd.evidence.com.
3. **Uses** City email address (e.g., john.doe@seattle.gov) and password to log in, if necessary.
4. **Notifies** the Photo Unit if Axon Capture upload process continues to fail.

7.090-TSK-3 Sending Upload Submission Links Via Axon Citizen

When sending an upload submission link via the Citizen option in Axon Capture, the **employee**:

1. **Opens** the Axon Capture mobile application on a department-issued smartphone.
2. **Clicks** on Citizen.
3. **Enters** the report number using YYYY-##### format in the ID section.
4. **Assigns** appropriate category to photographs.
5. **Obtains** the community member's cellular phone or email address.
6. **Enters** the cellular phone or email address into Citizen.
7. **Enters** the first and last name of the community member.
8. **Clicks** "Send" to generate and send the upload link.
9. **Documents** in the report that an Axon Citizen upload submission link was sent to the community member.

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7.090-TSK-4 Submitting Photos and Video into Evidence.com from Cameras, Link, Email Attachment, or Other Media

When submitting photos and video evidence via DSLR, legacy cameras, external link, email attachment or other media into Evidence.com the **employee**:

1. **Connects** device to the USB port of a computer (if applicable).
2. **Logs** in to Evidence.com.
3. **Clicks** on 'Evidence' in the upper left-hand corner.
4. **Clicks** on 'Import Evidence'.
5. **Clicks** on 'Drag and Drop' and chooses files to upload.
6. **Adds** Case Number information (if case number is unknown use NOCASENUMBER).
7. **Clicks** on 'Edit all IDs' and adds the case number using YYYY-123456 format (no padded zeros). If no case number exists, adds 'NOCASENUMBER' as the ID.
8. **Clicks** 'Edit all Categories' and selects the appropriate category from the drop-down menu.
9. **Ensures** that the Title, ID, and Category have been selected for all files.
10. **Clicks** Upload.
11. **Confirms** that each file says 'UPLOAD COMPLETE' in the status column. Note: All digital media clips must be complete before leaving the page.
12. **Returns** to Evidence.com once the files have completed uploading.
13. **Reviews** uploaded content to ensure completion.
14. **Documents** in the report that photos and video evidence via DSLR, legacy cameras, or external share link or email attachment received into Evidence.com were uploaded into Evidence.com.
15. **Notifies** the Photo or Video Unit by phone or email if photos and video evidence cannot be uploaded to Evidence.com.

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7.090-TSK-5 Submitting Photo and Video into Evidence.com When Upload from Other Media is Not Successful

When an employee is unable to upload photo or video files from other media into Evidence.com, the **employee**:

1. **Removes** the media card from the device, if applicable.
2. **Attempts** to contact the Photo/Video Unit to coordinate a resolution.
3. **Keeps** the media card in a safe place suitable for evidence storage.
4. **Documents** in the report that photo and/or video evidence was created but not submitted through Evidence.com due to a malfunction.