



EVIDENCE & RECOVERED PROPERTY – STORAGE OF PROPERTY

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I. DEFINITIONS

A. Temporary Storage

A series of cages, cabinets, lockers and drop boxes in district stations approved by the commander of the Property Management Section to securely store property awaiting transport to Property Management within 24 hours, excluding weekends and holidays. An additional drop box is located in the Anne Arundel County Centralized Holding and Processing Center (CHPC). The drop box at the CHPC may only be used for evidence/contraband recovered during a prisoner search (if the evidence/contraband can fit into the drop box and is not a firearm). The secured parking lots at the district stations may also be used as temporary storage for vehicles in certain circumstances (see VII. below).

B. District Property Officer

A person assigned by the district commander to manage property temporarily stored in district stations.

C. Property Transport Officer

A person assigned by the district commander or his/her designee to transport property from temporary storage in district stations/CHPC to Property Management.

II. CHAIN OF CUSTODY

The Chain of Custody will be recorded through the Department's computer systems. The chain of custody will document the following information:

- A. Date and time property placed in storage
- B. Complete description of property (including serial # or dollar amount when applicable)
- C. Case number
- D. Name of officer placing property in storage
- E. Location of property (locker #, drop box or bulk storage)
- F. Name of person releasing property
- G. Name of person property released to
- H. Reason for release

III. STORAGE OPTIONS AND PROCEDURES

A. Property which is recovered may be delivered directly to Property Management during normal operating hours or placed in temporary storage at district stations. Property may not be stored in any desk, file cabinet, vehicle, etc.

The following procedures include routine recovered property requiring added protection, such as money, precious metals, jewelry, and weapons other than firearms (See Index Code 1201).

There are different procedures for firearms, CDS, and CDS-related asset seizures involving money and vehicles. See:

Index Code 1201.2 for firearms;

Index Code 1202 for CDS procedures;

Index Code 1207 for CDS-related asset seizures.

B. Officers placing property in temporary storage will:

1. Scan the label of all property into Mark 43 Evidence application by utilizing their departmental phone. Once the property is secured in a drop box, locker and/or bulk storage, the officer will scan the label using the Mark 43 Evidence application of the location where the item was stored.
2. Place property envelopes in the property drop box (If envelopes cannot be safely dropped into drop box because of fragile contents, envelope may then be secured in a property locker.
3. Place property boxes in individual lockers and immediately secure the locker with the lock provided.
4. Rifles and shotguns will be placed in a long gun cabinet and immediately secured with lock provided.
5. Bulk items will be placed in an area designated as temporary storage for bulk items. The transfer of this property to long term bulk storage will be the responsibility of the district property officer who is the only person authorized to have access to this area. (Note: Bulk items must be included in the district property log book)

C. Once a property locker is secured no one may gain access to that locker except for the district property officer.

IV. TRANSFER OF PROPERTY FROM TEMPORARY STORAGE TO PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

A. The district property officer will maintain the keys to all property lockers, property drop box and bulk storage areas. In the event the district property officer is off for more than 24 hours an alternate property officer will be designated and assume the duties of the district property officer.

B. Every day (excluding weekends and holidays) the district property officer will facilitate the transfer of property temporarily held in the district to Property Management by:

1. Removing property from property lockers and drop box
2. Verifying property is properly packaged and labeled (Any property which is not in compliance with packaging and reporting standards will be held in the district until corrected by the original officer on his/her next scheduled work day.)
3. Scan into Mark 43 Evidence application, by using their departmental phone, the property being removed.
4. Assigning a property transfer officer to deliver all property to Property Management at headquarters.

C. Once the property is transported to Property Management, it will be received and transferred into the BEASTiLIMS system by Property Management personnel.

D. The Southern District property officer, or designee, will be responsible for facilitating the transfer of property temporarily held in the CHPC drop box, on a daily basis following the above procedures.

V. PERISHABLE PROPERTY

Perishable items of evidence, such as blood samples and urine specimens will be preserved by refrigeration so their properties will be unchanged as much as possible before they are examined in the laboratory or presented in court. Such items will be stored in the refrigerator and freezer located in and under the control of the Evidence Collection Unit.

VI. EXPLOSIVES OR HIGHLY FLAMMABLE PROPERTY

A. Explosives or any highly flammable material coming into the possession of any employee will be reported to the employee's commanding officer. The commanding officer will determine the proper method of handling and disposing of such property. In these situations, if feasible, the employee will contact his or her commanding officer for instructions prior to moving the material.

B. Gasoline powered vehicles, gas cans, or other containers holding highly flammable liquids will not be stored inside the Property Management Section nor within the confines of any district station.

C. Explosive devices, other than minor fireworks, will require notification and coordination with the State Fire Marshal.

VII. MOTORIZED VEHICLES

All recovered motor vehicles (including minibikes, ATV's, marine vessels and trailers, etc.) will be towed and stored by the area tow company, unless the vehicle is subject to forfeiture as an asset seizure or going to be held as evidence.

Any vehicle that is going to be held as evidence must be immediately towed or transported to the appropriate permanent secured lot (Traffic Safety Lot or Evidence Lot). ***The investigating officer or another officer must follow the vehicle if it is towed to the Traffic Safety Lot or the Evidence Lot.*** Traffic Safety personnel will be responsible for the storage of vehicles involved in crash investigations in the "Traffic Safety Lot". All other vehicles that are to be held as evidence must be transported to the "Evidence Lot". Investigating officers must contact ***Property Management personnel (during business hours) or on-duty Evidence Collection Unit personnel (during non-business hours)*** to respond to the "Evidence Lot" to take control of the vehicle. ***It is the responsibility of the officer following the towed vehicle to enter the vehicle information appropriately into the Mark 43 evidence application to document the chain of custody, including scanning the appropriate storage lot bar code label when the vehicle is placed in the storage lot. In addition, officers must document the transport and chain of custody in the Offense/Incident Report or a Supplement Report.*** It is the responsibility of the investigating officer to authorize the release of the vehicle as soon as possible in coordination with the States Attorney's Office. The investigating officer will determine if the entire vehicle, or parts of the vehicle, needs to be held as evidence pending trial.

NOTE: District Station parking lots are not considered secured for the purposes of maintaining chain of custody of vehicles that are considered evidence, unless an officer/detective maintains constant custody and observation of the vehicle while it is there. This includes the temporary storage of a vehicle pending a search warrant.

Vehicles seized as an asset seizure will be towed to the "Asset Seizure Lot" during normal business hours. The "Asset Seizure Lot" officer will be notified to coordinate the storage of the vehicle. Vehicles seized as an asset seizure may temporarily be stored on the secured lots at the district stations after normal business hours. A steering wheel locking device must be applied to the vehicle during this time. The "Asset Seizure Lot" officer must be notified of the seizure via email of the seizure in these cases, to arrange for transport of the vehicle to the "Asset Seizure Lot". Arrangements must be made with the "Asset Seizure Lot" officer within 24 hours, excluding weekends and holidays, to have the vehicle transported to the "Asset Seizure Lot" (see Index Code 1207). ***It is the responsibility of the seizing officer/detective to enter the vehicle information appropriately into the Mark 43 evidence application to document the chain of custody, including scanning the appropriate lot bar code label when the vehicle is placed in the lot and when it is moved from a district station lot to the "Asset Seizure Lot".*** ***NOTE: When a vehicle is taken into custody as an asset seizure, the Vehicle Status "Asset Seizure" must be added to the vehicle information in the records management system.***

VIII. ANIMALS, ANIMAL-DRAWN VEHICLES, PUSHCARTS, CUMBERSOME PROPERTY

A. Animals coming into possession of the department will be turned over to the Anne Arundel County Animal Control Agency, if the animal cannot be returned to its owner. The arrangements for accomplishing this will be made through the Communications Section.

B. Pushcarts, animal-drawn vehicles, and other cumbersome property will be driven or transported to the district station and processed/documented in the same manner as bulk property.

IX. OBTAINING EVIDENCE FOR COURT

Evidence for court will be obtained through Property Management on the day the case is set for trial. No evidence will be released to an officer before his/her departmental identification is verified. All evidence removed from Property Management for Court will have a paper Court Evidence Tracking and Status Form attached. This Form will contain a chain of custody and case disposition information. The form must be maintained until evidence is returned to Property Management or a district temporary storage facility.

X. RETURNING EVIDENCE FROM COURT

A. After court, evidence will be returned to Property Management or a district temporary storage facility on the same day it was signed out. No evidence will be stored in a vehicle, desk, etc.

B. If the evidence is turned into a temporary storage facility, the Court Evidence Tracking and Status form must be attached to the evidence and must be filled out with the appropriate information for accountability purposes.

C. Officers will obtain a receipt for any evidence retained by a court for any reason, and will submit the receipt to the Property Management Section in lieu of returning the evidence. The officer who withdrew the evidence from Property Management for use in court is responsible for returning it to Property Management once the evidence is no longer needed by the court.

XI. RIGHT OF REFUSAL

The Property Management Section reserves the right to refuse any property which is not properly packaged, labeled or accompanied by the proper forms.

XII. PROPONENT UNIT: Property Management Section.

XIII. CANCELLATION: This directive cancels Index Code 1201.1 dated **06-06-22**.