

COOLIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT		
	CHAPTER 83 COLLECTION AND PRESERVATION OF EVIDENCE CALEA Standard(s):	General Orders
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83.1 Definitions

Chain of Custody: Documentation of the physical handling of all property from the time obtained until final disposition.

Evidence Custodian: The employee assigned as head of the Evidence Section.

Found Property: Lost or abandoned property which is not evidence and comes into the custody of the Department.

Safekeeping Property: Property that is not evidence that is taken into Department custody for the purpose of safeguarding the property for the rightful owner.

Prisoner Property: Property that is not evidence and that belongs to a prisoner who has been booked into jail.

Property for Disposal: Property that has no monetary value, is not evidence, and has been given to the Department by a citizen who has requested that the property be removed or destroyed.

Evidence: Property, trace materials and/or biological findings that may be related to a crime and which may implicate or clear a person of a crime.

Collecting Officer: The person who collected and packaged the property.

Submitting Officer: The person who turned the property over to the custody of the Evidence Section.

83.2 Evidence Section

A. The Evidence Section is responsible for the storage, organization, retrieval and return or disposal of all property which is collected for safekeeping, as evidence, and as found property.

B. All property and evidence that are to be submitted to the Section will be submitted before the submitting employee completes his/her duty shift and shall be secured while in the custody of the submitting employee until submitted. No property or evidence shall be left unsecured in a desk, vehicle or office.

C. Evidence Guidelines detailing the required packaging and labeling of all property and all other Evidence procedures shall be drafted by the Evidence Custodian, approved by the Chief, and be made available to all employees. Evidence Guidelines shall be followed by all employees.

D. Security of the Evidence Section is essential to establishing the chain of evidence for prosecution purposes. Only Section employees, the Section supervisor, and the Police Chief shall have direct access to the Evidence Section and facility. All persons entering the Evidence storage area will show identification, be logged in and out and be accompanied by section personnel. All access keys to all Evidence storage units or areas will be limited to section personnel. Any drop-box or overnight storage areas will be secured with mechanisms that allow property to be entered or dropped off, but not removed, except through the use of an access key.

E. An officer who seizes or receives property from a citizen shall, upon request, provide the citizen with a copy of the property control form as a receipt.

83.3 Collection of Evidence at the Scene

83.3.1 Scene management

A. It is the responsibility of the case agent at a crime scene to ensure that the scene is processed for all possible evidence, and the proper steps for its documentation, preservation and submission are taken.

B. All evidence collected at the scene, including digital audio and visual files, shall be submitted to Evidence, or downloaded onto the Department's storage systems, prior to the end of the officer's shift. Any exception to this rule requires supervisor approval.

83.3.2 Fingerprints

Each officer shall receive training on processing a crime scene for latent prints and shall carry a fingerprint kit for that purpose. All latent prints will be packaged separately in manila envelopes and submitted to Evidence.

83.3.3 Photographs

A. Crime scene photographs shall only be taken with Department issued or Department approved digital cameras. Officers shall receive training in taking evidentiary photographs (images obtained for the purposes of evidence to support a criminal investigation).

B. All evidentiary photographs, regardless of quality, shall be downloaded onto the Department's photographic evidence storage device. At no time shall any images be deleted. A specific case identifier shall be included at the beginning and the end of the series of images.

C. No officer may take photographs of a crime scene using private equipment or maintain a personal copy of any evidence photographs. Any images taken by an officer on an unauthorized camera shall have the memory medium packaged and placed into Evidence.

D. Photographs shall be taken when investigating serious crimes against persons or property, or when recovered property is to be returned to the victim in lieu of impounding (such as in shoplifting cases). Examples of serious crimes include, but are not limited to:

- Homicide
- Sexual Assault
- Arson
- Burglary
- Robbery
- Aggravated Assault
- Child Neglect/Abuse
- Traffic Fatality/Serious Injury Accident
- Injured Prisoner/Use of Force
- Any time a citizen is injured or alleges injury as a result of police contact, including traffic accidents

The officer taking the photographs shall document and describe the photographs in the DR.

83.3.4 Biological Evidence Collection

A. To avoid scene contamination, officers should closely control access to any crime scene in which there may be biological evidence. Officers should use protective gear (gloves, shoe covers, etc.) both for their own protection and to

avoid scene contamination. Access to the scene should be strictly limited; a log should be kept of all those entering the scene.

B. Given that biological evidence may be transferred during a physical encounter, both the suspect and the victim, themselves, must be considered part of the crime scene. The suspect and victim shall not be left alone until possible evidence is collected.

C. Any items that contain or may contain biological evidence should be collected and transported to the Evidence Section. All such evidence must be properly packaged to avoid cross contamination. All biological evidence shall be labeled with biohazard stickers.

D. If an item is such that it cannot be transported, Evidence technicians and Detectives may be called to the scene to assist with forensic collection from those items, subject to the approval of a supervisor. Sworn personnel will be in charge of the scene and investigation, with the responding Technician providing technical forensic support only.

83.4 Collection of Evidence at Police Facilities

83.4.1 Fingerprinting Subjects

A. Subjects will not be ten-print fingerprinted in the field. Prints shall be obtained either at a police facility or at the jail, preferably using the Arizona Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AZAFIS). Only certified operators shall use the AZAFIS equipment.

B. If the AFIS System or Live Scan equipment is non-operational or not available, fingerprints will be taken using an FBI fingerprint card. The card and a copy of the booking sheet will be forwarded to the AFIS operator for later entry into the AFIS system.

C. Subjects may also be referred to the Department for the purpose of obtaining a set of fingerprints for personal reasons or by court order. Such fingerprinting is only done at the Coolidge Police Department and must be requested by contacting a police officer. All persons requesting fingerprints, or responding due to a court order, must have a valid photographic identification card.

83.4.2 Photographing Subjects

All arrested persons and others who consent to providing a photograph shall be photographed during the arrest process, either at the Department or at the jail or

detention facility. Photographs taken at the Department shall be taken using the Holding Facility camera, using the same background.