



# Sioux Falls Police Department

Partnering with the community to serve, protect, and promote quality of life!

Policy: <b>Evidence Preservation</b>	Related Policies:	Section #: 1200 Evidence
		Policy #: 1201
		Effective: 5-01-2009
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<i>This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can be used as basis of a complaint by this department for nonjudicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i>		
Reference:		

1. Purpose:

1.1. The preservation and documentation of evidentiary property is of utmost importance to enable its use in forensic analysis and successful introduction in court.

2. Policy:

2.1. All evidence will be packaged and documented in accordance with guidelines established by the Crime Lab.

3. Procedure:

3.1. General Packaging Guidelines

3.1.1. The Crime Lab will maintain an Evidence Handbook that will be kept in the Evidence Packaging Room.

3.1.1.1. Since forensics and the law are constantly changing, the collection/storage requirements change also, sometimes on a frequent basis.

3.1.1.2. The Crime Lab will update any new developments as soon as feasible and pass on the updates to users of the Crime Lab.

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- 3.1.2. All property or evidence turned in to the department shall be identified and documented by an evidence tag or label containing the required information.
- 3.1.3. The evidence should then be placed in one of the lockers or storage areas provided by the Crime Lab for this purpose.
- 3.1.4. Evidence should be turned over to the Crime Lab as soon as possible after it is obtained so the chain of custody can be maintained for court.
- 3.1.5. Officers will not keep evidence or seized property in their personal lockers or possession, except the Detective Division Commander may authorize detectives to retain items in specific cases as stated in the Detective Division SOP and by Traffic Case Investigators using hit and run evidence to match with vehicles on cases they are actively working.

### 3.2. Specific Packaging Guidelines

#### 3.2.1. Sealing of Evidence

- 3.2.1.1. Whenever practicable, all items of evidence turned into the department should be sealed with the date and initials of the submitting officer.
- 3.2.1.2. Exceptions to this are items to be processed for fingerprints and / or DNA and firearms that need a safety check done before being entered.

#### 3.2.2. Items of Evidence with Special Packaging Instructions

- 3.2.2.1. Refer to the Physical Evidence Bulletins, Evidence Handbook located in the Evidence Packaging Room or the packaging videos located on InSite for further detail on any specific packaging guidelines.
- 3.2.2.2. If there is a question that cannot be answered by those sources, please contact the Crime Lab (directly during business hours or the on-call personnel after business hours).

### 3.3. Transport of Evidence to External Agency

- 3.3.1. The Crime Lab will assist in packaging and arranging transport of evidence to the FBI lab, DCI forensic crime lab, or other laboratories when necessary.
- 3.3.2. No other sections or shifts will send any evidence to these agencies for further processing.
- 3.3.3. Investigators will fill out the necessary forms for these labs since they require information about the case that is normally not readily available to the Crime Lab.

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### 3.4. Evidence Storage and Processing for Other Agencies

3.4.1. As a general rule, this department will not accept, store, or process evidence or property for other law enforcement agencies.

3.4.2. Exceptions to this rule are:

3.4.2.1. The Crime Lab will handle all evidence and crime scene processing for the Minnehaha County Sheriff's Office.

3.4.2.2. Evidence or property seized in a joint investigation with another agency for prosecution in Minnehaha or Lincoln County.

3.4.2.3. Per agreement, the Crime Lab will provide analysis for all blood alcohol and drug exhibits held as evidence in cases to be prosecuted in Minnehaha County.

3.4.2.3.1. Exhibits belonging to the Highway Patrol, Brandon PD, and Garretson PD will be returned to them for storage once analysis is done.

3.4.2.4. When authorized by the Chief of Police or a Division Commander.

3.4.3. Occasionally, officers are dispatched to a local hospital to seize evidence for other jurisdictions involving injury or fatal accidents, rapes, assaults, and homicides.

3.4.3.1. A shift supervisor should make contact with authorities in these jurisdictions and request that they send a representative from their agency if feasible to collect the evidence if it is not of an emergency nature. If alternate arrangements cannot be made or it is of an emergency nature, the items can be collected at the supervisor's discretion.

3.4.3.2. This is to avoid our officers and the Crime Lab personnel becoming entangled in the chain of evidence and requiring them to travel to and testify at trial in other jurisdictions.

3.4.3.3. In those cases in which evidence is collected and / or received for another law enforcement agency, a foreign aid case report must be completed to document the evidence entered into our Crime Lab.

### 3.5. Documentation

3.5.1. Seized property or evidence must be inventoried within the officer's reports.

3.5.2. Sketches, photographs, and collection of physical evidence should be accurate and meticulously documented.

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3.5.3. The chain of evidence shall be maintained on all physical evidence through proper packaging, labeling, and computer tracking.

3.5.4. When items other than blood alcohol tubes, alcohol samples, or DWI arrest videotapes are placed into evidence, a Case Report must be made.

### 3.6. Crime Scene Processing

3.6.1. Uniformed Services Division shift supervisors will be trained in basic fingerprint development and recovery, taking of proper DNA swabs as well as basic crime scene photography techniques. They are expected to handle most of the minor or “property crime” crime scenes such as:

3.6.1.1. Vandalism.

3.6.1.2. All thefts from vehicle.

3.6.1.3. Commercial and residential burglaries and attempts where the total property loss is less than \$500.00.

3.6.2. Special consideration should be given to all other crime scenes. The Uniformed Services Division shift supervisor should consult with the on-call Crime Lab personnel as the Crime Lab will normally respond to and process crime scenes involving:

3.6.2.1. Death or serious personal injuries (e.g. obvious homicides, suspicious deaths and aggravated assaults).

3.6.2.2. Rapes and sexual assaults.

3.6.2.3. Armed robberies.

3.6.2.4. Commercial or residential burglaries where the structure was occupied at the time of the crime.

3.6.2.5. A series of felony crimes “probably” committed by the same suspect(s).

3.6.2.6. Commercial or residential burglaries where total property loss is \$500.00 or more.

3.6.2.7. Motor vehicle thefts.

3.6.3. Requests for Crime Lab personnel to respond to a crime scene will come from a Uniformed Services Division or Investigative Services Division supervisor who is present at the scene.

3.6.3.1. Once on the scene, an officer will stand by while Crime Lab personnel process the scene.

- 3.6.4. Once aid has been rendered to any injured parties and the scene swept for remaining suspects, protection of the crime scene becomes the top priority.
- 3.6.5. Depending upon the scene, a perimeter should be established or scene secured to prevent people from entering and, in some cases, leaving the scene.
  - 3.6.5.1. The more people entering a scene increases the risk of the scene being irreparably contaminated or altered.
  - 3.6.5.2. All persons who are not providing forensic services or have a statutory right to be present in the scene; i.e., the county coroner, should clear and remain clear of the scene until advised otherwise by Crime Lab personnel.
  - 3.6.5.3. Crime Lab personnel have the authority to remove anyone from the scene except the county coroner.

### 3.7. Lost/Found Property

- 3.7.1. All found or abandoned property and found bicycles, as well as items turned in for safekeeping, will have a completed evidence tag or evidence label attached.
- 3.7.2. Except for found bicycles, which are to be placed in the lobby of the East Evidence storage facility, all items should be placed in the evidence lockers or storage areas.

**3.8. Tagging cash / money into the Crime Lab:** This form / envelope serves as the sole method for logging cash money into the property room. Cash is defined as coin and / or U.S. Currency. Checks, credit cards, foreign currency and coins, or other negotiable items are not to be used with the money envelope. The Crime Lab will not accept money that has not been packaged / logged appropriately and according to the following procedures:

3.8.1. Money is to be itemized by denomination listing sub totals and total amounts.

3.8.2. All money logged into the property room will require the submitting officer's signature and a supervisor signature verifying the money count.

3.8.3. The entering officer and supervisor shall sign their names and badge numbers to the front of the envelope, seal the envelope with tamper-proof security tape, then both must initial the back of the envelope prior to entering into the property locker. NOTE: It is strongly suggested that two (2) separate counts be conducted with large amounts of cash.

3.8.4. Extremely large amounts of coin and / or currency might be seized which, because of the container or quantity of money, make it impractical to package in

the money envelope (e.g., coins stored in a large piggy bank or water bottle, a large amount of bills in a briefcase or satchel, etc.) In those rare cases, it is acceptable to log the container containing the money as is. However, a money count and completion of the money form must still be done. The money envelope can be taped to the container, however, officers submitting the money should secure the container as necessary with evidence tape to prevent tampering.

3.8.5. All money envelopes will be tagged into the Crime Lab evidence locker in the LEC packaging room or one of the approved East or West Evidence Drop off Facilities. The East Evidence facility located at 200 West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street is not an acceptable drop off location for money.

3.8.6. In the event a K-9 unit is requested for a narcotics related case or K-9 sniff of currency, refer to the K-9 policy regarding drug sniffs as the handler will not handle the money directly.



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Policy: <b>Photographic Evidence Collection / DIMS</b>	Related Policies:	Section #: 1200 Evidence
		Policy #: 1202
		Effective: 4-01-2009
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<i>This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can be used as basis of a complaint by this department for nonjudicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i>		
Reference:		

I. Purpose:

This policy is created to give guidance to department personnel on the proper collection of photographic evidence.

II. Policy:

Still image photography will be done with digital cameras. The images will be stored on the Linear Systems Digital Image Management System (DIMS). Images normally will be of crime scenes, traffic accidents, for case documentation, for public relations or for other investigative purposes. Photographic documentation of scenes or criminal investigations should be accurate and thorough. Images captured must be relevant to the case and appropriate in nature.

Digital image security and integrity is extremely important and the DIMS equipment is instrumental in this role. No changes will ever be made to original images as none are allowed by the system. There are many operations and databases, watchdogs if you will, working out of sight recording every event that happens to each image.

III. Definitions:

a. Categories of crime scene photographs

- i. **Comparison** (close-up) – documents class and individual characteristics for future comparisons *or* for producing 1:1 scale prints for court presentation. A scale is required to be included when taking these types of photographs. Victim injuries is a common situation where a scale must be included in the

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close-up photograph of the injuries. It is permissible to have the victim to assist in the photography by holding the scale.

- ii. **Identification** (close-up) – shows specific items so they can be recognized and identified, i.e. the face of a victim with injuries, a VIN plate and firearm serial number, etc. Scales must be included in some types of these photographs so they can be printed in actual size at a later time. Common examples would be shoeprints and tire tracks/tread. The camera should be positioned 90 degrees to the print or track to avoid distortion of the print/track in the image. Scales or tape measures must be included in photos of tire tracks/tread and shoeprints.
- iii. **Orientation** (overall or long range) – provides a general view of the entire scene, building, person, etc.
- iv. **Relationship** (medium range) – shows relationships between items of evidence or objects at the scene in relation to each other.

b. **DIMS** – Digital Image Management System

c. **System Administrator** – is the Crime Lab director. Any changes in permission levels should go through the chain of command. Problems or errors should be brought to the attention of the system administrator as soon as possible by email.

#### IV. Procedure:

a. Basic Photography

- i. The DIMS system can store a wide variety of image file formats, including video formats commonly found in digital cameras.
- ii. The majority of situations recorded by officers do not require a higher image resolution of 3 megapixels (mp). If the situation calls for it, the mp level may be increased or decreased, however an increase in mp will result in larger files which will take longer to load into DIMS.
- iii. The Crime Lab by the nature of it's work will normally record in much higher resolutions and occasionally in uncompressed formats like RAW or TIFF.

b. Once photography is completed the officer or forensic specialist will maintain chain of custody over the image storage card until it is archived in DIMS. At no time will images be deleted from the storage card. All images taken on a case must be downloaded.



c. Archiving in DIMS is done at one of three download (shuttle) stations located in the Law Enforcement Center.

i. Station locations:

1. Report room on the 1<sup>st</sup> level,
2. Evidence packaging room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> level;
3. Crime Lab.

ii. Archiving Procedure

1. Sign onto the DIMS shuttle station with your normal City network username and password.
2. Insert the storage card into the proper slot in the shuttle station.
3. Wait 5 – 10 seconds then double-click the DIMS icon on the PC Desktop to launch the software.
4. Once DIMS is running click on Download to start the download process. All images will be selected since all the images must be archived.
5. Enter the case number with the full year and five digit case number. (i.e. 2009-00012345)
6. Click Transfer the images (another window will appear to re-enter the Case number to guard against erroneous case numbers being entered into the system).
7. Once the case number is re-entered the images will download to a folder.
8. At this point you can exit the system or review images.
9. Changes can be made during review but no changes are saved or made to the original image.
10. After exiting the system the storage card can be removed from the station. The DIMS will erase and format the card so it's immediately ready for use on another case.

d. Viewing Images

i. Viewing images stored in DIMS is done through Windows Internet Explorer. This is accessible only on *City* networked PC's in the LEC.

- ii. After normal City network sign-on, start up Internet Explorer and enter DIMS URL in the address bar. A small window will appear to enter a DIMS specific username (usually first initial and last name) and user password.
  - iii. Once into the viewing system the user can use a number of search criteria boxes in the left column to find what case they're searching.
  - iv. When the search results appear you select the case number to click and open to view the images. Only the Crime Lab and select detectives have the ability to print, email or export DIMS images.
  - v. Permissions to view certain types of cases will be restricted to personnel who need to use them for investigative or case management oversight.
- e. Printing Images
- i. The Crime Lab has the ability to print high quality prints, of various sizes, on its photo printer.
  - ii. Requests for image prints will be processed through New World software as an Activity Request. Details for print sizes, which images (asset numbers) to print and how many to print will be detailed in the activity request.