



WRITTEN DIRECTIVE	No. PD17-1101	Page: 1 of 7
Subject: CRIME SCENE PROCESSING	Effective Date:	4-3-17
	Supercedes/ Amends:	PD14-1101
	Reference:	1.2.4, 42.2.1, 46.1.3, 83.1.1, 83.1.2, 83.2.1, 83.2.2, 83.2.3, 83.2.6, 84.1.1



42.2.1 C, 46.1.3 E

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines for collecting, preserving, and packaging evidence as well as defining guidelines for the assignment of Forensics Unit personnel.

II. Policy

83.2.6

It shall be the policy of the Lynchburg Police Department that a crime scene be carefully processed so as not to overlook, contaminate or destroy evidence, and that any evidence found is collected and packaged so that it will not be changed in form or value.

III. Procedure

A. CRIME SCENE SECURITY

1.2.4 A, D

1. As soon as practical after arrival at the scene, responding officers should attempt to determine the location where the crime occurred, and should assume physical control over the identified crime scene.
 - a. When necessary, the on scene supervisor will designate an officer to be responsible for security of the crime scene and documenting **ALL** persons who enter the crime scene on the *Crime Scene Log*. This log will be entered into the Property and Evidence system as evidence.
 - b. Officers should maintain physical control of the crime scene until all evidence collection is completed.
 - c. If circumstances that initially justified officer entry significantly change, it may become necessary to obtain a search warrant in order to maintain control of the crime scene.

2. All officers are responsible for protecting evidence at crime or accident scenes.
3. Officers not engaged in protecting or recording the scene, conducting the investigation or collecting evidence should remain outside the crime scene to avoid possible contamination or alteration of evidence.

B. NOTIFICATION OF FORENSICS UNIT PERSONNEL

1. For the purpose of this directive, a full-time Crime Scene Detective (CSD) will refer to any Detective whose primary assignment is investigating crime scenes and collecting evidence. The On-Call CSD will refer to the Crime Scene Detective who, regardless of primary assignment is designated as on-call at that particular time.
 - a. If a CSD is needed and a full-time CSD is currently working, he or she will be contacted first and requested to respond. If no on-duty CSD is available, or it is after regular Forensics Unit work hours, the On-Call CSD will be contacted and requested to respond.
2. The on-call CSD will be requested by contacting the on-call CID supervisor first to determine the need for a response.
 - a. A CSD will process crime scenes as listed in directive PD-0902 *Criminal Investigations* under section III.A.2, "Required Notification of Investigations".
 - b. A CSD may be requested to process crime scenes as listed in directive PD-0902 *Criminal Investigations* under section III. A.3, "Optional Notification of Investigations".
 - c. A CSD may be requested at any time that specialized expertise or equipment is deemed necessary for proper processing of a crime scene by the supervisor in charge of that crime scene.
3. When the services of a CSD are required, the on-call CSD will be notified per the authority of the on-call CID supervisor.
 - a. A CSD will be available on a 24 hour basis.
 - b. The Forensics Unit Sergeant or his designee will be responsible for providing the Department of Emergency Services with a monthly CSD on-call schedule.
 - c. On notification, the CSD may provide the supervisor with specialized instructions as required to preserve the crime scene until the arrival of the CSD.

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- d. The supervisor in charge of the crime scene will be responsible for protecting the scene from contamination or alteration until the arrival of the CSD.
4. The CSD will process crime scenes in accordance with guidelines established by the Virginia Division of Forensic Science (VDFS).
 - a. The VDFS Evidence Handling and Laboratory Capabilities Guide can be found at the following link:

<http://www.dfs.virginia.gov/documentation-publications/evidence-handling-and-laboratory-capabilities-guide/>

83.2.2

C. PHOTOGRAPHING AND DIGITAL VIDEO RECORDING OF EVIDENCE/CRIME SCENES

1. The department maintains various types of photographic and digital video recording equipment for creating a permanent visual record of the evidence or crime scene.
 - a. Field Operations officers are issued Department Mobile Phones that are equipped with cameras. They are intended for use by field personnel for normal photography and/or digital video recording situations that do not require more sophisticated equipment or techniques.
 - b. Situations requiring specialized photographic techniques or digital video recording equipment will be handled by notifying a CSD (if working) or the on-call CSD.
 - c. Evidentiary photographs will only be taken using LPD issued equipment.
2. Overall photography will be used to orient the viewer to the general crime scene area.
3. Midrange photography will be used to orient the viewer as to the exact location of items of evidence in the scene.
4. Close-up photography will be used to photograph specific items of evidence, and may include a scale (ruler) to help indicate the size of the item being photographed.
5. Officers will note in the related incident/supplement report that photographs were taken at the scene, and submitted into evidence on a CD or DVD. Submission will be done using an evidence voucher and in accordance with directive PD 1201 (*Evidence, Recovered, and Found Property*)

- a. The CD or DVD will be identified with the CC number and the assigned item number.

83.2.3**D. LIFTING LATENT FINGERPRINTS**

1. The department maintains various equipment for lifting latent fingerprints.
 - a. Field Operations patrol vehicles are equipped with fingerprint lifting equipment intended for use by field personnel for normal lifting situations that do not require more sophisticated equipment or techniques.
 - b. Situations requiring specialized lifting techniques will be handled by notifying a CSD (if working) or the on-call CSD.
2. When processing the crime scene for latent fingerprints, the officer will take the following into consideration:
 - a. the type of surface, and
 - b. potential for destruction if moved (if moving the object will destroy latent prints, the object will be processed at the scene).
3. Officers will note in the related incident/supplement report the number of prints lifted at the scene, the location lifted, and the CC number and item number on which the prints were submitted, and will label the print cards with the following information:
 - a. complaint control (CC) number,
 - b. item number,
 - c. officer's name,
 - d. date, and
 - e. location (diagram as appropriate) each print was lifted from.

83.2.7**E. DNA EVIDENCE**

1. Officers responding to crime scenes will be cautious to avoid contaminating DNA evidence.
 - a. Officers should wear latex gloves when handling all potential DNA evidence.
 - b. Officers will follow crime scene security procedures as defined in Section III A of this directive.

2. DNA evidence will be collected, stored, and transported using accepted procedures as described in the VDFS evidence guide available online at the following link:

<http://www.dfs.virginia.gov/documentation-publications/evidence-handling-and-laboratory-capabilities-guide/>

3. All officers collecting DNA evidence will have received training on the proper techniques for collecting evidence
4. Any DNA evidence/analysis request will be submitted on a Request for Laboratory Examination (RFLE) form and will follow guidelines listed in directive PD-1201 (*Evidence, Recovered, and Found Property*) Section III. C.

83.2.6

F. COLLECTING AND PACKAGING EVIDENCE

1. Officers will be responsible for collecting and packaging evidentiary items when a CSD does not respond to the scene.
2. Situations requiring specialized collection techniques will be handled by notifying a CSD (if working) or the on-call CSD.

83.1.2

3. When collecting items of evidence, the officer will consider:
 - a. The use of tongs, tweezers, or latex gloves ~~when ever where~~ possible to avoid contaminating the item of evidence.
 - b. Proper order of collection:
 - 1) The officer should collect perishable evidence first.
 - 2) If destruction of evidence is not a concern, then the officer should work their way through the scene, collecting in a logical sequence, trying to avoid disruption of other items of evidence.

83.3.1

- c. Collection of known samples:
 - 1) Whenever available, sufficient specimens or known samples will be collected and submitted for comparisons of such items as hairs, fibers, paint, glass, soil, and tool marks.
 - 2) A CSD may be consulted regarding the necessity and quantity of specimens or known samples to be collected.

84.1.1 D

- d. Marking evidence:
 - 1) Officers will mark or tag the container that evidence is placed in as soon as the item is taken into custody.

- 2) Information to be included, at minimum:
 - a) complaint control (CC) number,
 - b) item number,
 - c) officer's name, and
 - d) date.
- e. Packaging evidence:
 - 1) Officers will choose a container suitable to the type of evidence to be packaged, giving consideration to the following:
 - a) the size and weight of the item,
 - b) whether the item is moist or wet, and
 - c) whether the item is a sharp.
 - 2) Officers will avoid possible contamination of evidence by packaging all items separately.
 - 3) Items will be packed in such a manner as to minimize interior movement within the package.
 - 4) The package will be sealed with evidence tape, and the collecting officer will initial across the seal.
 - 5) The package will be labeled (see section III.E.3.d) before placing the evidence in it so as not to damage contents while writing on it.
- f. When collecting evidence that has been contaminated with human body fluids, the officer will be responsible for:
 - 1) following procedures as outlined in directive PD-2009 (*Communicable Disease Exposure*) when handling the item,
 - 2) placing sharps in a plastic biohazard tube or other appropriate container,
 - 3) placarding the package with a bio-hazard label
 - 4) air-drying wet evidence (if necessary) in the designated Forensics Unit Drying Room.
 - a) The Drying Room is a secure location that can only be accessed by notifying a CSD for assistance.

- b) if the fluids are not completely dry, the officer will temporarily seal the contaminated item (other than needles) in a plastic bag using evidence tape until the item can be placed in the appropriate location for drying.
- 5) notifying the Property and Evidence Coordinator if an item being held for evidence/analysis has been left in the refrigerator.

Original Signed

Raul M. Diaz
Chief of Police

April 3, 2017

Date