5-04/120.20 - Found Property Processing and Disposition

Found property shall be retained at the concerned station/unit no longer than 30 days from the item's booking date in PRELIMS to allow time for investigative procedures or the rightful owner to claim the property. If the property is not claimed by the owner within this period, the property shall be transferred to the Central Property custodian. The *Receipt for Found Property* (SH-CR-213) and a copy of the case report shall accompany all found property that is transferred to the Central Property custodian.

If found property is money, the station shall deposit it to the Department's trust fund and forward the *Receipt for Found Property* (SH-CR-213) and copy of the case report to the Central Property custodian. Units other than stations shall dispose of found money in accordance with those procedures outlined in section 5-04/100.00 - Cash Property Procedures - Units Other than Stations. All money of numismatic value shall be transferred to the Central Property custodian.

In regard to found property, the Central Property custodian shall have the following responsibilities:

- Maintain custody of the property for 60 days in addition to the 30-day period at the station or unit;
- Publish a notice of found property valued at $250 or more at least once after the 60 days in a newspaper of general circulation;
- Maintain custody of the property for seven days after the publication in addition to the 90 days or until the owner or the finder claims the property; and
- If unclaimed by the finder within 23 days after the 97-day holding period, the property will be deemed abandoned and sold at a public auction.

The owner or the finder claiming the property must first pay the publication cost prior to taking possession of the property if the property was valued at $250 or more.

Department of Sheriff Miscellaneous Receipt (76M474C) for payment of the publication costs shall be issued by the Central Property custodian.

Prior to the public auction of unclaimed/abandoned property, the Department may acquire the property if it can be put to public use. See section 5-04/190.20 - Acquisition Request and Release of Unclaimed Property.