5-07/075.00 - Taking of Photographs During Service of Search Warrants

Whenever any member or members of this Department are involved in the service of a search warrant, whether or not this Department is the primary, concurrent, or assisting agency in the service of such search warrant, it shall be the responsibility of the ranking Department member at the scene to photograph, or cause to be photographed, the location, vehicle, or area to be searched both before and after the search. Photographs taken shall be of 35 mm or larger only, or recording may be done on videocassette.

Members of the Department who engage in the service of a search warrant shall use caution when searching the property of another. Members shall not cause unnecessary damage to the property.

"Before search" photographs shall be taken as soon as practical after the location, vehicle, or area to be searched is contained. "After search" photographs shall be taken after the search is completed and just prior to leaving the location. "After search" photographs shall duplicate the location, vehicle or area photographed prior to conducting the search, paying particular attention to any damage or areas of substantial disruption as a result of the service of the search warrant.

Undeveloped film shall be handled as evidence and forwarded with a completed SH-R-258 to Scientific Services Bureau, Photographic Laboratory, with instructions to return prints and/or file negatives for further reference. Photographs will be printed and sent to the investigating unit only if requested.

Following the execution of a search warrant, a report shall be written indicating the number of "before search" and the number of "after search" photographs taken, or the number of videocassettes used. The disposition of the film rolls or videocassettes shall be indicated in the report.