5-07/230.20 - Enhancement of Audio and Video Evidence

The intent of this policy is to clarify the use of outside contractors, laboratories, and individuals for the enhancement of audio and video evidence. Department investigators shall first use Department resources for this service before seeking outside assistance.

Audio and video enhancement is a forensic process currently performed by the Fraud & Cyber Crimes Bureau, Technical Operations Detail. Investigators assigned to this detail possess the training, expertise, and equipment necessary to properly evaluate and enhance audio and video evidence. Whenever an investigator of this Department deems it necessary to have audio and/or video evidence enhanced, they will adhere to the following procedures:

- The Technical Operations Detail will be the primary point of contact for audio and video enhancement requests. It is the responsibility of the handling investigator to seek the assistance of the Technical Operations Detail before going outside the Department;
- If the Technical Operations Detail is unable to work on the subject evidence, or if the evidence cannot be satisfactorily processed within 10 working days, the investigator may seek outside assistance with the concurrence of the Technical Operations Detail sergeant or lieutenant, and then the approval of the investigator's unit commander. Technical Operations Detail will provide a referral as described:
    - The Technical Operations Detail will be responsible for referring investigators to reputable outside resources in the following order:
        1. No-fee service from a government sponsored lab, i.e., FBI, NLECTS, etc.; and
        2. Fee-based service from a private lab

    NOTE: Use of a fee-based lab requires compliance with established Fiscal Guidelines and Procedures

- exceptions to the above policy may be appealed through the detective division chief or his designee.

Nothing in this policy precludes other units within the Sheriff's Department from developing their own audio and video enhancement capabilities, as long as standard recognized equipment is utilized and the enhancement is accomplished by properly trained personnel. In these cases, the use of outside enhancement resources will still be dictated by this policy.