Station Order 009 - Property and Evidence Handling Procedures

Basic procedures for property and evidence handling are set forth in the “Property and Evidence Chapter” of the Policy and Procedures Manual, Section 5-04/000.00 through 5-04/130.25. All personnel shall be familiar with and conform to these procedures.

In addition, the following procedures clarify and further detail property and evidence handling at Industry Station. Station personnel shall also be familiar with and conform to these procedures.

RESPONSIBILITIES Appropriate property and evidence handling is the responsibility of all station personnel. Additional specific responsibilities are as follows:

Watch Commander’s Responsibilities

- Maintain proper evidence and property handling on their respective shifts.
- Assure that patrol personnel receive appropriate training on the handling of property and evidence.
- Accurate completion of safe ledger entries, and packaging and labeling of items stored in the safe.
- Verification of articles and money placed in the safe. Watch Commanders must sign first initial and last name across the back flap of all envelopes.
- Maintaining an orderly safe.
- Control of keys to permanent property storage areas. **NOTE:** During hours that the Property Room is not open, the keys shall be kept in a sealed envelope in the station safe. Any breaking of the seal requires an entry in the Watch Commander’s log. The keys will be resealed after each use, and the seal signed by the Watch Commander.
- The day shift Watch Commander shall prepare deposits of bail money and assure timely deposits of bail money and collected fees, as well as disposition of property in the safe and monthly audits of safe contents and safe ledger.
- At the end of shift, the Watch Commander shall inspect the entries made in the master ledger during that shift for completeness, accuracy, and correctness. The Watch Commander shall direct any necessary corrections and sign his/her name after the last entry of that shift to verify the inspection was done.

Watch Sergeant’s Responsibilities

- Control of the interim property storage keys (inside and outside).
- Opening and placing property into the interim storage lockers.
- Promptly relocking interim storage lockers as soon as property has been placed therein.
- Assuring that proper entries are made in the Master Ledger. Sergeants shall countersign each of the Mater Ledger entries with employee number and signature, and shall inspect the inside evidence locker at least once each shift.
- Reviewing property and evidence packaging and labeling to assure compliance with procedures.

- Reviewing reports to assure that evidence and property are properly described and that the storage locations are recorded.
- Conducting detailed evidence and property handling training of patrol personnel, with appropriate refresher training as indicated.
- The Detective Operations Sergeant shall have the specific responsibility for timely disposition and periodic audits of property and evidence.

Jailer's Responsibilities

- Safekeeping of money (under $400) and property not retained by prisoners. Bulk property should be kept at least 30 days before entering into the evidence computer.
- Assuring that any prisoner money over $400 or valuables stored in the safe accompany the prisoner when transferred or released. Where this is not possible, such money or valuables shall be forwarded to the new jail location, via Transportation Bureau, as soon as possible after notification or transfer.

Detective Commander's Responsibilities

- Frequent monitoring and review of the property and evidence handling procedures.
- Conduct formal quarterly audits of evidence and property, including audits of the Master Property Control Ledger.
- Submitting written reports to the Unit Commander detailing any non-compliance with property and evidence handling procedures found during review or audits.
- Monitoring the training and supervision of the station Evidence Control Officer and a designated alternate.
- Assuring that detective personnel receive appropriate training on the handling of property and evidence.
- Assuring the periodic and timely transfer of property and evidence to Central Property.
- Authorizing and supervising any destruction of evidence or property at the station.

Early Morning Watch Deputy's Responsibilities

- Preparation of Miscellaneous Fees deposits.

Station Evidence Control Officer's Responsibilities

- Daily transferring of property and evidence from interim evidence storage to permanent station storage areas with appropriate recordation in the Master Ledgers.
- Maintaining physical control of the keys to the property and evidence storage areas while on duty and turning in these keys to the Watch Commander when leaving.

- Weekly review of the Safe Ledger for the accumulation of **"held in trust"** money (other than bail and fees) and preparation of appropriate deposit slips as needed.
- Recording names of handling investigators on property labels and ensuring labels correctly describe attached property.
- Monthly transfers of property to Central Property.
- Immediately reporting any discrepancies in the property and evidence handling procedures to the Detective Commander.
- Daily review of "Interim Property Removal Forms" to ensure proper clearance of evidence taken to court, etc.
- Additional responsibilities as detailed in the Policy and Procedures Manual.

ACCESS TO PROPERTY STORAGE AREAS No one shall enter any station property storage area unless actually conducting business related to property storage. Access to the permanent inside and outside storage areas during the off-duty hours of the Evidence Control Officer must be authorized by the Watch Commander.

The Watch Commander shall authorize such access **only in emergent situations and shall personally supervise this activity.**

STORAGE LOCATIONS Property and evidence shall be stored as follows:

Prisoner's personal property and money (under $400) shall be sealed and stored in the jailer's safe drawer, with the following exceptions:

- Money When a prisoner is booked with over $400, all money in excess of that allowed to be retained by the prisoner (up to $40) shall be stored in the safe.
- Jewelry or other prisoner personal property items believed to be of high value shall, at the discretion of the Watch Commander, be stored in the safe. Otherwise, such items shall be put into an envelope and sealed with the remainder of the prisoner's personal property.
- Bulk property such as suitcases, backpacks, and sleeping bags will be stored in the jail interim property store room while the prisoner is in custody at the station. These items will be labeled.

NOTE: An appropriate notation shall be made on the booking slip when any prisoner money or property is stored in the safe or storage room. Such money shall accompany the prisoner, if transferred. Bulky items will not be accepted by Transportation or Custody units and will remain at the station.

- Money All other money shall be stored in the safe, including counterfeit money, coins, and foreign money.
- Jewelry All jewelry believed to be of high value shall be stored in the safe.
- Valuables Any other item believed to be of high value shall, with the authorization of the Watch

Commander, be stored in the safe. Examples would include stamp collections, stocks, and bonds.

- Narcotics All narcotics and paraphernalia shall be packaged appropriately and initially stored in the Narcotics Drop Safe (mailbox) located in the hallway next to the Watch Commander's office.
- Hypodermic syringes The seizing deputy shall take two photos of the syringe(s) in the presence of the Watch Sergeant. The URN shall be visible in the photo. The photos shall then be handled as normal patrol evidence, with the name of the deputies and witnessing sergeant listed in the report. The syringes shall be deposited in the red "Sharps" container in the inside evidence storage room.
- Blood, Urine, and Sexual Assault Kits shall be stored in the inside interim property storage room, placed in the refrigerator, and initials placed on the labels.
- Bulky Items Items too large to be stored in the inside interim storage room shall be stored in the outside interim storage room (bicycle locker). Examples include bicycles, bulky appliances, vehicle parts, tires, etc.
- Perishable Items Every attempt shall be made to immediately return perishable items to their rightful owner. Some perishable items may be retained in the inside or outside interim evidence storage rooms with the authorization of the Watch Commander. Disposal of perishable items shall be authorized by the Watch Commander or the Detective Commander. Photographs should be taken prior to the disposal of perishable items.
- Combustible items or potentially hazardous materials shall not be stored in either the inside interim or permanent property storage areas. These items will be placed in the outside hazardous materials locker located next to the outside property room door. Items such as firecrackers shall be placed in the outside interim property storage room; however, they will be kept away from the other property.
    - Explosives shall not be stored at the station. Arson/Explosives Detail shall be contacted immediately for disposal.
    - Guns and fixed ammunition shall be stored in the inside interim property storage room.
    - Other regular evidence and property shall be stored in the inside interim property storage room.
    - Exceptions and unusual items shall be stored in a location as authorized by the Watch Commander. Central Property may be of assistance in locating storage areas for unusual items such as large quantities of meat, etc. Central Property can also provide portable safe cabinets for secure storage of large amounts of jewelry, coins, or other bulky items requiring storage in a safe.

EXAMINATION OF PROPERTY All property shall be examined before being placed in storage at Industry Station. Sealed boxes, knapsacks, suitcases, and other packages shall be opened and the contents inventoried.

AUTOMATED EVIDENCE ENTRIES Automated evidence entries shall be made into the automated "Epic" program -- see attached procedures/samples. This will generate three labels for each entry: one label for a designated area of the SH-R-49, one label for the safe or master ledger, and one label for the evidence itself. Start with suffix identifier 001 and subsequent items would increase numerically to 002, 003, etc. See Appendix A and B.

PROPERTY PACKAGING AND LABELING Whenever possible, all property and evidence shall be placed in a plain manila envelope with a metal clasp. All property and evidence shall be labeled. The only exceptions are detailed in this section.

Use of Plastic Bags Evidence and property (other than prisoner's personal property) shall not be sealed in a plastic prisoner's property bag. This includes money. Large, clear plastic trash bags may be used to package multiple small items of evidence or property under the same URN number, such as clothing and linens. The property label shall be completed and securely affixed to the outside of the plastic bag. Bags will not be sealed.

- Prisoner's money or valuables retained in the safe shall be placed in an appropriate size manila envelope bearing the "prisoner's property" stamp which will be completely filled in. Other prisoner's property placed in the safe will be tagged and recorded in the safe ledger under the appropriate file or booking number.
- Prisoner's personal bulk property shall be labeled. Other prisoner's personal property which is sealed in the appropriate plastic prisoner's property bag shall not be labeled.
- Marking of evidence shall be completed as detailed in Policy and Procedures Manual, Section 5-04/020.25. Also see Appendix A.
- Method of Affixing Property Label (Refer to Policy and Procedures Manual, Section 5-04/020.20.) The method varies, depending on the storage location.
    - Property shall be labeled in such a manner that the label will not be separated from the item. If the item has no surface to which an adhesive label will adhere, a tag may be tied to it, then the property label affixed to the tag.

Safe Storage Items All money and valuables stored in the safe shall be placed in a clasp envelope with a completed property/evidence label affixed on the outside. The Watch Commander shall sign his name cross the flap of the envelope and then seal only the flap with clear tape.

ITEMS REQUIRING SPECIAL HANDLING Special packaging, labeling, or handling is required for particular items as follows:

- Serialized property shall have a teletype listing it as evidence, found, or recovered attached to that piece of property.
- Handguns and ammunition can be packaged together. All handguns shall be placed in a "clasp" envelope. Envelopes containing guns or ammunition shall be labeled.
- Rifles and long guns shall be labeled and ammunition will be packaged separately.
- Open knives, pieces of glass, or other sharp objects shall be wrapped securely with paper and then placed in a "clasp" envelope. For safety, the contents shall be written outside.
- Open alcoholic beverage containers. A two-ounce sample shall be placed in a vial and the remainder of the contents of the open container destroyed. The vial shall be affixed to the empty container. Alcoholic beverage containers shall be not placed in an envelope.
- Urine samples shall not be placed in any type of envelope. The label information on the bottle shall be completed with the pink label on top and the yellow label around or covering the pink label. A completed

file number is required. The initials of the person sealing the evidence must be overlapping the tape and evidence container.

- GSR Test. The required information shall be completed on the outside of the envelope, including the charge. The initials of the person sealing the evidence must be overlapping the tape and evidence container.
- Sexual Assault Kits. The required information shall be completed on the outside of the envelope. The initials of the person sealing the evidence must be overlapping the tape and envelope flap.
- Narcotics and paraphernalia shall be placed in pre-printed narcotics envelope. The required information shall be completed on the outside of the envelope. The packaging deputy shall close and seal the envelope.
    - PCP shall first be placed inside a “Kapak” plastic bag, sealed, and then placed inside a narcotics “clasp” envelope, as described above. Only PCP shall be placed in Kapak bags.
    - Marijuana plants may be folded before placing in a paper envelope. Damp roots and mud shall be removed prior to packaging (photos may be taken prior to removing roots). Large seizures of marijuana shall be packaged in large paper bags. The bats shall be sealed and small air ventilation holes made in the paper. A narcotics envelope shall be completed and affixed to the outside of the large bag with scotch tape. See Policy and Procedures Manual, Section 5-04/120.00 through 5-04/120.35 for further narcotics information.
- Film Rolls of film that are to be sent to the lab for developing **shall not** be entered into the evidence ledger. An SH-R-258 form (blue form) shall be filled out and stapled to the outside of a 6"x9" envelope. Place this into the blue lab box located in the inside evidence room to be sent to the Crime Lab.

LEDGER ENTRIES

The following information applies to the Safe and Master Property Ledgers. Specific information for each ledger is detailed below. See Appendix B.

- Ink -- All entries shall be made in indelible ink.
- “URN SEQ. No.” Column Enter sequential only. Booking numbers shall be used in this column when storing prisoner’s money or other personal property belonging to prisoners.
- Property Description - Affix computer printed label here. Items shall not be described as gold, silver, diamonds etc., but as yellow metal, while metal, clear stones, etc.
- Original storage codes shall be used to represent the original storage locations. Use one of the following:
    - P/I - Patrol, Inside
    - P/O - Patrol, Outside
    - N - Narcotics Depository
    - R - Refrigerator
    - H - Haz-Mat Locker
- Employee number and signature (last name) shall be written in the appropriate columns by the person

who records the entry.

- The Watch Sergeant shall write his employee number and last name signature in the appropriate columns on the final line of the property description. The signature of the Watch Sergeant indicates that he has verified the contents to be placed in storage and checked the ledger entry, the envelope, and the label for accuracy.
- Two blank spaces shall be left in the "Property Description" column after the last property item entry, including entries at the bottom of the page. This permits additional notations such as cross-referencing to be made then or at a later date.

  If an entry must be continued to the following page, this will be indicate din the "Property Description" column on the last line and on the first line of the following page. The entering deputy shall place his employee number and signature on the first line of each page used for continued entries. The Watch Sergeant shall sign at the bottom of each page of a continued entry.

- Errors - If an error is made, a disposition shall be made and the last name of the person making the disposition signed. White-outs, erasures, obliterations, or deletions of any type shall not be made.
- Cross-Referencing - Cross-referencing between the Safe and Master Ledgers is required whenever items under the same URN are recorded in both ledgers. (Example: If money and a gun are taken as evidence, the entry in the Safe Ledger for money must be cross-referenced to the entry in the Master Ledger for the gun, and vice versa.

  If additional evidence is recovered on a later date under the same URN number, and an earlier listing of evidence has been made in either the Safe or Master Ledger, both the original and latter entries shall be cross-referenced to each other.

- Partial Release of Property or Money- If only a portion of evidence or property that has been listed on one line in either ledger is released, then the remaining items or amount shall be re-entered as a new entry. Both the original and the new entry shall be cross-referenced to each other.

SAFE LEDGER - Any time an item of evidence or property is deposited in the Watch Commander's safe, it is imperative that each section of the safe ledger is filled out completely and correctly.

Procedures applicable only to entries made in the Safe Ledger are as follows:

- Original Storage and Storage Change Columns- All entries in the Safe Ledger shall have an "S" in the "ORIGINAL STORAGE" column. In addition, one of the following entries shall be made in the "STORAGE CHANGE" column:
  - INT - Money to be held intact as evidence. Also referred to as Type "A" money. This includes counterfeit money.
  - INT/C - Collectible Items (Currency or coin with a value greater than that negotiable on its face.)
  - DT - Money to be deposited - referred to as "held in trust" (evidence not necessary to be held intact, bail, bicycle, or fingerprint fees, found money, etc.). Also referred to as Type "B" money.
  - Pk - Prisoner's Money (prisoners booked with over $400 cash and prisoner's personal property).
  - VAL - Items of monetary value (jewelry, stamp collections, etc.).

- MISC - Any other items (documents, special papers, administrative entries, etc.).

- The Watch Commander shall write his employee number and last name signature in the appropriate columns on the final line of the property description. The signature of the Watch Commander indicates that he has verified the contents to be placed in storage and checked the ledger entry, the property, and the label for accuracy. The Watch Commander shall place the property in the safe.
- Monies - All money, including coins, shall be counted and the amount verified by the Watch Commander.

TEMPORARY REMOVAL OF EVIDENCE OR PROPERTY - Whenever property is temporarily removed from any property storage location for court or any other purpose, a "PROPERTY INTERIM REMOVAL RECORD" form shall be completed in duplicate. The removing deputy retains the original, and the Evidence Control Officer maintains the copy.

- Items or Money Temporarily Removed from the Safe - If the envelope has been opened, the Watch Commander receiving the property back shall rectify or recount the contents and reseal the envelope prior to placing the item in the safe.
- The "PROPERTY INTERIM REMOVAL RECORD" form copy shall be retained in the safe until the item is returned. Upon return or notification that the item has been retained by the court, the Watch Commander shall assure that the remainder of the form is completed and the form forwarded to the Evidence Control Officer for placement in the URN file.
- Items Stored Other than in the Safe - A "PROPERTY INTERIM REMOVAL RECORD" shall b completed (no counter signature of the Watch Commander is required) and retained by the Evidence Control officer in an arch file. The deputy returning the property shall complete the disposition portion. The form shall then be filed in the URN file by the Evidence Control Officer.
- Evidence taken for a court appearance shall be removed from the station only on the date of the appearance and returned on the same date.
- If the property is "taken into evidence" by the court, the Interim Removal Record should be signed by the court clerk and returned to the Evidence Control Officer for entry in the ledger and filing in the URN file.

RELEASE OF PROPERTY - Once an item has been recorded in either the Safe or Master Ledger, appropriate paperwork must be completed when the item is released or otherwise disposed of. Wherever possible, such property shall be released only by the station Evidence Control Officer during regular business hours. In the rare instance where property that is recorded in a ledger is released at other times, a "RECEIPT FOR PROPERTY" form (Sh-CR-19) shall be completed in duplicate. Both copies shall be forwarded to the station Evidence Control Officer for handling, and after recording in the ledger, will be filed in the URN file. Completion of the form is self-explanatory.

NOTE: A person of the permanent rank of lieutenant or above must sign an authorization on the receipt when a firearm is released -- **NO EXCEPTIONS**.