



LOUDON POLICE DEPARTMENT LOUDON, TN



Chapter 8

Subject: Evidence Control	Effective Date: 02/27/2006	Revised Date: 01/20/2020
Title: Evidence Control	Pages: 5	Distribution: All Officers
Cross Reference:	Chief of Police Approval:	

This Directive consist of the following sections:

- I. Purpose
- II. Policy
- III. Definitions
- IV. Procedures

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy to establish guidelines for maintaining the integrity of the evidentiary chain of custody.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Loudon Police Department to ensure that evidence and property in its custody will be properly secured in stored, readily retrieved, and the any changes in its custody have been properly fully documented.

III. Definitions

- a. Chain of evidence: the continuity of the custody of physical evidence - from time of original collection to final disposal - which may be introduce in a judicial proceeding.
- b. Impounding officer: the member of the Loudon Police Department who initially receives the evidence and initiates the chain of custody.
- c. Evidence custodian: the loud and police departments investigator is the officer accountable for control and maintenance of all evidence or property accepted by or stored in the Loudon Police Department evidence room period an assistant evidence custodian will serve in this capacity in the investigator's absence.

IV. Procedures

a. Processing evidence

- i. Any member of the Loudon Police Department who has evidence or property to be placed in the evidence room shall make an inventory of that evidence at the location it was found or recovered. The inventory shot include the following information for all items of evidence:
 1. Description of the item including make model number and serial number if any: and
 2. Source from whom or location obtained; And
 3. Name of person primarily responsible for collecting the item or items.
- ii. The impounding officer shall properly handle, mark, and package all evidence or property, and transport all physical evidence or property to the evidence room, or other authorized secure location as soon as practical.
- iii. Evidence of a hazardous nature shall be appropriately packaged and stored in accordance with established Loudon

Police Department policy. Such substances include, but are not limited to, items which may have been exposed to or contaminated by communicable diseases, hazardous chemicals, waste products, explosives, or highly combustible products. Where appropriate, the evidence custodian will make all arrangements and assume responsibility for storage in control of such substances outside the evidence room.

- iv. All evidence shall be transferred to the evidence custodian:
 - 1. By securing evidence in the temporary evidence lockers;
 - Or
 - 2. By hand delivery into the possession of the evidence custodian.

b. Impounding evidence

- i. The evidence custodian shall be responsible for receiving, storing, maintaining, releasing, and accounting for all evidence or property in compliance with the established Loudon Police Department policy.
- ii. When evidence or property is received, a receipt shall be completed by the impounding officer. The evidence or property receipt shall include all information necessary to both document and ensure the integrity of the chain of custody. All drugs should be weighed in monies counted by the evidence custodian and recorded on the receipt.
- iii. The evidence custodian shall be responsible for developing and maintaining a master file of all evidence or property receipts and evidence or property tags completed. This file may be either manual or automated and shall be cross indexed with the chain of evidence custody file.

c. Storage of evidence

- i. The evidence custodian shall assign a storage location to each item of evidence or property and record this information on the receipt and tag.
- ii. Evidence requiring added security comment to include money, precious metals, jewelry, gemstones, weapons, narcotics, and dangerous drugs shall be stored in separate secure area.

d. Access to evidence room

- i. Only the evidence custodian and chief of police may enter the evidence room
 - ii. A log shall be kept by the evidence custodian which identifies each authorized member entering the evidence room.
- e. Inspections of the evidence room
 - i. On a monthly basis, the chief of police shall make an inspection of the evidence storage facilities and policies to ensure adherence to appropriate policies and procedures.
 - ii. Unannounced inspections of evidence storage areas shall be conducted at least semiannually as directed by the Loudon police department's chief of police.
 - iii. An annual inventory of the evidence held by the Loudon Police Department shall be conducted by the chief of police.
- f. Recording transfers of custody
 - i. The evidence custodian shall be responsible for developing in maintaining a file that documents all changes in custody of physical evidence or property. The file shall be capable of readily identifying the individual or organization currently maintaining custody of all evidence.
 - ii. A written record of all transfers of physical evidence or property shall be made.
 - iii. Members of the Loudon Police Department, who assumed custody of evidence or property from the evidence room, bear full responsibility for ensuring its security, proper storage, and maintenance, and for the ready retrieval of such evidence upon demand.
- g. Disposal of evidence or property
 - i. When no longer needed for evidentiary purposes, all evidence or property comment with the exception of firearms and contraband, shall be returned to its lawful owner an less title to the evidence or property is transferred to the jurisdiction by court order or the lawful owner fails to claim it. In such cases the Loudon Police Department may, as permitted under state law:
 - 1. Destroy it; Or
 - 2. Dispose of it by public auction; Or
 - 3. Retain it for use by the jurisdiction.

- ii. Firearms and other non-drug contraband shall be physically destroyed unless:
 - 1. The court order authorizes use of the item by the Loudon Police Department; or
 - 2. The firearm is required by state law to be returned to its lawful owner.
- iii. The chief of police or his designee shall designate an officer to monitor the entire drug destruction process and:
 - 1. On the date of destruction, monitor the loading of the items to be destroyed.
 - 2. During the destruction process will document by videotaping or photographing.
 - 3. After the completion of the destruction process, submit a report to the investigator which shall include:
 - a. The date time and location of the destruction;
 - b. An inventory of the items destroyed;
 - c. A list of those present at the destruction;
 - d. Return court order to the courts for proof of destruction.