



Peoria Police Department Policy and Procedure Manual

Policy 8.04

Property Management



I. POLICY

It is the policy of this Department to ensure the consistency and continuity of operation in the management of its property and evidence function.

II. PROCEDURE

A. Acquired and In-Custody Property

1. Property and Evidence Personnel Responsibilities: Employees assigned to the Property and Evidence Section are responsible for the receipt, storing, indexing, security, retrieval, disposal, and processing of all property and evidence impounded or otherwise received by the Department in a manner that is safe, consistent, and pursuant to generally accepted property management procedures. Employees of this Section shall accurately reflect the status of all property held by the agency, including location, date and time received or released/destroyed, amount and type and chain of custody in both the manual and automated systems (84.1.5). Property and Evidence employee's duties include: (11.1.1)
 - a. Accountability for the security of all property once it has been placed in a property impound locker.
 - b. The security of the Property office and all storage and processing areas.
 - c. Accountability for all Property and Evidence once it has been accepted as part of the inventory of the Property Section.
 - d. The proper disposition of all property in custody, as prescribed by Arizona State law and Department Policies.
 - e. Receiving, cataloging, and storing property as soon as possible after it has been received, and keeping current manual and automated records of all transactions involving property.
 - f. Ensuring that all impounded property has been properly marked and tagged, and that all property records (including property status) are accurate. (84.1.5)
 - g. Releasing property to its rightful owner.
 - h. Releasing property to officers for investigation or court purposes.
 - i. Maintaining all Property Receipt forms in an orderly and easily accessible manner.
 - j. Reporting any discrepancies, damage to property, or any other unusual occurrences immediately to the Property and Evidence Supervisor.
 - k. Conducting quarterly audits on all 90-day, safekeeping, and found property to ensure that all items are disposed of in a timely manner.

B. Property Storage (84.1.2)

1. Processing Areas

- a. The Processing areas are locations used by employees to prepare or process items prior to official impound into the Property system. Until an item is in the secured possession of the Property and Evidence Section, the custody of that property is considered within the control of the impounding employee.

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- b. Although use of the Processing areas are restricted to Department employees only, all chain of custody rules will apply. As such, no item(s) being processed or packaged in any of these areas may be left unattended at any time until the item(s) are safely secured into the Property system.
 - c. While personnel assigned to the Property and Evidence Section maintain authority over all Processing areas, it is the responsibility of the impounding employee to protect the security of all property they are impounding, as well as ensuring they leave the area in a clean and orderly manner prior to leaving.
 - d. The processing areas within the Department include:
 - (1) The Processing Room adjacent to the main Property and Evidence Section
 - (2) The Processing Room at the Pinnacle Peak Public Safety Facility (PPPSF).
 - (3) The non-fenced spaces located within the Vehicle bay.
2. Short-Term (Temporary) Storage (84.1.2)
- a. Short-term (or Temporary) storage areas are locations used by employees to officially impound their items into the Property system. Once the item is securely locked and stored, custody of the property transfers to the Property and Evidence Section. From that point forward, access to these items is restricted to Property personnel, the case agent or their designees, and the case agent's supervisor.
 - b. Access to the Short-Term storage areas is restricted to Property and Evidence personnel only.
 - c. Use of Fenced Vehicle Enclosures (Vehicle Bay and Parking Garage)
 - (1) The fenced vehicle enclosures located within the Vehicle Bay area and the Department parking structure are to be used only for temporary storage until the vehicle can be processed for further evidence.
 - (2) Approval from Traffic Services or Criminal Investigations is required prior to impounding a vehicle into the fenced enclosure.
 - (3) Keys to locks for the fenced vehicle enclosure are maintained by the on-duty station officer and may be retrieved via a key check-out system. Keys to the fenced enclosures must be impounded as safekeeping immediately upon securing the lock. Property and Evidence personnel will retain the key until such time as the vehicle is removed or released from the fenced enclosure.
 - (4) A separate Property Receipt form shall be filled out for all vehicles that are impounded within the fenced areas within the vehicle bay or parking structure and placed into the Property and Evidence envelope locker. Officers shall note on the bottom of the form that the item impounded has been stored within the vehicle bay or the parking garage.
 - (5) Locks to the fenced enclosures shall be maintained in a locked position at all times.
 - d. The short-term storage areas within the Department include:
 - (1) The property lockers located in the processing area adjacent to the Property Section.
 - (2) The fenced vehicle enclosure located within the vehicle bay.
 - (3) The two fenced vehicle enclosures located in the Department's parking garage.
 - (4) Evidence section of the bicycle cage in the parking garage of the Public Safety Administration Building (PSAB).
 - (5) The fenced area in the storage building at the PPPSF is for **NON- EVIDENTIARY** items only. Employees impounding items at this location will complete the log documenting entry to the impound area. The Property and Evidence section will be responsible to move impounded property in this location to the long term storage areas.

3. Long-Term Storage Areas

- a. The primary storage area for all property and evidence is located within the Police Department at 8351 W. Cinnabar Avenue. This location is secured by an alarm system which is monitored 24-hours/7days a week by the on-duty station officer.
- b. The majority of property and evidence is stored within the secured, main warehouse area of the Property and Evidence Section. This area includes property/evidence that is of a general nature and is not considered high-risk.
- c. A bulk property storage area is maintained adjacent to the main warehouse in which non high-risk items are stored.
- d. High-risk items (narcotics, weapons, and money) are stored in separate, locked areas inside the main warehouse.
- e. Non-evidentiary bicycles are stored within the bicycle cage located in the Department's secured parking structure. Bicycles of an evidentiary nature are stored in the main warehouse.
- f. Fireworks are stored in a fireworks container located in the Department's secured parking structure.
- g. Vehicles and other large equipment-type items are maintained within a secured, fenced enclosure located at the Municipal Operations Center (MOC).
 - (1) The vehicle storage facility is a fenced, secure yard at the southwest corner of the Municipal Operations Center which is secured by a high-security padlock. Access to this facility for impound purposes will require contacting an employee of the Property and Evidence Section or the Property and Evidence Supervisor.
 - (2) Vehicles pending evidentiary processing must not be impounded at the MOC due to potential exposure to the elements. Upon completion of all processing, vehicles may be removed to this location for long-term storage purposes.
 - (3) A separate Property Receipt form shall be filled out for all items that are impounded at the storage facility located at the MOC as well as any applicable keys associated with that item. The original copy of this form shall be placed in the envelope locker at the Police Department. Impounding employees shall note on the bottom of the form that the item impounded has been stored at the MOC.
 - (4) Each item impounded at the MOC shall be labeled separately and clearly by Property and Evidence personnel to include, at the very least, the Incident Report and item number.
 - (5) Employees of the Property and Evidence Section shall conduct a visual check of the MOC storage area during normal working hours, Monday through Friday. The daily checks will be documented in the MOC Storage Log, which is maintained in Property and Evidence at the main station. A review of this log will be included in the semi-annual inspection of Property. The purpose of these checks shall be to ensure that:
 - (a) No unauthorized access to the impound yard has been made or attempted;
 - (b) That the gate and lock to the yard is secure; and
 - (c) Chat IR's and item numbers for all items are clearly visible.
 - (6) All rules governing the disposition of property shall apply to property impounded at the MOC storage facility. The case agent in charge of the investigation or the case agent's supervisor shall be responsible for the completion and processing of all paperwork related to the application of titles on abandoned or seized vehicles.
 - (7) The on-duty supervisor shall be notified, and approve of the decision to utilize the storage facility at the MOC prior to any evidence being placed therein.
 - (8) If the vehicle or oversized property cannot be secured at MOC or the secured, fenced enclosure located in the basement-parking garage then the Department of Public Safety shall be contacted for assistance.

- (a) If the Department of Public Safety has no storage areas available, the vehicle/s or property shall be impounded into a secure, leased storage facility.
- (b) Impounding a vehicle into a leased facility shall require the approval of a CIB or TSS supervisor.

h. Hazardous Materials

- (1) Hazardous materials, which are evidentiary in nature and require testing, will only be impounded with supervisory approval.
 - (2) The material will be impounded only in sufficient quantity for testing in an airtight container.
 - (3) The material will be placed in the Department Property and Evidence Room until the item can be transported to the DPS facility for testing (which should be done as soon as possible).
 - (4) Access to this area will require contacting a Property and Evidence Section employee or the Property and Evidence Supervisor.
 - (5) Explosives (ie, blasting caps, nitro, dynamite, etc.) shall be referred to the DPS Bomb Squad.
 - (6) Fireworks confiscated as evidence shall be photographed and impounded for destruction by placing in the fireworks container located in the fenced bicycle storage area.
- i. Impounded property/evidence will only be stored and maintained in designated property storage areas as defined in this policy.

C. Security (84.1.2)

1. Storage Area Security

- a. Employees assigned to the Property and Evidence Section are responsible for all property accepted by or stored in the Department storage areas and for maintaining the security of that property. Therefore, the property storage areas shall remain locked except when property/evidence is being added, removed, or inventoried. Employees and Supervisors of Property and Evidence are the only individuals normally authorized by the Chief of Police to remove property or evidence from its storage location.
- b. An alarm system is installed within the main warehouse of the Property and Evidence Section and is monitored 24 hours/7 days a week by the on-duty station officer. This alarm is tested on the first Monday of each month by Property and Evidence personnel.

2. Building Keys

- a. Employees assigned to Property and Evidence shall be responsible for maintaining all internal and external Police Department building keys, as well as the keys to the Property office, storage areas, locker boxes, fenced enclosures as well as the combination to the evidence vault.
- b. A complete set of these keys and vault combination shall be maintained in a secure location as designated by the Chief of Police.
- c. Duplication of any key to the Property office or any of the property/evidence storage locations, without permission of the Chief of Police, is prohibited.

D. Access

- 1. Restricted Access: In order to further ensure the security of property and evidence, access into the locked property and evidence storage areas are restricted to the employees of the Property and Evidence Section, the Property and Evidence Supervisor, and the Technical Services Bureau Manager. (84.1.4)
 - a. All other Department/City personnel shall not enter the property and evidence storage areas unless accompanied by an authorized Department employee.

- b. All unauthorized employees entering the property and evidence storage areas must sign their name, date, time of entry and exit, and reason for access on the Visitor Log. The authorized Department employee accompanying the visitor must also sign the log.
- c. Normal business hours for public access to the Property and Evidence Section shall be weekdays, from 0800 hours to 1700 hours.
- d. All found, recovered and evidentiary property that is acquired during times when the Property and Evidence Section is closed shall be secured in temporary storage lockers. Items too large to fit in the lockers shall require the call-out of an employee assigned to the Property and Evidence Section. (84.1.3)

E. Documentation

1. Employees assigned to Property and Evidence shall ensure that all property and evidence impounded into the Section is accurately documented and then entered into the automated Property Tracking system as soon as possible after receipt. (84.1.1.a) (82.3.2.c)
2. A Property Receipt form must be attached to all items prior to storage in the Department property storage areas. This 3-part form is completed, signed by the impounding officer, and distributed as follows:
 - a. White (original): Maintained by the Property and Evidence Section.
 - b. Yellow (2nd sheet): Forwarded to the Records Management Section with the Incident Report.
 - c. Pink (3rd Sheet): This copy serves as the property receipt to be given to the person from whom property has been taken by an employee of the Department. This receipt shall be given to any person, regardless of status (ie, suspect, arrestee, victim, finder, etc.) and regardless of the type of property taken from that person (ie, stolen property, clothing, etc.).
 - (1) Officers shall obtain the person's signature on the bottom of the original Property Receipt form or note a refusal to sign.
 - (2) Every effort should be made to personally receipt the person from whom the listed property has been taken.
 - (3) In the event that multiple persons need to be given receipts from the same Property Report, photocopies of both sides of the pink form should be made and given to each person
3. Impounded items that are placed in the property storage lockers will have the Property Receipt form attached.
4. Property Receipt forms for items that have been placed in the fenced enclosures located in the vehicle bay, parking garage, MOC, bicycle cage, and items that have been transported to the Department of Public Safety shall be placed in an envelope drop locker.
5. Property/Evidence items submitted for impound must contain the following information on each evidence/property label:
 - a. Initials or name and serial number of employee impounding the property/evidence item(s).
 - b. Incident Report Number
 - c. Item Number
 - d. Property Description.
 - e. Date
 - f. Item serial number, if applicable
6. All Property Receipt forms must contain complete and legible information to include the following information prior to being processed into the Property system:

- a. Accurate report (IR) number and date/time of impound
 - b. A detailed description of the item(s) being impounded including item numbers, clearly written serial number(s), noticeable damages, etc.
 - c. Owner or finder's name/address (including city and zip codes) and telephone number.
 - d. All suspects involved in the incident as well as the type of crime.
 - e. Location/description of where the property was found.
7. Items that are not completely and/or accurately documented shall be returned to the reporting employee for correction.
 8. All property containing serial numbers shall be itemized and labeled separately from other property impounded with the case.
 9. All narcotics shall be itemized and packaged separately from other property impounded with the case.
 10. The Property and Evidence Supervisor shall be notified whenever items listed on the Property Receipt form are not located during processing.
 - a. The Property and Evidence Supervisor will make contact with the impounding employee to determine where the property may be found.
 - b. If contact with the impounding employee fails to produce the missing items(s), the Property and Evidence Supervisor shall notify the Technical Services Bureau Manager.
 - c. Both the Property Receipt form and any accompanying property will be held in a secure location within the Property and Evidence Section until a resolution is determined.
 11. An Incident Report shall be completed on all impounded property. The report shall provide a description of each item impounded as well as the circumstances by which the property came into possession of the Police Department. (84.1.1.c)

F. Receipt of Property/Evidence

1. Securing Property:
 - a. Employees shall ensure that all property/evidence impounded during their shift is properly documented and physically placed into the property system prior to going off-duty. (84.1.1.b)
 - b. If property is associated with two or more incident reports, the impounding employee will ensure that all connected report numbers are annotated under the comment section of the Property Receipt form or through submission of an email or memorandum to the Property and Evidence Section.
2. Items being impounded for the following reasons are required to be tagged/labeled using specialized, red-bordered labels to ensure that the property is not inadvertently released or destroyed: (Both the case agent and the case agent's supervisor must approve the release or destruction of items affixed with a red-bordered label(s).
 - a. Homicides
 - b. Sexual Assaults
 - c. Any item(s) identified by a Criminal Investigations Supervisor.
3. Property/evidence must be properly secured and packaged or it will not be accepted for processing by Property and Evidence personnel. Employees may refer to the Property and Evidence Manual for correct packaging procedures. (84.1.1.d)

- a. Each evidence container/envelope must be securely packaged (to include being taped and/or sealed) and contain the following information:
 - (1) Initials written across the seal and name/serial number on the package.
 - (2) Incident Report Number
 - (3) Item Number and serial number
 - (4) Property Description.
 - (5) Date
4. All serialized property is required to be queried for stolen through ACIC/NCIC prior to impound into the Property and Evidence Section. In the event that the ACJIS system is unavailable, Property and Evidence personnel will conduct the necessary stolen checks during processing.
5. Bio-hazards: All items that may constitute a biological hazard to personnel (ie, blood, body fluids, potential disease carrying items) will be packaged so as to protect employees of the Property and Evidence Section and all other personnel who handle property/evidence. These items must display a BIOHAZARD sticker clearly visible on the exterior of the packaging. If only a portion of an item to be impounded has been contaminated, that area will be described on the BIOHAZARD label, i.e., "blood on gun barrel." Refer to policy on Communicable Diseases/Drug Exposure #5.05 regarding the cautions and precautions when exposed to body fluids and air borne contaminants.
6. Biological Evidence: Damp or biological evidence will not be accepted in plastic bags. The fluids must be exposed to the air so they will dry. Refer to the Property and Evidence Manual for drying cabinet use procedures.
7. Syringes: Hypodermic syringes will not be accepted unless contained in plastic syringe tubes.
8. Money: All money (coins or currency) impounded into the Property and Evidence Section must be packaged in a money envelope specifically designed for this purpose. Personnel assigned to Property and Evidence will not accept money that has not been packaged and logged appropriately and according to the following procedures:
 - a. Money is to be itemized by denomination listing subtotals and total amounts.
 - b. All money logged into the property room will require at least two officers or employees to verify the count. These counts shall be accomplished independently of one another.
 - (1) All money envelopes must contain at least two signatures verifying the amount listed and enclosed.
 - (2) The impounding officer and the verifying officer shall sign their names and serial numbers to the front of the envelope, seal the envelope with tamper-proof security tape, then both must initial the back of the envelope prior to entering into the property locker.
 - c. Extremely large amounts of coin and/or currency might be seized which, because of the container or quantity of money, make it impractical to package in the money envelope (ie, coins stored in a large piggy bank or water bottle, large amount of bills in a briefcase or satchel, etc.).
 - (1) In those rare cases, it is acceptable to impound the container as is with the money left inside. However, a money count and completion of the money envelope must still be accomplished. The completed money envelope is then taped to the container.
 - (2) As all money is considered high-risk property, it is essential that officers secure all containers in such a manner as to prevent tampering.
 - d. A money envelope may be used for suspected counterfeit bills; however, it will not be listed as having any cash value. Impounding employees must make a notation on the outside of the money envelope reflecting that the contents contain suspected counterfeit bills.

- e. Money envelopes are not to be used for foreign currency. If there is a combination of foreign and domestic currency, the two types shall be separated into two envelopes with the contents clearly labeled.
 - f. Currency totaling \$25.00 or more shall be placed in the property vault for safekeeping.
 - g. If the currency received is for a bond, every attempt will be made to forward those funds to the Peoria Municipal Court on the same day.
9. Firearms: All firearms in the custody of the Department shall be handled with care so as not to damage the stock, metal surfaces, or operating mechanisms. Under no circumstances will loaded firearms be impounded or stored in the Property and Evidence storage areas.
- a. Loaded guns shall not be placed into the storage locker. Magazines shall be carefully removed to ensure any latents that may be on the side of the magazine are preserved. The position of loaded chambers, empty chambers, and chambers containing fired cases with respect to position of the cylinder in revolvers shall be noted in the IR.
 - b. Firearms shall not be cleaned or fired prior to being examined.
 - c. Firearms shall not be picked up by inserting a pencil or other object in the end of the barrel.
 - d. Firearms which cannot be unloaded shall have special protection on the firing mechanism to prevent an accidental discharge. These weapons shall be impounded and stored separately into the Armory and shall bear a warning note indicating that the weapon is loaded. A Property Receipt form shall be placed in the Property envelope locker for these weapons. A Department Armorer shall be notified to inspect the weapon and attempt to unload it as soon as possible.
 - e. The serial number and complete description (make, model, and caliber) shall be noted in the IR and on the Property Receipt form along with the owner information, if available. It is imperative that serial numbers be legible and clearly written as these numbers are entered into the automated Property Tracking system which is utilized for periodic ACIC/NCIC checks during audits and inspections.
 - f. Firearms shall be packaged in the boxes specifically designed for this purpose. They shall not be placed in bags or envelopes unless there is a need to protect for latent prints or there is an associated biohazard concern).
 - g. Ammunition and/or magazines shall be packaged separately from firearms.
10. Dangerous Weapons: Dangerous weapons shall be properly packaged and marked for identification prior to acceptance into the Property and Evidence Section. Cutting edges and knife points must be adequately covered with cardboard or other material to prevent injury.
11. Bicycles: Bicycles shall be properly tagged and impounded into the fenced (bicycle cage) enclosure in the Department's parking garage with the Property Receipt form deposited into the Property envelope locker.
- a. Officers may check out the key to the fenced bicycle cage storage area through the on-duty station officer.
 - b. Bicycles impounded as evidence will be placed in the temporary evidence section of the bicycle cage. Upon the next business day, Property and Evidence personnel will remove the bicycle and relocate to the main warehouse the next business day.
 - c. The key to the evidence bicycle area may be obtained from the on-duty station officer and shall be placed in the envelop drop locker with the Property Receipt form.
12. Drugs: Narcotics and dangerous drugs shall be impounded in tamper-proof sealed packages and impounded into the property system in the same manner as other items of evidence. The processing Property and Evidence employee will inspect the package, paying careful attention to the officer's seal and initials as well as any breaks or appearance of breaks in the tape and/or container. The processing employee will contact the Property and Evidence Supervisor in the event that any signs of possible tampering are discovered. (84.1.1.e)

- a. Employees assigned to Property and Evidence shall not open sealed packages of known or suspected narcotics/dangerous drugs and shall store them in a location separate from the general property.
 - b. Upon final disposition, sealed packages will be delivered for incineration.
 - c. Narcotics will be sealed in a laboratory envelope for transportation to the Department of Public Safety Crime Laboratory.
13. Consumables shall not be impounded unless involved in a serious felony as determined by a CIB Lieutenant. If a consumable has evidentiary value, it will be photographed and returned and/or properly disposed of.
14. Refrigerated or Frozen Items: Items requiring refrigeration or freezing (such as blood, urine, items from sexual assault kits, etc) shall be impounded in the Property and Evidence refrigerator or freezer located in the Processing area adjacent to the Property and Evidence Section.
- a. Items requiring refrigeration/freezing shall be clearly labeled as to the source and identity of the person who collected it. Additionally, the evidence shall be properly sealed with the Property Receipt form being deposited into the Property envelope locker.
 - b. When impounding blood, urine, or vaginal aspirate from a sexual assault kit, the impounding officer will utilize alpha characters (a, b, etc) to identify blood, urine, or vaginal aspirate taken from the kit. (Example; sexual assault kit, Item 1; blood from sexual assault kit item 1a; and urine from sexual assault kit, item 1b, etc.) This will ensure that the Department of Public Safety Crime Lab will treat blood, urine, and aspirate as part of the sexual assault kit. The use of alpha characteristics is only permissible regarding blood, urine, and vaginal aspirate from the sexual assault kits.
 - c. All other items inside the sexual assault kit will remain together and will be impounded as one item number.
15. Security Risk Property:
- a. Security risk property is any property/evidence that is considered sensitive, of high value, and/or constitutes a concern of theft. Items in this category include: (84.1.1.e) (84.1.2)
 - (1) Currency
 - (2) Jewelry
 - (3) Narcotics and dangerous drugs
 - (4) Firearms
 - b. Items designated as high-risk shall be stored in a separate, secured area from the other property.

G. Property Categories and Disposition Guidelines

1. Found Property: Found property, with the exception of illegal substances/devices, will be retained for a period of 30 days after date of publication in the newspaper.
 - a. If no owner is determined after the 30 day period, the property will be released to the finder or, if no finder is identified or the finder does not wish to claim the property, turned over to Materials Management for disposition
 - (1) Property and Evidence personnel will attempt to locate the owner of all found property turned into the Section by conducting inquiries on any names, social security numbers, serial numbers, or any other identifying factors that may be present. (84.1.1.f)
 - (2) After the 30 day publication period, Property and Evidence personnel will attempt to contact the finder by telephone or mail advising that they have two weeks to claim the item(s). Upon expiration of the two week period, the item(s) will be turned over to Materials Management for disposition. (84.1.1.f)
 - (3) Unclaimed property that is determined to be of little or no value will be destroyed.

- b. Owners claiming found property will be required to provide positive identification as well as ownership of the item(s) being claimed.
 - c. Police employees are ineligible to claim found property.
 2. Safekeeping Property: Generally, safekeeping items are considered any property that possesses no evidentiary value and is surrendered to the Department with the understanding that the person surrendering the item(s) has the legal right to do so and that the property will be returned to the owner within a specified time period.
 - a. Safekeeping property is retained for a period of 60 days.
 - (1) Safekeeping property not claimed within 60 days shall be considered legally abandoned by the owner and shall be disposed of by the appropriate means (destruction, use, auction, etc.).
 - (2) It is the responsibility of the employee impounding safekeeping items to notify the owner that they must claim the property within 60 days or the item will be disposed of. (84.1.1.f)
 - b. Firearms that are impounded as safekeeping by virtue of an Order of Protection will be retained for the period of the Order; typically one year. In the event that the owner of the weapon becomes a prohibited possessor (ie, on parole/probation, has a felony conviction or a conviction for domestic violence, or is listed as a defendant on an order of protection), the firearm will not be released back to him/her.
 - c. If safekeeping property has been impounded in conjunction with a death investigation, a Property Release Authorization must be completed by the assigned detective prior to the release of the item(s).
 - d. Bond money shall be impounded as safekeeping property and will be turned over to the applicable court during the next business day.
 - (1) Bond money will only be accepted in Department approved money envelopes that itemize each contained denomination.
 - (2) Bond money for Peoria Municipal Court will be hand-delivered by an employee of the Property and Evidence Section to the Court the next business day.
 - (a) The employee transferring the money to the Court shall ensure that the money is counted and verified by the court employee in their presence.
 - (b) The Court employee will then be required to sign for chain of custody on the original Property Receipt form.
3. Property for Destruction: Property impounded for destruction includes items turned into the Department for disposal purposes only; non-evidentiary illegal substances/items that are seized by officers/detectives; illegal substances/items found by Department employees in which no suspects can be determined
 - a. Drugs, firearms, and other dangerous weapons or devices that are impounded for destruction shall be incinerated.
 - b. Documents impounded for destruction shall be shredded.
 - c. Fireworks and other detonating devices shall be turned over to the DPS Bomb Squad for destruction.
 - d. Chemicals, paints, and other like hazardous materials will not be accepted from the public for the purpose of destruction.
4. Evidence:
 - a. Evidence is any property that comes into the custody of a Department employee when such property may tend to prove or disprove the commission of a crime, lead to the identity of a suspect, or pursuant to an official Department criminal investigation.

- b. Evidence may only be released, destroyed, or otherwise disposed of by Property and Evidence personnel by means of a Property Release Authorization signed and dated by the case agent or a Criminal Investigations supervisor.
- c. If the case is exceptionally cleared and has not been assigned for follow-up investigation within 90 days of impound, the evidence shall be disposed of or destroyed by employees of the Property and Evidence Section.
- d. Impounded property (including vehicles) that have been seized or impounded as evidence which have civil actions involving, or potentially involving, the City shall not be released without the written permission of the City Attorney's office.
 - (1) The City Attorney's office shall send a memorandum to the Chief of Police requesting that any and all specific property be retained until otherwise directed by that office.
 - (2) The memorandum shall be forwarded to the Professional Standards Unit who will copy and retain it for file and forward the original to the Property and Evidence Section.
 - (3) Upon receipt of the memorandum, Property and Evidence personnel will attach the document to the original Property Receipt form.
- e. Evidentiary property may be returned to its owner after being photographed. The photo will become the visual record of the item and will be placed in the IR file. The assigned employee will complete a supplement documenting the release and the photographing of the property. The original copies of the documents directing the release will be forwarded to Records Management for filing into the original file.
- f. Evidence may be released to the rightful owner prior to the conclusion of a trial pursuant to court order or the written authorization of the representing County/City attorney which stipulates that the owner agrees not to sell, destroy, or give away the property until the conclusion of all legal proceedings in the case. A completed Property Release Authorization with the court order or written authorization attached is required from the case agent prior to Property and Evidence personnel releasing the item(s)
- g. Once final disposition on items of evidence has been accomplished, the original Property Receipt form and attached Property Release Authorization will be forwarded to Records Management for filing into the original case report.
- h. All evidence or property collected during the investigation of homicide cases will be stored until all defendants expire unless:
 - (1) All court actions involving the suspects are final and the County Attorney approves the release.
 - (2) There were no suspects or leads for a period no longer than the Statute of Limitations and the case agent authorizes disposition. The City/County Attorney may authorize disposal of property or evidence prior to the expiration of the Statute of Limitations in the interest of justice.
 - (3) Evidence relating to homicide investigations shall be grouped together and relegated to those areas that are least accessible in the Property warehouse. Homicide related weapons and narcotics will be stored in the designated narcotics and firearms areas.
- i. Property and evidence will be retained in cases involving multiple defendants where the complaint disposition reports only identify one individual per report. Property and Evidence personnel must ensure that the property indicated for release or disposal is no longer needed for additional suspects' trials.
- j. All sexual assault kits or other biological evidence obtained during the investigation of a sex crime will be retained for a period not less than 99 years or upon the submission of a Release Authorization signed by both the case agent and the case agent's supervisor.
- k. Misdemeanor offenses in which no detective has been assigned may be released by authority of the impounding officer or an official court order signed and dated by the presiding judge.

5. General Disposition Guidelines

- a. Property may be disposed of using one of the following methods:
 - (1) Returned to owner or finder
 - (2) Destroyed
 - (3) Utilized by the Department or City (except firearms)
 - (4) Sold at auction
 - (5) Donated to a non-profit organization
 - (6) Forwarded to the court for bond purposes (17.4.2.b)
- b. Only compensated employees assigned or responsible for the Property and Evidence function have the authority to physically destroy or release any items of property maintained within the Section.
- c. Item(s) being released to owners, victims, other agencies, etc., shall be accomplished in the Property and Evidence Pick-Up office to protect the privacy of the recipients. In the event that the item(s) being released are too large to be returned within this area, the owners/recipients will be directed to a separate location away from the lobby to retrieve their item(s).
 - (1) Property of value (\$500 or more) that is being released to an owner, victim, etc., shall require the presence of two employees.
 - (a) All packages shall be opened and any currency (including coins) shall be counted by the employee in front of the claimant prior to release.
 - (b) Both employees shall sign the release section of the Property Receipt form to verify that the item(s) released were accurate and accounted for.
 - (c) Any discrepancies shall require the Property and Evidence employee releasing the item(s) to contact the Section Supervisor or the Technical Services Bureau Manager prior to processing the item(s) further.
 - (2) Any item being processed for destruction by an employee of the Property and Evidence Section shall be verified against the item(s) listed on both the impound sheet and the package label.
 - (3) Any discrepancies shall require the Property and Evidence employee releasing the item(s) to contact the Section Supervisor or the Technical Services Bureau Manager prior to processing the item(s) further.
 - (4) With the exception of narcotics or hazardous items, the contents of all packages or containers shall be verified prior to release or destruction by checking the item and quantity against the Property Receipt form.
- d. Unclaimed firearms will be destroyed when no longer needed for retention.
- e. All property/evidence being released from the Property and Evidence Section requires the recipient to sign/date for receipt of the items under the release section of the Property Receipt form. A copy of the recipient's driver's license or identification will be attached to the Department's copy of the Property Receipt form.
- f. Prior to release, a criminal history check will be performed on all claimants of firearms to ensure that the weapon is not being released to a prohibited possessor.
- g. Upon final disposition of any property/evidence, all paperwork will be forwarded to the Records Management Section for filing in the applicable case file.
- h. Impounded property shall be returned to the legal owner as soon as practical once all legal processes involving the property have been concluded; at the direction of a court order; or with the approval of the prosecuting attorney.

The final disposition of all property shall be accomplished within six months of completion of all legal requirements. (84.1.1.g) (84.1.7)

- i. All serialized property will be queried through ACIC/NCIC prior to release or disposal to ensure that no agency has entered the item as stolen while in custody of the Department. In the event that the property being queried results in a confirmed stolen hit, the Property and Evidence employee running the transaction will contact the case agent for further disposition.
 - j. Property of value (except firearms, dangerous weapons, currency, ammunition, hazardous materials, explosives, controlled substances, and narcotic paraphernalia) will be forwarded to the Materials Management Division or held for Department use. Materials Management may transfer the item to a Department within the City for use, donate the item to a non-profit organization, or place the item up for public auction.
 - k. Non-evidentiary license plates forwarded to Property and Evidence for disposal shall not require a Property Receipt form. The employee completes information concerning the license plate on the MVD License Plate Destruction log and places the plate in the license plate bin provided.
 - l. Items determined to be held for Department use shall require the authorization of the Chief of Police. Upon approval from the Chief of Police to retain an item(s), Property and Evidence personnel will:
 - (1) Ensure that the receiving employee signs the chain of custody section of the Property Receipt form.
 - (2) Tags the item with the IR number, Item Number, and notice to return the item to Property and Evidence once the item becomes obsolete or no longer usable. (Note: If item is seized due to a forfeiture action, this will be annotated on the item as well).
 - (3) Log the item in the Department Use Log or the Forfeiture Department Use Log.
 - (4) Change the automated file to reflect that the item has been converted to Department use.
 - m. Prior to the destruction of narcotics and firearms, all items shall be inventoried by the sworn transporting officer and the assigned Property and Evidence employee.
 - (1) Both employees shall sign and date the Affidavit of Destruction upon completion of the process.
 - (2) The original Affidavit and a printout of all items destroyed will be maintained in the Destruction log book.
 - n. Hazardous materials will be destroyed by a professional disposal company as needed. If the material is a household chemical, paint, motor oil, etc. it will be brought to the City Yard. The City Yard is equipped for disposal of such items during the periodic household chemical disposal campaigns.
6. Chain of Custody Card
- a. The chain of custody card is attached to all evidence that is checked out of the Property and Evidence Section to ensure that anyone handling the evidence has been officially documented. All persons who are involved in the chain of custody must sign the card as they relinquish or obtain control of the evidence. (83.3.1)
 - b. When evidence is released to court, the officer introducing the property into evidence shall ensure that a chain of custody card has been completed and that the bottom section of the card is returned to the Property and Evidence Section. If only a portion of the evidence has been released to or retained by the court, it shall be so noted on both the Property Receipt form and the chain of custody card.
 - c. If a former officer is subpoenaed, or the court requests evidence for a court proceeding, a Department employee shall be required to remove the evidence from impound and deliver it to the court. Under no circumstances is a former officer permitted to take custody of evidence.
7. Inventories/Audits

- a. Required Special Inventory: Whenever a new Police Services Officer is assigned to Property and Evidence, the new and former Police Services Officers shall conduct a property inventory, consisting of a sampling of property records on a sufficient number of items to verify accuracy of the property records, and ensure the integrity and continuity of the system. (84.1.6.b)
 - b. Semi-Annual Inspections: The Property and Evidence Supervisor is responsible for supervising the operation of the Property and Evidence Section, and shall conduct informal semi-annual inspections to determine if the following duties are being accomplished: (84.1.6.a)
 - (1) Maintenance of the Property and Evidence Section in a clean and orderly fashion.
 - (2) Protection of property from damage and deterioration.
 - (3) Maintenance of proper accountability procedures.
 - (4) Prompt disposition of property with no further evidentiary value in a manner that complies with Arizona State laws, City ordinances, the City's Materials Management Division procedures, and Peoria Police Department Policies.
 - (5) The Property and Evidence Supervisor shall provide the Property and Evidence employee results of each inspection.
 - c. Annual Inventory:
 - (1) An annual inventory of property held by the Department shall be conducted by a supervisory member of the Department who is not connected to the control of the property function.
 - (2) This individual shall be designated by the Chief of Police.
 - (3) This inventory does not require the individual accounting of every item of property. It is intended to validate the integrity and management of the Department's property and evidence system. (84.1.6.c)
 - (4) The Technical Services Bureau Manager shall be provided with the written results of the property inventory, with a copy to the Property and Evidence Supervisor.
 - d. Unannounced Inspections: At the discretion of the Chief of Police, unannounced inspections of the property storage areas shall be conducted on a semiannual basis. These inspections, which support and are in addition to regularly scheduled inspections, shall include: (84.1.6.d)
 - (1) A review of property accountability and security procedures.
 - (2) Random comparisons of written records with the actual physical property held by the Department. The random comparison is intended to be the most significant aspect of the unannounced inspections as it will reflect the integrity of the system currently in place. However, other operational procedures may be examined at this time.
 - (3) The individual conducting the semiannual inspection shall provide the Technical Services Bureau Manager the written results of the inspection, with a copy to the Property and Evidence Supervisor and the Police Services Officers assigned to Property and Evidence.
 - e. On a monthly basis, the Property and Evidence Supervisor will conduct a review of all property signed-out to Department employees to ensure that property is accounted for and returned in a timely manner. Property that is in dispute or can not be located shall be referred to the Technical Services Bureau Manager.
8. Agency Owned Property (17.5.1)
- a. The Property and Evidence Section shall be responsible for ensuring that all agency-owned property is maintained in a state of operational readiness. The operational readiness of equipment shall be inspected on a quarterly basis by the Section Supervisor or the unit responsible for that equipment. (17.5.3)

- b. A record shall be maintained of all Department property that is issued to employees (i.e., building keys, helmets, protective vests, badges, etc.) and shall ensure the employee signs to indicate receipt or return of the property. (17.5.2) (21.2.3) (41.3.5)
- c. The City of Peoria, Materials Management Division, maintains the official equipment inventory listing for all Departments within the City, including the Police Department.

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