



Section 4/700 ♦ Criminal Investigation		
4 / 705	Collection / Preservation of Evidence	8/25/98 Rev 3/08/09
Accreditation Standards	1.2.4/43.1.4/61.2.3/83.1.1/83.2.1/83.2.2/ 83.2.3/83.2.4/83.2.6/83.2.7/83.3.1/83.3.2/ 84.1.1/84.1.3	

4 / 705.05 GENERAL

The goal of the Laurel Police Department is to combat crime using all investigative methods available for a successful investigation and prosecution of criminal offenders. One very important method is processing the crime scene properly. The crime scene integrity starts with protecting the scene. Collection, preservation and transportation to a forensic laboratory for identification follow in this important chain. The procedures in this chapter relate to responsibilities of each officer, investigator and evidence technician.

4 / 705.10 GUIDELINES

All property and/or evidence that is recovered, found, seized, or received by members of this agency will be documented on a Laurel Police Department Property Report as soon as possible which will also facilitate a chain of custody of said property. All property or evidence will be submitted into the agency's custody prior to the receiving member's ending tour of duty. All property or evidence will be properly packaged, marked, tagged, and identified by the receiving member to include all applicable information on the Property Report.

4 / 705.15 GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Members shall complete the following steps in order to properly submit any property or evidence into this agency's custody:

1. Receive property
2. Complete LPD Property Form
3. Complete lab analysis request for all CDS
4. Mark / tag / package items
5. Initiate Chain of Custody Log
6. Submit via Evidence/Property transfer area in compliance with General Order 4/109.20 Property Evidence Transfer Area

4 / 705.20 CRIME SCENE RESPONSIBILITIES

• The responsibilities of the first officer(s) to arrive at a crime scene include, but are not limited to:

1. Render first aid if necessary
2. Secure the scene
3. Document observations of the crime scene

4. Notify a supervisor
5. Locate, maintain and separate witnesses
6. Document all persons who enter the crime scene
7. Maintain crime scene security and prevent unauthorized entry

• Processing minor crime scenes - Patrol Officer:

1. Preliminary survey - Note taking
2. Photography
 - a) Long distance or establishing shots
 - b) Medium distance shots
 - c) Close-ups
 - d) Document each photograph
3. Collection of evidence
 - a) Document each piece of evidence
 - b) Place in proper containers
4. Latent printing (also: See CIM Page 2-17)
 - a) Document each latent print lifted
 - b) Place latent print cards into evidence bags

• Supervisory Responsibilities:

1. Ensure complete and accurate documentation of LPD Property Form
2. Ensure marking/tagging/packaging of property is completed
3. Ensure lab request (CDS) is completed
4. Access and document property into transfer area

• Detective Responsibilities:

1. Ensure security of crime scene and its perimeter
2. Preliminary survey
 - a) Note taking
 - b) Notification of evidence technician if needed
3. Photography
 - a) Long distance or establishing shots
 - b) Medium distance shots
 - c) Close-ups
 - d) Document each photograph
4. Rough sketch of crime prior to evidence removal (if needed)
5. Collection of evidence
 - a) Document each piece of evidence
 - b) Place in proper container
6. Latent printing (also: See CIM Page 2-17)
 - a) Document each latent print lifted

- b) Place latent print cards into evidence bags
- 7. Final survey
- Evidence Technician Responsibilities:

Additional Resource Guides

- Criminal Investigations Manual, Sections III & IV.
- U.S. Dept. of Justice, Handbook of Forensic Science

1. Used at the discretion of the detective in charge of the scene
2. Ensure and maintain security of the crime scene and its perimeter
3. Preliminary survey
 - a) Note taking
 - b) Briefing from detectives
4. Photography (video if required by detectives)
 - a) Long distance or establishing shots
 - b) Medium distance shots
 - c) Close-ups
 - d) Polaroids
 - e) Document each photograph
5. Rough sketch of scene when required
6. Collection of evidence
 - a) Blood
 - b) Semen or body fluids
 - c) Hairs
 - d) Fibers
 - e) Any other physical evidence
 - f) Document each piece of evidence taken
7. Latent printing
 - a) Document each latent print card lifted
 - b) Place latent print cards into evidence bags
8. Final survey

4 / 705.25 PROTECTING PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

- The first officer on the scene should practice good officer survival techniques while remaining cognizant of the possible presence of physical evidence. Care should be taken to protect such evidence from contamination or destruction if this protection can be safely accomplished.

The first officer on the scene should:

1. Render first aid
2. If victim is deceased, do not disturb the body
3. Do not remove any evidence from or around the body
4. If probable cause exists, arrest the suspect and conduct a search. Make notes of all statements made by the suspect.
5. Officers must examine the crime scene and notify the dispatcher for the following, if needed
 - a) Supervisor
 - b) CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT
 - c) Duty Commander

- Protecting the Crime Scene:

The first officer must secure the crime scene from its initial point, and it must extend outward to the perimeter. This is the most important and crucial part of the crime scene.

Means of Security:

1. Crime scene tape
2. Signs
3. Barricades
4. Personnel Assigned Perimeter Positions

- Collection and Submission of Evidence/Property

All Evidence/Property shall be collected, marked, tagged, and packaged in the same manner as described in 4/705.10 and 4/705.40.

4 / 705.30 CRIME SCENE PROCESSING EQUIPMENT

- Patrol / Detective Vehicles:

1. Each vehicle will have a latent fingerprint kit
2. Each vehicle will have a suitable amount of packaging materials
3. Photographic equipment to be made available (see Photography Section)

- Evidence Unit Vehicle:

1. Photography Equipment
 - a) 35mm camera
 - b) Flash attachment
 - c) Film - 2 rolls each color / black and white
 - d) 12-inch ruler
 - e) Tripod
 - f) Video Camera / Videotape
2. Sketch Equipment
 - a) Pad of graph paper and clipboard
 - b) Pencils
 - c) 50-foot metal measuring tape
 - d) 10-foot measure tape
 - e) 12-inch ruler
 - f) Templates
3. Latent Fingerprint Kit
 - a) Brushes
 - i) Fiberglass
 - ii) Large-scale brushes
 - iii) Magnetic wand
 - b) Powders
 - i) Black
 - ii) Magnetic
 - c) Lifting tape
 - d) Blank latent print cards

- e) Mask
- f) Gloves
- g) Camera
- 4. DNA Evidence Collection Kit
- 5. Marking pens
- 6. Paper bags - various sizes
- 7. Flashlight
- 8. Footwear - Tire Impression Kit
 - a) Dental stone
 - b) Buckets
 - c) Spoons
 - d) Frames
 - e) Dirt hardener
 - f) Snow wax
 - g) Container of water
 - h) Electrostatic dust print lifter
- 9. Fibers/hair vacuum
- 10. Metal detector
- 11. Bio-Hazard suits
- 12. Air purification mask

4 / 705.35 DOCUMENTING LACK OF PHYSICAL EVIDENCE OR PHOTOGRAPHS

The evidence technician will submit a full and detailed report to the Commander of the Special Operations Division outlining the reasons that no physical evidence was recovered or the reasons no crime scene photography was conducted at the scene of any Major Crime in which he was directed to respond.

4 / 705.40 COLLECTION AND SUBMISSION OF PERISHABLE AND NON-PERISHABLE EVIDENCE

1. Procedures:

- It is the responsibility of the officer or detective to request the evidence technician/property officer to submit the evidence collected to a forensic crime laboratory with the type of examination which is requested.
- If more than one evidence technician is processing a crime scene, the senior evidence technician will be responsible for submitting evidence to a forensic crime laboratory.

2. Preservation of perishable items:

- When perishable evidence is collected and the chance that such evidence (i.e., liquid semen or blood) could be destroyed if not properly stored, the evidence technician/property officer will submit the evidence as soon as possible or no later than 72 hours to a forensic laboratory.

When the property section is closed and an evidence tech is unavailable, evidentiary property collected by field officers requiring refrigeration will be appropriately packaged, labeled, and sealed, then placed in the property transfer area refrigerator. The refrigerator will then be locked. If the

refrigerator is in use or the items requiring refrigeration are too large for the transfer area refrigerator, the property custodian or an evidence tech will be notified to secure the evidence.

- Transporting perishable evidence to a forensic laboratory
 - ♦ The evidence technician/property officer will notify a representative of the lab in person that the item is perishable and possibly a bio-hazard
 - ♦ The evidence package will be marked in red ink, stating that a perishable item is enclosed and whether a bio-hazard exists
- Delays in transporting perishable items to a forensic laboratory
 - ♦ Perishable evidence will be placed into a refrigerator, stored, and locked within the departmental Evidence Lab for no longer than 72 hours and so indicated in the Chain of Custody Log.
 - ♦ Exception - clothing soaked in blood or bodily fluids.

No clothing evidence will be submitted to a forensic laboratory wet. The clothing article(s) will be air dried and then submitted.

1. Non-perishable items
 - a) Shall be packaged separately from perishable items to avoid contamination.
2. Special considerations (FBI Laboratory)
 - a) Evidence to be submitted for examination to the Federal Bureau of Investigation will be done by the evidence technician/property officer. The officer requesting the examination will notify the evidence technician/property officer, explaining the type of examination requested. The evidence technician / property officer will complete the necessary forms for the examination. (Form letters found in CIM 2-29 through 2-31)
 - b) The evidence technician will make a written typed report indicating the events that took place. In this report the following shall be noted:
 - i) Date and time evidence technician arrived on scene
 - ii) Location of incident
 - iii) Case number
 - iv) Evidence Technician/Officers observing
 - v) Evidence Technician Administrative Work Log on incident
3. Request for Laboratory Examination
 - a) Prince George's Co. Laboratory
 - i) Format and guidelines for P.G.Co.Lab examinations are outlined in the Administrative Manual, Section 4
 - b) Maryland State Police Laboratory

- i) Format and guidelines for MSP Lab examinations are outlined in the Administrative Manual, Section 4
4. Sample Letter for Evidence Submission to Federal Bureau of Investigation Forensic Laboratory. (See C.I.M., Page 2-28 through 2-31)

4 / 705.45 COLLECTION OF KNOWN SAMPLES FOR COMPARISON WITH PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Once known evidence is located, it must be forwarded to the forensic laboratory for comparison with the questioned evidence located at the crime scene. The following are some examples of known-questioned evidence to be compared:

1. Hairs
2. Fibers
3. Paint
4. Glass
5. Soil
6. Tool Marks
7. Finger/Palm Prints

4 / 7-5.50 COLLECTION OF PHYSIOLOGICAL SPECIMENS

Collected DNA samples are to be forwarded only to laboratories accredited by either the 'American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors Laboratory Accreditation Board' (ASCLD/LAB) or 'National Forensic Science Technology Center (NFSTC). DNA Samples may also be sent to the FBI's national DNA Indexing System (NDIS) laboratory.

4 / 705.55 CRIME SCENE SKETCH

Additional Resource Guides:

- Criminal Investigations Manual, Section III
- U.S. Dept of Justice Handbook of Forensic Science

• The evidence technician will complete a detailed sketch in the following incidents:

1. Homicide
2. Suicide
3. Suspicious Death
4. When requested by the on-scene detective

• Crime scene sketch shall contain the following information:

1. Time and date of incident
2. Time and date of sketch

3. Location of offense
4. Location of evidence
5. Position of victim if applicable
6. Buildings, rooms, other landmarks
7. Name of evidence technician preparing the sketch

4 / 705.60 CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHY—GENERAL

Additional Resource Guide:

- Criminal Investigations Manual, Section III

Crime scene photography is an extremely important part of processing the scene. It shows an accurate account of the scene at the time of the incident.

The detective or evidence technician can view the pictures of the scene repeatedly for additional information. Photographs of the crime scene give the jury in a criminal trial an accurate account of the incident. A photograph speaks for itself in most cases.

4 / 705.65 UNIFORM PATROL PHOTOGRAPHY GUIDELINES

This section establishes guidelines for the use of photographic equipment as it relates to the collection and documentation of evidence by the agency.

• Types of Equipment:

1. 35mm camera
2. Polaroid camera
3. Video camera

• Use of Equipment:

1. 35 mm Camera: Each squad in the Uniform Patrol Division will be issued a 35mm camera to be utilized for documentation as follows:

- a) Record vehicle accident scenes
- b) Record vehicle damage
- c) Record crime scenes
- d) Record seized evidence
- e) Record victims' injuries

Each Patrol Squad Supervisor will be accountable for the individual camera, and for ensuring that documentation of its usage is submitted. In situations which exceed the issued camera's capabilities, it shall be the supervisor's decision to request additional photographic assistance from the following sources:

1. Special Operations Division
2. Crime Scene/Evidence Technicians

These units have access to 35mm cameras that have additional capabilities for specific purposes; close-up photography, additional lighting sources, enhanced lens for distance variations. It shall be the on-duty supervisor's responsibility to ensure that an adequate supply of film and batteries is maintained.

Further responsibilities include the proper documentation of the use of these cameras, to be supplemented with the original reports. Additionally, film and batteries may be replenished by submitting a photo request form requesting replacements, and noting how film was expended as well as the property number assigned to the expended film.

2. Polaroid Camera: A Polaroid camera and a supply of film will be maintained and secured within the Communications area and may be signed out by all supervisory personnel, or at their request. Again, it shall be the responsibility of the on duty supervisor to ensure proper documentation is supplemented to original reports as to the usage of the cameras, and to ensure that the photos are submitted into property. Polaroid cameras should only be utilized for the following purpose(s)

- a) Documentation of Police K-9 bites
- b) Documentation of a person's identity when the Department ID camera is out of service

****NOTE:** Polaroid photographs of subjects should only be taken against "plain, light colored" backgrounds.

3. Video Camera: The video cameras will only be utilized by the following personnel:
 - a) Special Operations Division
 - b) Crime Scene/Evidence Technicians
 - c) Photographic Support Unit Personnel

This equipment is to be utilized for the documentation of crime scenes, criminal activity, and surveillance activities as approved by the supervisory staff of the Investigative Services Division. All video camera usage will be documented by supplementing original reports.

4 / 705.70 EVIDENCE TECH PHOTOGRAPHY

- The evidence technician should photograph the scene immediately after the preliminary survey.

- Overall - Establishing Photographs

1. Should be taken from several different locations of the crime scene. The area surrounding the crime shall also be photographed.

2. Interior scene should be photographed using a wide-angle lens. The evidence technician should start in a corner of the room and then go clockwise to each of the other walls.

- Mid-Range Photography allows the person reviewing the photograph to observe the location of the evidence and its surrounding landmarks. Mid-range photographs should be taken with a normal lens to prevent distortion.

- Close-up photography allows the person viewing the photograph to observe the evidence in detail.

1. Field of vision must be filled without a scale
2. After filling the field of vision without the scale card and photographing, a scale card should be placed next to the evidence, the field of vision filled and re-photographed with the scale in place. A scale card or ruler is sufficient for the photograph.

- Completion of Crime Scene Photography:

1. Evidence technician must keep a written photographic log of each photograph taken of the scene. A log shall consist of the following:
 - a) Type of camera
 - b) Type of lens used
 - c) Flash used
 - d) Type of film
 - e) Date and time
 - f) Location
 - g) Description of each photograph taken
 - h) Case number and offense
 - i) Officer's name and ID number
2. Each roll of film will be placed into an evidence bag with the necessary information completed on the card. The film will be placed in the evidence locker, accompanied by an evidence/property report.
3. The evidence technician/property officer or detective will transport film to a processing company and note the date and time of delivery. The processing company will provide a receipt for each roll of film. The date and time of pickup will be noted on the envelope.
4. If a roll of film is not completely used on a crime scene, it must be removed from the camera. One case per film.
5. The evidence technician/property officer will be responsible for returning the photographs to the officer or detective.
6. The officer/evidence technician who photographs the crime scene will place his/her initials and case number on the back of the photographs.

4 / 705.75 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE MARKING, LABELING, SEALING, PACKAGING

1. Large Evidence:
 - a) Evidence should be labeled and / or marked as such and the tag should include the following:
 - i) Date
 - ii) Time
 - iii) Officer name
 - iv) Location of recovery
 - v) Item and case number
2. Small Evidence:
 - a) Should not be directly marked - only on evidence bags.
 - b) Tags to be attached to evidence if possible.
 - c) Evidence placed in a labeled container or bag.
3. Patrol Officer - Evidence Technician:
 - a) Should always place marks on evidence in basically the same manner as any other evidence. This will prevent searching for the marks on the evidence in a court trial.
4. Marking Instruments:
 - a) Permanent Markers - felt tip
 - b) Scribes
 - i) Diamond tip
 - ii) Awl
 - iii) Screwdriver point or head
 - iv) Black ball point ink pens
5. Collecting Evidence - Responsibility to Mark:
 - a) The member who collects the evidence is responsible for marking or labeling the evidence.
6. Packaging Evidence:
 - a) All evidence, whether marked or unmarked, must be packaged in a container, sealed and properly labeled for identification.

4 / 705.80 COLLECTION OF EVIDENCE

• Recommended Methods for Collection, Packaging, and Submission of Different Types of Evidence:

1. Tools to use for collection:
 - a) Tongs
 - b) Tweezers
 - c) Hands with gloves (2 pair last resort)
2. Order of Collection:
 - a) Perishable evidence first
 - b) Physical evidence in a logical sequence
3. Documentation:

- a) All items collected as evidence will be listed on a Laurel Police Evidence/Property Report. The report must be completely filled out with a full description, serial number, where located and who recovered it.
4. Arson Evidence:
 - a) The Prince George's County Fire Department Investigation Division will collect all fire/arson-related evidence. The department evidence technician will only collect non-fire-related evidence in fatal or serious bodily harm incidents.
5. Collection and Preservation of CDS Evidence:
 - a) (Documented in Administrative Manual / CDS Packaging Section)

4 / 705.85 REPORT - CRIME SCENE PROCESSING

The officer or evidence technician notes taken at the crime scene need to be readily available so that they may be transferred to a finished report at a later time.

Information needed at the crime scene:

1. Case number
2. Date and time of arrival
3. Location(s)
4. Name of victim
5. Action on scene
6. Evidence Log - for evidence technician
7. Latent Print Log - for evidence technician

Patrol Personnel will document their crime scene processing activities by use of Supplement Reports to their original reports.

Evidence Technicians will document their crime scene processing activities on Crime Scene Processing Reports for all major cases.

4 / 705.90 PROPERTY CUSTODIAN'S DUTIES

Evidence/Property Custodian:

1. Retrieve property from transfer area
2. Review LPD Property form and lab request for accuracy and completeness
3. Inspect property for compliance with proper marking/tagging/packaging
4. Log all property into the computer
5. Separate all property for disposition (i.e., disposal, lab analysis, evidentiary holding, etc.)
6. Forward property of evidentiary nature requiring laboratory examination to proper forensic lab.

Examples:

 - a) CDS (PGPD CDS lab)
 - b) Firearms (PGPD Firearm Unit)
 - c) Latent lifts (Evidence Technician Unit)

- d) Evidence to be processed for latent lifts (Evidence Technician Unit)
- e) Bio-Hazards/Semen/Blood (Evidence Technician Unit for storage in refrigerator in Evidence Processing Lab)
- f) Film (Photographic Support Unit for storage/processing)
- g) Continuation of Chain of Custody on all property
- h) Secure all evidence/property in Evidence/Property Storage area
- i) General Evidence (Property Storage Room)
- j) CDS (Property Room / Vault Room)
- k) Valuable jewelry (Property Room safe)
- l) Weapons (Property Room / Vault Room)

4 / 705.95 WRITTEN RESULTS OF LABORATORY ANALYSIS

The evidence technician will provide a written report of all processed evidence to the submitting patrol officer and forward a copy of the Laboratory Analysis from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Maryland State Police, and / or Prince George's County Drug Laboratory.

4 / 705.100 TRAINING IN CRIME / ACCIDENT SCENE PROCESSING

All police officers of the Laurel Police Department have received training from accredited police academies located in the State of Maryland on crime scene/traffic accident processing.

The Department's training officer will schedule training classes on crime scene/traffic accident processing at his/her discretion.

4 / 705.105 SPECIALIZED TRAINING / CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION

The evidence technician of the Laurel Police Department is assigned to the Special Operations Division and reports directly to the Commander. The technician is responsible for processing major crime scenes.

The Commander of the Special Operations Division, through the training officer, will ensure that all evidence technicians receive the following specialized training:

1. Collection, preservation, and transportation of all physical evidence
2. Crime scene photography
3. Latent finger/palm print recovery
4. Recovery of tool, tire and foot impressions
5. Crime scene sketching
6. Hair/fiber recovery

- Refresher Training - Evidence Technician:

The Commander of the Special Operations Division and training officer will ensure that training is afforded to all evidence technicians in the following areas:

1. Update the evidence technician's knowledge involving the forensic laboratory abilities
2. New technology and techniques regarding the recovery of all physical evidence
3. New technology and techniques in latent print processing
4. Any training that the Commander of the Special Operations Division or training officer feels will serve a purpose to the evidence technician in crime scene processing

The evidence technician will provide the training officer with all training certificates received after the successful completion of the training. The evidence technician will also maintain a folder with all their training certificates. The evidence technician will receive refresher training at least once a year

4 / 705.110 EVIDENCE TECHNICIAN - 24 HOUR BASIS

The Evidence Technician will respond on the following incidents when requested by the Special Operations Division:

1. All death scenes, unless canceled by the detective or patrol officer
2. All major burglaries/break-ins with authorization from the on-case detective
3. All rape and felony sex offenses
4. All kidnappings - abductions
5. All business armed robberies when requested by a detective
6. Any crime scene to which the on-call detective requests an evidence technician.
7. Evidence Technicians will respond to assist Accident Re-constructionists upon their request.

Only a detective or the Commander of Special Operations Division can request an evidence technician to respond to a crime scene. If an evidence technician is not on duty, either the lead detective or the Commander of Special Operations will call a trained evidence technician to respond to the scene if the scene requires processing beyond the capabilities of the patrol officer. If an agency evidence technician is not available, Prince George's County Police or Howard County Police should be notified and assistance requested.

END OF ORDER