

Property and Evidence Section Procedures

700.1 FOUND, EVIDENTIARY AND/OR RECOVERED PROPERTY AND EVIDENCE REPORTING PROCEDURES

Documentation can be accomplished by entering a Case or Incident Report into CAD.

DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY

- (a) Found, recovered and/or evidentiary property will be disposed of in one (1) of the following three (3) ways, pursuant to applicable statutory requirements and restrictions, but always within six (6) months after legal requirements have been met.
 - 1. Returned to owner.
 - 2. Processed as abandoned or unclaimed.
 - 3. Processed per a court order.
- (b) Disposal procedures for held property that is not contraband nor is needed for use as evidence may be initiated sixty (60) days after the department obtains possession of the property.
- (c) It will be the responsibility of the officer submitting property to the Property Custodian to determine its manner of disposal. The officer of record will be responsible for obtaining court orders when needed for the disposal of evidentiary property. The officer of record will complete a property disposition form generated from BEAST for all court evidence. This form will include a line for the signature of the trial judge and may serve as an order of the court.
- (d) Substitution of Photographs for Evidence - When evidentiary property is very bulky, dangerous to store, prone to spoilage or deterioration, in need of special preservative or of essential use to the owner, if the owner is not the arrestee, the State's Attorney's Office is to be contacted for direction. If the State's Attorney authorizes it, photographs of the evidentiary property will be substituted for the real property. The real property then may be destroyed or returned to the owner as appropriate. If the charge is a local one, the Village Prosecutor can be contacted for direction. Case reports and Property forms are to be filed to document this exchange.
- (e) Manner of Destruction: Evidentiary Property
 - 1. Alcoholic beverages and foodstuffs will be opened and placed in the trash.
 - 2. Dangerous weapons, such as knives, etc. will be destroyed by melting, cutting, or other recommended method of destruction.
 - 3. Firearms and controlled substances are to be taken to the crime lab for destruction by crime lab technicians in a legally sufficient manner.
 - 4. All other property may be destroyed by burning, shredding or crushing.
- (f) The following guidelines will apply to the disposal of found, forfeited or recovered (non-contraband) property:
 - 1. The four (4) possible methods for disposal of this type of property will be:

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- A. The return to the rightful owner upon reasonable and satisfactory proof of ownership.
 - B. Process the property as abandoned or unclaimed, including the sale of the property for cash at public auction.
 - C. The owner or other person(s) entitled to possession of this property may claim and recover possession at any time before the public auction upon providing reasonable and satisfactory proof of ownership or right to possession and after reimbursing the department for all reasonable expenses involved in the custody of the property.
 - D. Money shall be turned over to the Village of Vernon Hills Finance Department to be deposited into the General Fund after all statutory requirements have been met.
- (g) Found or recovered contraband will be disposed of using the same manner of destruction as listed for evidentiary property. Refer to section e - Manner of Destruction above.

700.2 CHAIN OF EVIDENCE PROCEDURES TRANSFER TO COURT

- (a) When an officer takes evidence to court, the reverse side of the Property Form listed under "Chain of Custody" will be filled out by either the officer or the Property Custodian, and signed by both. Categories completed are items transferred, date, time, releasing signature with agency, receiving signature with agency, and reason for change of custody.
- (b) When returning evidence the officer has signed out, he/she or the Property Custodian will again fill out the reverse side of the Property Form listed under "Chain of Custody". Both will again sign it. When the Property Custodian is unavailable, the officer will lock the evidence in an evidence locker. When the Property Custodian retrieves the returned evidence, he/she will sign the "Receiving Signature" portion of the form.
- (c) When returning evidence after a case has been adjudicated, a Property Disposition form must accompany the returned evidence and be marked with one (1) of the following dispositions:
 - 1. Return to owner
 - 2. Return to finder
 - 3. To be disposed of by Police Department
 - 4. Police Department to retain custody
 - 5. Destroy
 - 6. Auction
- (d) The officer completing the form will then sign it.

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TRANSFER TO CRIME LAB

- (a) When evidence will be transferred to the crime lab for analysis or other tests, the lab transmittal form will be completed.
- (b) The lab transmittal form will contain at a minimum:
 - 1. The name of the officer first having custody.
 - 2. The date and time of evidence transfer. The method of submission.
 - 3. The receiving person's name, signature and functional responsibility. The date and time of receipt in the laboratory.
 - 4. The reason for the transfer.
 - 5. The name and location of the laboratory, type of case or event and examinations required.
- (c) The assignment of evidence to the crime lab analysis also must be recorded in the applicable sections of the Property Form.
- (d) Transmittal forms are supplied by the North Eastern Illinois Regional Crime Lab. They are titled "Receipt for Exhibit". The forms are available in BEAST to all Property and Evidence personnel.

700.3 LABORATORY TESTING OF EVIDENCE REQUESTING LAB TESTS

The officer will indicate this request by filling in the "Routing" section of the Property Form with "COL" (abbreviation for Crime Lab). The officer will also indicate specific instructions for the evidence/Crime Lab under the "Special Instructions" portion of the Property Form.

EVIDENCE TRANSMITTALS TO THE CRIME LAB

- (a) The North Eastern Illinois Regional Crime Lab will be the primary crime lab facility used by the department.
- (b) Procedures governing the time and conditions for submission of perishable and other evidence to the crime lab for analysis, as well as evidence handling procedures will be delineated in the department's Evidence and Property Manual.
- (c) Collected evidence awaiting transfer to the crime lab for analysis will be turned over to the Property Custodian for storage in the property room. A Property Form must be completed to document this property assignment or transfer.
- (d) DUI blood kits will be kept refrigerated until analyzed. They may be directly transported to the North Eastern Illinois Regional Crime Lab with the requisite paperwork for this purpose.

RECORD OF LAB TRANSMITTALS

The Receipt for Exhibit identified in section 800.2 above will serve as the record for any transmittal of evidence to the crime lab.

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WRITTEN LAB TEST RESULTS

- (a) The North Eastern Illinois Regional Crime Lab will provide a written report of laboratory findings for all requests submitted for laboratory examination.
- (b) The requesting officer should always note the request for a written report on the Property Form when evidence will be transmitted to the crime lab.
- (c) Written reports of laboratory findings received from the crime lab will be filed with the original case report in the Records Section. A copy will be sent to the officer's Shift Commander, who will make sure that the arresting officer checks the case to see if the arrestee has already been charged with the offense. If they have already been charged, the officer will complete an Investigative Action report to document the lab results. If they have not been charged with the offense, the officer will complete an Investigative Action report requesting that the Investigations Section obtain a warrant or that the charges be enhanced. The lab results will also be documented.

700.4 SUPPLEMENTARY PROPERTY LIST PROCEDURES

A Supplementary Property List will be used in those cases where a large amount of property has been stolen (residential or commercial burglary, etc.) The officer will fill out the top portion, which includes the case number, officer name, and star number.

The form is then given to the victim, who completes the form and mails it back to the Police Department. Sections to be filled out by the victim are:

- Quantity
- Article Type
- Brand/Manufacturer and Model Name
- Serial Number
- Complete Description: Size, Color, Distinguishing Marks, etc.
- Value
- Victim's Signature
- Victim's Name – Printed
- Date

700.5 DIGITAL EVIDENCE COLLECTION AND STORAGE

Evidence.com is the primary method of storing digital evidence. The BEAST photo vault is not to be used to upload pictures, however CDs and memory sticks can be inventoried as evidence if needed.

Use the below guidelines for storage of any digital evidence:

- (a) For minor cases (CDTP, BTV, etc.) where pictures are taken to supplement the case, upload using the Axon Capture app.

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1. This will cover the far majority of pictures collected. Generally most pictures taken with a cell phone will go this route.
 2. DO NOT upload pictures directly into the BEAST or request Records to attach them to the case.
 3. Pictures can be attached to a Mobile Case Report, but should be limited to 2-3 maximum. Anything more should go onto evidence.com.
- (b) For larger cases (Residential Burglary, Sex Assault, etc.) where pictures are taken as evidence, photos should be downloaded onto a CD or memory stick and inventoried as evidence.
1. Generally pictures taken with the SLR will follow this route.
- (c) Security footage or digital evidence from outside sources can be obtained via the Axon Citizen feature and put straight into evidence.com or inventoried as evidence if supplied as a CD/memory stick.

Exceptions can be made if reasonable circumstances are presented.

- (a) A victim may be photographed on scene with a cell phone, but the officer may choose to burn the pictures to a CD and inventory as evidence if it is a case of any significance.
- (b) A minor case that has a considerable number of pictures taken with an officer's phone should be stored by burning onto a CD/memory stick and inventory as evidence.
- (c) Printed pictures can be scanned in and attached by Records personnel.
- (d) Other situations that arise can be considered as well. It is the officer's responsibility to consult with their supervisor with questions rather than take action themselves.

Document the presence of all forms of digital evidence in the narrative of the incident/case report; to include:

- Squad camera footage
- BWC footage
- Uploaded pictures/videos
- Videos/pictures inventoried as evidence
- Footage needed from outside sources (i.e., MPD BWC)
- Booking / other VH surveillance footage

Axon Capture/Citizen On-Line Training (<https://academy.axon.com/catalog>)

- Registration is required to take the tutorials and a new profile must be created (it is not the same account as evidence.com).

PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING OF VIDEO RECORDINGS

If it is determined video exists and that video needs to be saved for evidentiary purposes, the below procedures will be followed.

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- (a) The Officer will make a request for Video Recordings through the Village's email system to the IT Department. The email will be addressed to "Helpdesk" (help@vhills.on.spiceworks.com) and the requesting Officer's Supervisor will be Carbon Copy (cc) on the email. The subject line will contain "Video Request" and the Case/Incident number. The email request will contain the following information:
 - 1. The reason recording is being requested (Use of Force, Unusual incident, etc.)
 - 2. The location(s) recording was made (Booking Room, Sally Port, Lobby, etc.)
 - 3. Date recording was made.
 - 4. The period of time the recording was made, both approximate start time and end time.
- (b) The IT Coordinator will create a case in evidence.com and upload the requested videos. Officers will be notified through evidence.com when they have access to the videos.

Video from Squad Cameras and Body Worn Cameras from outside agencies:

- (a) Document in a report narrative. Submit a memorandum/email through the chain of command indicating video may exist, the location the video may exist and the steps to be taken in obtaining video evidence.
- (b) Once the video evidence is obtained, it will be entered into BEAST by the department member obtaining the video.
- (c) Audio and Video evidence will be preserved for court purposes and officer review.

Audio from IT systems maintained external to VHPD and not involving in-car cameras or body worn cameras:

- (a) Document in report narrative indicating video may exist, and location video may exist.
- (b) If available request a copy of the video immediately as evidence.
- (c) If a copy of video cannot be created immediately, obtain information pertaining to the person who has the most control and knowledge of the video recording system and document in report narrative.
- (d) All video evidence will be entered into BEAST by the Sworn Member receiving the video.

700.5.1 FLOCK SAFETY STORAGE ON EVIDENCE.COM

To upload a captured Flock Safety image directly into Evidence.com:

- 1. Run the plate or locate the plate read
- 2. Make sure you are under the "Chronological" tab and not the "Summary" tab
- 3. Click the button that says "Add to Evidence.com"
- 4. Fill out the necessary fields, with you being the Owner, and fill in ID and Title just like you would on Evidence.com. If a case folder has been created on Edvidence.com, you can fill out the Case field too and it will upload the image and put it in the case folder.

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5. Log into Evidence.com and click "My Evidence" at the top to see that the image uploaded.

700.6 PROPERTY CONTROL PROCEDURES

All property is to be logged into our records before the officer ends his/her tour of duty. This is done by entering property into the BEAST (exception is for digital evidence - see above section 800.5). If applicable, all currency submitted as evidence will be counted a minimum of two times to confirm the total.

A Custody Receipt will be completed for all released property which will include all of the following information:

- (a) Case Number
- (b) Item Numbers
- (c) Date/Time
- (d) Releasing Signature
- (e) Receiving Signature
- (f) Reason for Change of Custody

A Property Custody Receipt will be printed from the BEAST. The person that property is released to will sign the "released to" line on the Property Custody Receipt. Department Member releasing the property will obtain identification of person the property is released to, and a photocopy of the Identification will be scanned into BEAST.

Controlled Substances Release: The acceptance and release of controlled substances from the Property Room will be regulated by a quantity control system. All property management records will reflect this identifier. Quantitative identifiers, i.e., number and weight of items, are to be listed on the outside of packaged controlled substance evidence by the officer submitting the evidence to the Property Custodian. Controlled Substances will be sealed in tamper proof containers. These containers should be inspected again at inventory as a safeguard against tampering or substitution.

SECURITY

Vehicles, bicycles and other bulky items will be stored in the secure north bay of the sally port. If the item cannot be securely chained or locked to the fencing, the pedestrian door leading to the south bay will be closed and locked and the electrical power to the overhead garage door will be switched off. As soon as possible, these items will be moved to the Property Room or to a secure off-site facility.

PERISHABLE ITEMS

Refrigerated storage will be available within the Evidence Processing Room and four (4) pass through evidence refrigerated storage lockers for perishable items. Use of these refrigerators is limited to in-custody property and evidence. Procedures for the use of these refrigerators are as follows:

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- (a) The four (4) refrigerated pass through storage lockers are kept open until needed by personnel putting an item(s) inside a refrigerator locker. Personnel will place item(s) inside the locker with any applicable paperwork, close and lock the refrigerator locker, then drop the key for that locker in same pass through locker. Personnel placing evidence items in the pass through lockers shall properly package items using evidence tape, which shall be initialed to maintain integrity of the packaged evidence.
- (b) The property custodian will retrieve the evidence and locker key from the refrigerated storage pass through locker. The evidence item(s) will be either transported to the crime lab within 24 hours of the next business day following the submittal of the property, or transferred to a secure refrigerator inside the Evidence/Property room by the property custodian.

EVIDENCE LOCKERS

Evidence lockers with locks are located next to the Property Custodian office and are to be used for the temporary storage of found, recovered or evidentiary property during periods when the Property Custodian is off-duty. Personnel turning property into the Property Custodian should put the property inside these lockers, lock the locker. The Property Custodian will retrieve the property from the other side.

RECORDS

All property acquired by the Department and submitted to the Property Custodian will be entered into BEAST. Personnel should ensure that:

- (a) Property will be packaged in accordance with procedures outlined in the Evidence and Property Manual.
- (b) Separate report forms will be completed for the property of different owners, different origins, different processing requirements, or different storage requirements.
- (c) The Item notes section of BEAST will be completed whenever there are specific handling instructions pertaining to submitted items.

The Property Custodian will document all property disposals and destructions in BEAST, to include date and time.