



CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE

GENERAL POLICE ORDER



EFFECTIVE DATE: APRIL 20, 2023	CHAPTER: 6 - Property	PAGE: 1 of 2	NUMBER: 6.02.04
SUBJECT: REMOVING DRUG EVIDENCE FROM THE FORENSIC UNIT			
CHIEF: <i>Dornat A. Drummond, Chief</i>			

Substantive changes are italicized

PURPOSE: To ensure accountability for controlled substances removed from the Forensic Unit.

POLICY: **It is the policy of the Cleveland Division of Police** to regulate the removal of drug evidence from the Forensic Unit to maintain accountability.

PROCEDURES:

- I. Removing Drug Evidence for Court
 - A. Officers shall not remove drug evidence from the Forensic Unit without authorization.
 - B. Officers may receive authorization from a prosecutor to remove drug evidence from the Forensic Unit for court-related purposes in the following circumstances:
 - 1. The drug evidence is for a pending pretrial hearing or a trial, and the City or county prosecutor assigned to the case gives the officer a verbal or written request to present the evidence.
 - 2. A written request is on the officer’s subpoena that drug evidence is needed at the court appearance.
 - C. *The Forensic Unit shall:*
 - 1. *Update the chain of custody in LERMS from the Forensic Unit to the receiving officer.*
 - 2. *Complete a paper copy with the receiving officer’s signature.*
 - 3. *Retain the signed document in the evidence release files until the evidence is returned.*
 - D. In instances where an officer is no longer needed but drug evidence *is requested to remain in the courtroom by the prosecutor, officers shall not relinquish custody without completing the following:*
 - 1. *The prosecutor assuming custody of the drug evidence shall send an email to the officer containing:*

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- a. *The prosecutor's full name, contact information, and the evidence they are taking custody of.*
- b. *The email shall be received reviewed by the officer **before** leaving court and relinquishing custody.*
2. *The officer shall make a LERMS chain of custody entry to document to whom the evidence was transferred.*

III. Returning Drug Evidence

A. The Forensic Unit shall:

1. *Update the evidence release files when the drugs are returned.*
2. *Inspect the drugs returned.*
 - a. *The inspection shall include an examination of the original packaging, the contents, and recorded quantities.*
 - b. *Discrepancies in the above shall be noted and forwarded *through the chain of command to the Internal Affairs Unit* for further investigation.*

B. *Drug evidence being returned from court after Forensic Unit hours shall be secured at the member's district/unit.*

THIS ORDER SUPERSEDES ANY PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DIRECTIVE OR POLICY FOR THIS SUBJECT AND WILL REMAIN EFFECTIVE UNTIL RESCINDED OR SUPERSEDED.