

City of St. Louis Department of Public Safety / Division of Corrections
POLICY & PROCEDURES

CHAPTER:	3	Institutional Operations	3.1.28
SECTION:	1	Security and Control	EFFECTIVE DATE: 7 / 21 / 2020
SUBJECT:	28	Crime Scene Management and Evidence Handling	
STANDARDS: ACA – 4 – ALDF: 2C-06			
APPROVED:			REVIEW DATE: 7 / 21 / 20
Dale Glass COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTIONS			REVISION DATE: 7 / 30 / 20
Rescind: 3.1.28 dated 3/26/13 Cancel:			

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Division of Corrections to collect, control and preserves all relevant evidence, including exculpatory evidence, in a manner which ensures its integrity and suitability for presentation in court.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

All Division of Corrections staff, contractors, and volunteers are responsible for adhering to the following procedures.

III. DEFINITIONS

“Division; Division of Corrections: Means the St. Louis City Division of Corrections (the City Justice Center and the Medium Security Institution).

Chain of Custody: The continuity and documentation of the physical handling of contraband evidence from time obtained until final disposition.

Contraband: Any item possessed or found within the premises of the facility that is illegal by law or expressly prohibited by the Division.

Collecting Officer: The individual responsible for the physical collection and packaging of property.

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Crime: Any action or incident on the premises of the Division of Corrections facility that violates federal law, state statutes or local ordinance.

Crime Scene: The space in and around the area where a crime has occurred.

Dangerous Contraband: Illegal or prohibited items that would aid in the escape from the facility or could be used as a weapon.

Dangerous Drugs: Alcohol and all illegal or controlled substances and similar volatile substances of mood-altering effect such as cleaning fluids, glue, lacquer, petroleum distillates, etc.

Deadly Weapon: Any device that can be used or intended for use in a manner that will cause serious bodily injury or death.

Evidence Depository: A facility designated area where evidence is deposited for pick-up by a Correctional Investigator.

Correctional Investigator: The individual responsible for monitoring a criminal investigation and/or overseeing an administrative investigation and acts as a liaison with other investigating authorities. The Investigator has full authority over a crime scene once the scene has been relinquished by the police.

Major/Minor Incident: (See policy #3.1.10: Incident Reporting).

Nuisance Contraband: Contraband that does not endanger the safety or security of the Division of Correction's facilities or its occupants.

Physical Evidence: Any substance, material, or object found or recovered and is held as evidence.

Preservation of Evidence: Deliberate and specific action taken or caused to be taken with the intention of preventing contamination to, or destruction of, any evidence including the recording, storage, and maintenance of continuity of such evidence.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. General Information

1. The Division provides protective gears (i.e., hand gloves, masks, etc.) for use by employees if necessary to collect crime scene evidence.
2. The Division provides plastic or paper bags or otherwise appropriate container to preserve evidence from crime scene.

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3. Contraband is classified as follows:
 - a. Drugs or pharmaceuticals
 - b. Drug paraphernalia
 - c. Weapons
 - d. Money or other commodities of exchange (e.g., jewelry)
 - e. Certain personal property as defined in policy or post order.

B. Crime Scene Discovery

1. A Correctional staff member discovering a crime will:
 - a. Not disturb, remove, or change or alter the position of any item in or around the crime scene,
 - b. Take immediate steps to notify the Area/Shift Supervisor and if necessary request for back-up to neutralize or counter any additional threat.
 - c. Take immediate steps to secure the area if no additional threat is present and immediately notify the Area /Shift Supervisor.
2. Upon arrival, the Area Supervisor will direct activities to preserve life, prevent further injuries or damages, prevent escape and ensure evidence is preserve.
3. Not withstanding the provision of Procedure A, item # 1(a) above, a Correctional staff member may move or alter the position of crime scene evidence only if not doing so will cause further serious injury or death or will further jeopardize the security of the facility. The employee will submit written report justifying the action.
4. If an injured person is at the crime scene and needed first aid, the Correctional staff member will move quickly to administer first aid. (See policy #4.2.20: First Aid Kits).
5. If the injured victim has an object lodged into, or pierced through the victim's body the Correctional staff members will not remove the object or participate in removing the object from the victim's body.
6. Suspects will be identified and if present, isolated in such a manner as to prohibit communication with any other inmate. Divisional staff will record any statements given by the suspect as well as the victim and the time of the statement.

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7. After all life/safety provisions have been met, the scene of the crime will be preserved until authorized otherwise.
8. The Shift/Area Supervisor will ensure that notification to appropriate individuals is made. (See policy #3.1.10: Incident Reporting).

C. Handling Physical Evidence

1. Any staff member finding and taking custody of physical evidence will take note of the type of evidence, its location, and position and document the time that the evidence was found and taken.
2. The evidence is placed in an evidence bag. The bag may be either paper or plastic. Evidence with blood or blood stain must be allowed to dry prior to placing into paper evidence bag. Other organic type materials, such as green plant material, will be placed into paper bags to prevent mold and mildew from forming and destroying the evidence.
3. Evidence that is too large to fit into an evidence bag will be marked with the date and the finder's initials. This marking will be placed in an area that will not alter the evidentiary value of the item. If the marking can not be accomplished without damaging the evidentiary value of the item, an evidence tag will be attached to the item and the item will be placed into the Evidence Depository.
4. Multiple pieces of evidence will be packaged separately unless otherwise authorized by the Correctional Investigator.
5. When there are multiple pieces of evidence recovered from crime scene, they may be logged in on the same form, provided that they are connected to the same case or event and they were collected at the same time.
6. Additional evidence or evidence that is located after the initial evidence is placed into the Evidence Depository may be documented on a Receipt for Property and Chain of Custody supplemental form.
7. After placing the evidence into an evidence bag, the bag will be sealed using evidence tape. The person finding the evidence will then place their initials and date across the seal.
8. The person finding the evidence will:
 - a. Complete a Receipt for Property and Chain of Custody Form,
 - b. Attach the original form and the first copy to the evidence bag, and

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- c. Turn the bag over to the Shift Supervisor or Area Supervisor who retains the third copy for their records.
9. The person finding the evidence will maintain possession until it has been packaged and turned over to the Shift Supervisor or Area Supervisor or until it is collected by an Investigator. Evidence will not be handled by other staff for purposes of curiosity.
10. A proper chain-of-custody for all cataloged evidence will be accurately and consistently maintained by recording all changes of custody for each piece of evidence. Each recorded transfer of evidence will stipulate the time and date of the transfer as well as the name of the receiving person(s) including DSN if the person is a Police Officer.
11. Anytime contraband is stored, handled, inventoried, removed from the evidence depository, or disposed of, the activity is noted on the Receipt for Property and Chain of Custody Form.
12. Dangerous drugs and weapons not immediately turned over to the police or Correctional Investigator will be stored in the evidence depository. Access will be limited to individuals designated by the appointing authority.
13. All medication considered contraband will be documented and turned over to the Correctional Investigator. Narcotics, Marijuana, prescription drugs and other controlled substances will be packaged separately from any paraphernalia. Liquid drugs will be placed in an evidence plastic bag to avoid leakage.
14. If contraband items are to be used in proceedings for disciplinary hearings or for criminal prosecution, they will be tagged and noted as such in the Receipt for Property and Chain of Custody Form.
15. After disciplinary hearing the contraband item(s) will be turned over to the Correctional Investigator. When contraband or evidence is to be turned over to the Correctional Investigator or the police, the Shift/Area Supervisor will notify them immediately.
16. If the evidence is to be transferred to Police department, the Shift/Area Supervisor will make photocopy of the evidence when the police officer arrives and give the original evidence bag and its content to the police officer who will sign and date the Receipt for Property and Chain of Custody Form. The Shift/Area Supervisor obtain Complaint number and the Officer's DSN from the Officer.
17. All staff that are involved or witnessed a crime will write a detailed incident report and if applicable, complete the Use of Force Report Forms. These reports and a copy of the Receipt for Property and Chain of Custody Form will be kept together and forwarded to the Chief of Security.

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D. Confiscation of Dangerous Drugs

1. If a staff member observes or suspects an inmate in possession of dangerous drug, the staff member will order the inmate to relinquish the contraband.
2. If the inmate fails to comply, the employee will detain the inmate and not allow the inmate entry into assigned cell or housing unit if the inmate is outside of the cell or housing unit. The staff member will call the Area Supervisor for back-up before attempting to use force to confiscate the contraband.
3. If the inmate is inside the cell unit or dormitory housing, the staff member will closely monitor the inmate and call the Area Supervisor for backup before attempting to use force to confiscate the contraband.
3. If the staff members use force to retrieve the contraband, all actions taken will be documented and justified in writing. The confiscated contraband will be preserved in new and unused evidence bag and sealed with a clear tape and turned over to the Shift Supervisor.
4. Staff members involved in the incident will write a detailed incident report and if applicable, complete the Use of Force Report Forms. These reports and a copy of the Receipt for Property and Chain of Custody Form will be kept together and forwarded to the Chief of Security.

E. Recovery or Confiscation of Glass and Sharp Objects

1. Glass particles will be swept into Divisional approved envelope and placed inside approved evidence bag and sealed and turned over to the Shift/Area Supervisor.
2. All sharp objects including syringes will be clearly labeled in order to protect the individuals who may handle or come into contact with the packaging.
3. If the glass or sharp is found on an inmate, the employee making the discovery will issue disciplinary report on the inmate.

F. Recovery or Confiscation of Firearms

1. The Shift /Area Supervisor will authorize a weapon qualified staff to safely disengage all firearms that have been confiscated, completely unloaded, prior to placement into the armory by the supervisor.
2. Bullets and magazines will be packaged in a separate Divisional approved envelope prior to packaging them with the confiscated or recovered firearm and placed in the armory.

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3. Weapon is never deposited in the evidence depository. The Shift/Area Supervisor will turn over weapon to Correctional Investigator or the Police Department.
4. If the weapon is found on an inmate, the employee discovering the contraband will issue disciplinary report on the inmate.

G. Confiscation of Money

1. All confiscated currency will be packaged separately and counted by listing the number of denominations only.
2. If money is found on arrestee a Receipt for Property and Chain of Custody Form is completed and turned over to the Police department for placement in arrestee's property. The Police will sign the Receipt of Property and Chain of Custody form. The signed form is turned over to the Chief of Security.
3. If money is found on an admitted inmate or in a common area in the housing units/dorm a Receipt for Property and Chain of Custody Form is completed and the money is turned over to the Correctional Investigator. A copy of the completed Receipt for Property and Chain of Custody Form will be retained by the Chief of Security. The Officer discovering the money will issue disciplinary report on the inmate.

H. Correctional Investigator Access to Crime Scene

1. The Correctional Investigator will have immediate access to the crime scene, witness(s), and evidence after the police relinquishes the crime scene to Division staff.
2. The Correctional Investigator will authorize the returned of the crime scene to normal operation when appropriate to do so.

I. Disposal of Crime Scene Evidence

1. Nuisance contraband evidence will be disposed of by following normal trash removal procedures or in the case of facility issued items returned to the proper repository. If the items are part of an administrative hearing the hearing officer will dispose of the item (s) when it is no longer needed.
2. The St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department will be contacted on all illegal contraband. If the police do not take possession of contraband when they respond to the facility the Correctional Investigator will ensure proper disposal.