



## ***WEBER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE*** **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **Property Management Activities and Responsibilities**

EFFECTIVE DATE: 10/07/03  
AMENDS/SUPERCEDES: 56.1,2  
STANDARD NUMBER: 84.1.1

REVIEW DATE: 05/02/05  
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APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Sheriff Signature

#### **56.1.1 Purpose**

To establish uniform procedures for receiving all in-custody and evidentiary property into Weber County Sheriff's Office control.

#### **56.1.2 Rationale**

The evidence function is responsible to protect all property coming into Weber County Sheriff's Office custody or control and to maintain an uninterrupted chain of custody. Such issues as receiving, documenting, packaging, labeling, storage, security, and release are all important risk management issues. Complete and transparent accountability profoundly impact office liability, office reputation and the prosecution of criminals.

#### **56.1.3 Policy**

A. All property officially obtained by this office will be:

1. Logged onto the correct report form by the end of the shift of the member who obtained the property. This report will include a description of each item and the name of the property owner if known. A receipt will be given to the owner if applicable.
2. Placed into the appropriate container or package and marked for storage in the evidence storage facility until resolution of the case or other disposition per state statute and department policies and procedures.
3. Placed in an evidence locker or appropriate evidence area, for control by

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the evidence custodian, by the end of the booking deputy's shift. All necessary paperwork will be submitted with the property.

4. All property submitted must have WCSO case number, even if associated with another agency case number.
5. Listed in the deputies written report as part of a detailed explanation of the circumstances by which the property came into the possession of the Sheriff's Office.

### 56.1.4 Procedure

- A. All firearms, jewelry, money, and drugs, whether being held as evidence or found property, shall be packaged separately by the submitting deputy. The evidence is then stored with extra security measures. They shall be segregated from other evidence and found property in secured/locked storage within the evidence facility as to prevent unauthorized access.
  1. Money and Other Valuable Property
    - a. Money will be counted by two (2) persons and packaged separately from other evidence.
    - b. Each package will be individually marked or tagged.
    - c. Paper money should be photocopied prior to submitting them to the evidence custodian when practical and necessary for evidentiary or documentary purposes.
    - d. All money will be counted by two (2) persons when released by the property custodian.
    - e. Stored in a locked safe accessible to the evidence custodian or designee.
  2. Firearms
    - a. All firearms will be unloaded by the submitting deputy and the cartridges placed in a separate container.
      - i. Exception: Loaded firearms which, by necessity, must be submitted to the laboratory in loaded condition, in order to avoid destroying evidence. *Important: The property*

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*report will then be marked "Loaded Firearm."*

- b. Each firearm will be individually tagged.
  - c. Firearms will be stored in a locked cabinet accessible to the evidence custodian or designee.
  - d. Handguns will be placed into individual gun boxes and left unsealed to allow inspection to verify serial numbers and make sure the handgun is not loaded.
3. Controlled substances and suspected controlled substances
- a. Live growing cannabis
    - i. The seizing deputy will have CSI photograph the plants and the plants will be removed from the soil. The CSI case number will be noted on the evidence sheet.
    - ii. A sample of the plants will be separated and packaged in a paper bag.
    - iii. The remainder of the plant(s) will be packaged in a paper bag and marked for destruction.
    - iv. Both paper bags will be weighed.
  - b. Large amounts of cannabis
    - i. Cannabis in the amounts of one pound or more will be handled similarly. The seizing deputy will have CSI photograph the substance and the CSI case number will be noted on the evidence sheet.
    - ii. A sample will be packaged separately.
    - iii. The remainder will be packaged in a paper bag and marked for destruction.
    - iv. Both packages will be weighed.
  - c. Smaller amounts of cannabis

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- i. Smaller amounts of cannabis will be packaged in paper bags and weighed.
- d. Individual items: pills and capsules
  - i. The items will be placed in paper bags and weighed. This gross weight will be noted by the item on the property report.
  - ii. Each bag will be individually marked or tagged and sealed.
- e. Particulate items: powder and pieces
  - i. The items will be placed in plastic bags and weighed. This gross weight will be noted by the item on the property report.
  - ii. Each bag will be individually marked or tagged and sealed.
- f. Dried Mushrooms
  - i. Dried mushrooms will be packaged in a paper bag.
- g. Living Damp Mushrooms
  - i. The seizing deputy will have CSI photograph the mushrooms. The CSI case number will be noted on the evidence sheet.
  - ii. A small sample of the mushrooms will be separated and packaged in a paper bag. The remainder of the mushrooms will be packaged in a second paper bag and marked for destruction.
  - iii. Both paper bags will be weighed.
- h. Syringes/Needles
  - i. The submitting deputy must separate the needle from the syringe and package the two separately, the needle in a

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“sharps” container.

- ii. If the contents of the needle must be analyzed, the submitting deputy will, before separating the needle from the syringe, squirt (expel) the needle contents into a vial and submit the vial as a separate evidence item.
- i. Controlled substances will be stored by individual cases in a locked cabinet segregated from other property, and accessible to the evidence custodian or designee.

### 4. Explosives, Pyrotechnics and Flammable Items

- a. Explosives **WILL NOT** be submitted to the evidence facility. The agency which handles explosives must be notified to take custody.
- b. Pyrotechnics (fireworks) may be placed in an evidence locker, and the evidence custodian will store them in a flammable storage cabinet.
- c. Flammable items (gasoline, kerosene etc.) will be:
  - i. given directly to the evidence custodian.
  - ii. if submitted after hours, placed into the temporary outdoor evidence storage unit.
  - iii. placed by the evidence custodian into a flammable storage cabinet, at the earliest convenience.

### B. Packaging items for submission:

- 1. The submitting deputy will note on the package:
  - a. the WCSO case number,
  - b. date of submission into evidence,
  - c. the submitting deputy's name, and
  - d. the item number where the particular item appears on the evidence report form.
- 2. Packages should be sealed with clear packing tape and the deputy's signature or initials shall cover both the tape and the package.

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3. Property of different types should be packaged separately.
4. The Evidence Custodian may refuse acceptance of evidence or property.
  - a. An Evidence Custodian's may refuse to accept property or evidence if:
    - i. the evidence/property packaging is improperly labeled,
    - ii. the evidence/property is improperly packaged, or
    - iii. if the Evidence Form is not properly filled out or contains discrepancies.
  - b. In the case of a submission that is rejected by the evidence custodian, the custodian will attempt to contact the submitting deputy by phone or written notice. This notification will explain the refusal, and ask the deputy to return to the Office ASAP to make the proper corrections. Notification may also be made to the submitting deputy's supervisor.

### C. Evidence Report:

1. The Evidence Form must be completed as completely as possible, including:
  - a. any instructions for the evidence custodian, and
  - b. a complete description of the items in the "Description" section of the form, including; make, model, serial numbers and other descriptive information.
2. Separate Evidence Forms are required for firearms, drugs, money and jewelry.

### C. Temporary and Final Disposition of Property

1. Refer to Section 56.6.3 - *Temporary Release*
2. Refer to Section 56.8-9 - *Permanent Release*