

Medina Police Department

Subject: Property Room / Evidence Control	Policy Number: 4110	Property Room 4110
Reference: International Association of Chiefs of Police	Pages: 4	
Personnel: Sworn and Non-Sworn Personnel		
Issue Date: 04-24-06	Revised Date: 11-17-2020	

4110.1 - PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for maintaining the integrity of the evidentiary chain of custody.

4110.2 – POLICY

It is the policy of the Medina Police Department to ensure that evidence and property in its custody can be properly secured and stored, readily retrieved, and that any changes in its custody have been properly and fully documented.

All petty misdemeanor evidence will be destroyed after two years from the date of incident.

4110.3 – DEFINITIONS

4110.3-1 – Chain of Evidence: The continuity of the custody of physical evidence – from time of original collection to final disposal – which may be introduced in a judicial proceeding. (Chain of Custody)

4110.3-2 – Impounding Officer: The member of the Medina Police Department who initially receives the evidence and initiates the chain of custody.

4110.3-3 – Physical Evidence: Any substance or material found or recovered in connection with a criminal investigation.

4110.3-4 – Evidence Custodian: Medina Police Department member accountable for control and maintenance of all evidence and property accepted by or stored in the evidence room.

4110.3-5 – Evidence Room: Facilities utilized by the Medina Police Department to store evidence and property.

4110.4 - PROCEDURE

4110.4-1 – Processing Evidence

Any member of the Medina Police Department who has evidence or property to be placed in the evidence room shall utilize the LETG evidence management system to generate a label that will be affixed to the item of evidence bag or box containing the evidence item. The impounding officer shall properly handle, mark, and package all evidence or property, and transport all physical evidence or property to the evidence processing room and secure in an evidence intake locker.

Evidence of a hazardous nature shall be appropriately packaged and stored in accordance with established agency policy. Such substances include but are not limited to items which may have been exposed to or contaminated by communicable diseases, hazardous chemicals or waste products, or explosives or highly combustible products. Where appropriate, the evidence custodian will make arrangements and assume responsibility for storage and control of such substances outside the evidence room.

4110.4-2 – Impounding Evidence

The evidence custodian shall be responsible for receiving, storing, maintaining, releasing, and accounting for all inventory of evidence in compliance with established agency policy.

The inventory shall include all information necessary to both document and ensure the integrity of the chain of custody. All drugs should be weighed, and monies counted prior to impoundment, and should be recorded on the inventory.

The evidence custodian shall be responsible for developing and maintaining a master file of all evidence invoices and evidence tags completed.

4110.4-3 – Storage of Evidence

The evidence custodian shall assign a storage location to each item of evidence and record this information on the evidence receipt and evidence tag.

Evidence requiring added security, to include money, precious metals, jewelry, gemstones, weapons, narcotics, and dangerous drugs shall be stored in a separate secured area.

Perishables shall be stored in a refrigerator or other suitable container.

4110.4-4 – Access to the Evidence Room

Only members of the Medina Police Department authorized by the Chief of Police may enter the evidence room.

4110.4-5 – Inspections of the Evidence Room

On a quarterly basis, the supervisor of the evidence custodian shall make an inspection of the evidence storage facilities and policies to ensure adherence to appropriate policies and procedures.

Unannounced inspections of evidence storage areas shall be conducted as directed by the agency's Chief of Police.

An annual inventory of evidence held by the Medina Police Department shall be conducted by a commanding officer (appointed by the chief executive officer), not directly connected with evidence control.

4110.4-6 – Recording Transfers of Custody

The evidence custodian shall be responsible for developing and maintaining a file that documents all changes in custody of physical evidence. The file shall be capable of readily identifying the individual or organization currently maintaining custody of the evidence.

All transfers of physical evidence shall be tracked electronically.

Members of the Medina Police Department who assume custody of evidence from the evidence room bear full responsibility for ensuring its security, proper storage, and maintenance, and for the ready retrieval of such evidence upon demand.

4110.4-7 – Disposal of Evidence

When no longer needed for evidentiary purposes, all evidence, with the exception of firearms and contraband, shall be returned to its lawful owner *unless title to the evidence is transferred to the jurisdiction by court order* or the lawful owner fails to claim the evidence. In such cases the agency may, as permitted under state law:

1. Destroy it;
2. Dispose of it by public auction; or
3. Retain it for use by the jurisdiction.

Firearms and other non-drug contraband shall be physically destroyed unless:

1. Court order authorizes use of the item by this agency; or
2. The firearm is required by state law to be returned to its lawful owner
3. The firearm will be disposed of according to state law.

The Chief of Police or designee shall designate an investigator to monitor the entire drug destruction process and:

1. On the date of destruction, monitor the loading of the items to be destroyed, accompany the items to the destruction site and observe the destruction process.
2. If any discrepancies are found before the drugs are destroyed, the assigned investigator shall immediately notify the chief executive officer, who shall immediately initiate an appropriate internal affairs investigation.
3. After the completion of the destruction process, submit a report to the Chief of Police which shall include:
 - a) The date, time, and location of the destruction
 - b) An inventory of the items destroyed
 - c) A list of those present at the destruction
4. All released and destroyed property will be documented.

