

City of Ceres

Police Department



Evidence Packaging

Manual

A How-to Guide

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INTRODUCTION

Appropriate packaging and labeling of property and evidence serves many functions that are critical to the successful operation of the criminal justice system. Every item must be packaged precisely and securely in order to meet the following objectives:

- To keep the evidence as close to its original condition as possible.
- To prevent the loss or damage to evidence.
- To prevent contamination and/or inadmissibility in court.
- To preserve the individual identity of evidence for court presentation.
- To protect against cross-transfer:
 - Suspect to victim
 - Victim to suspect
 - Scene to scene
 - Item to item

GOALS OF EVIDENCE PACKAGING

- Protects personnel from possible hazards associated with evidence:
 - Accidental firearm discharge
 - Biohazards
 - Sharp objects
 - Health hazards associated with exposure to mold
 - Wet plant material
- Correctly identifies evidence with respect to:
 - Evidence description: What is it?
 - Evidence source
 - Origin – where was evidence when it was collected
 - Custodial Agency
 - Chain of custody
 - Provides a unique identifier so it cannot be confused with any other evidence item
 - Laboratory case and item number
- Can indicate
 - What processing is needed
 - For example: “Fingerprint processing required”
 - Required or preferred storage conditions
 - “Store at room temperature”
 - “Store frozen”

PURPOSE of this MANUAL

The Ceres Police Department is responsible for establishing policies and procedures which serve to ensure property seized from the public is safely and efficiently processed, secured and maintained for admissibility in court, and returned to the owner or otherwise disposed of in accordance with state law.

This manual is intended to serve as a guide for members of the Ceres Police Department and Property and Evidence personnel. It is a complete outline of all procedures and policies regarding the packaging and booking of property and evidence.

This manual is considered a living document. As legislative changes occur with respect to evidence handling, these procedures will change as well. Other changes may be necessary at times to reflect changes in policies of the police department or in physical locations of storage facilities.

RIGHT OF REFUSAL

The Property and Evidence Unit has the authority to refuse improperly documented, labeled, or packaged property. A notice of correction will be sent to the booking officer through email or the Officer Notification Module in RIMS.

For the purpose of this manual, property is defined and categorized as follows:

- **Evidence** is any property that comes into custody of a police department employee when such property may tend to prove or disprove the commission of a crime, or the identity of the suspect, pursuant to an official criminal investigation.
 - **Examples of evidence:** Physical, chemical, biological or photographic evidence left at the scene of a crime by a victim, or suspect; recovered (stolen) property; or suspected stolen property.
- **Property for Safekeeping** is non-evidentiary property that is placed in the custody of a law enforcement agency for temporary protection on behalf of the owner. Notification will be sent to the owner (if releasable) by the Property officer. Property will be held 60 days and then disposed of.
 - All items being booked as safekeeping should be thoroughly checked for illegal effects, currency, and food items. Food determined to be perishable shall NOT be booked into the Property Room.
 - If items are considered biohazard, please clearly mark the package with a biohazard sticker.
- **Found Property** is any property of non-evidentiary value, that is placed in the custody of an employee of this department, and whose rightful owner may, or may not be known. Due diligence must be exercised to locate or identify the rightful owner. If no owner is found, the department will dispose of the property in a manner prescribed by law (usually after 90 days of receipt). The reporting officer should make every effort to contact the owner of the property, making sure the name, address and phone numbers are listed in the report. If there is an ID with the property, list the date of birth and driver's license and/or social security number in the report. This will save the Property officer from having to open the sealed packaging.
 - The items should also be checked for any illegal effects, currency, or food items. Food items deemed perishable shall not be booked into the property room.
- **Property for Destruction** is any property, including firearms and ammunition, released by a citizen to the City of Ceres Police Department for disposal. Officers can book any item of non-evidentiary value for destruction.

FORMS AND PACKAGING SUPPLIES

Forms are located on the center floor officer briefing room and the basement officer booking annex.

Forms

1) Physical Evidence Submission Form (BFS-1) (*Bureau of Forensic Services*)

- a) To be completed and submitted by the officer with evidence that is to be forwarded to DOJ for specific testing. (e.g. 187pc, 245pc and 261pc cases). Please refer to detective's division for further instruction.

The form is a "Physical Evidence Submission Form" from the Bureau of Forensic Services. It includes fields for:

- RELATED BFS CASE #
- BFS CASE #
- State of California
Department of Justice
Bureau of Forensic Services
- Physical Evidence Submission Form
(Instructions for use of form located on reverse side.)
- INFORMATION AND
REPORT SECURITY ROUTINE AGENCY ONLY AGENT ONLY
- SUBMITTING AGENCY: AGENCY CASE NO:
- COUNTY OF PROSECUTION: RELATED AGENCIES/CASE NUMBER(S):
- OFFENSE(S): DATE OF INCIDENT: DATE NEEDED: REASON:
- INVESTIGATING OFFICER: PHONE: FAX:
- INVESTIGATING OFFICER - EMAIL ADDRESS:
- S. V. SUBJECTS DATE OF
OTHER, Last name First Name M I BIRTH CII #
OFFICER (LATENTS AND DNA)
- EVIDENCE SUBMITTED
- Line Item Number Description of Evidence
(One item per line when possible) Comments or Requests
for Service
- Line/Item
NUMBER Received From
(SIGN NAME LEGIBLY) Delivered to
(SIGN NAME LEGIBLY) DATE

At the bottom, it says: PLEASE SUBMIT A POLICE REPORT OR ATTACH A SEPARATE SHEET WITH A SUMMARY OF THE CASE FOR CRIMINALISTICS CASES
BFS LABORATORIES SHALL DECIDE THE SPECIFIC METHOD OF ANALYSIS

Page 1 of 2

BFS-1 Document #PF-0028, Revision 3, Issue Date 08/03/2011

2) Property report/receipt

- a) Provide to owners/finders of items taken as evidence/safekeeping/found.
- b) May be used as a receipt at a residence where a search warrant was served.
- c) The reverse side of this form provides specific information and instruction to property owners on how to retrieve their property.

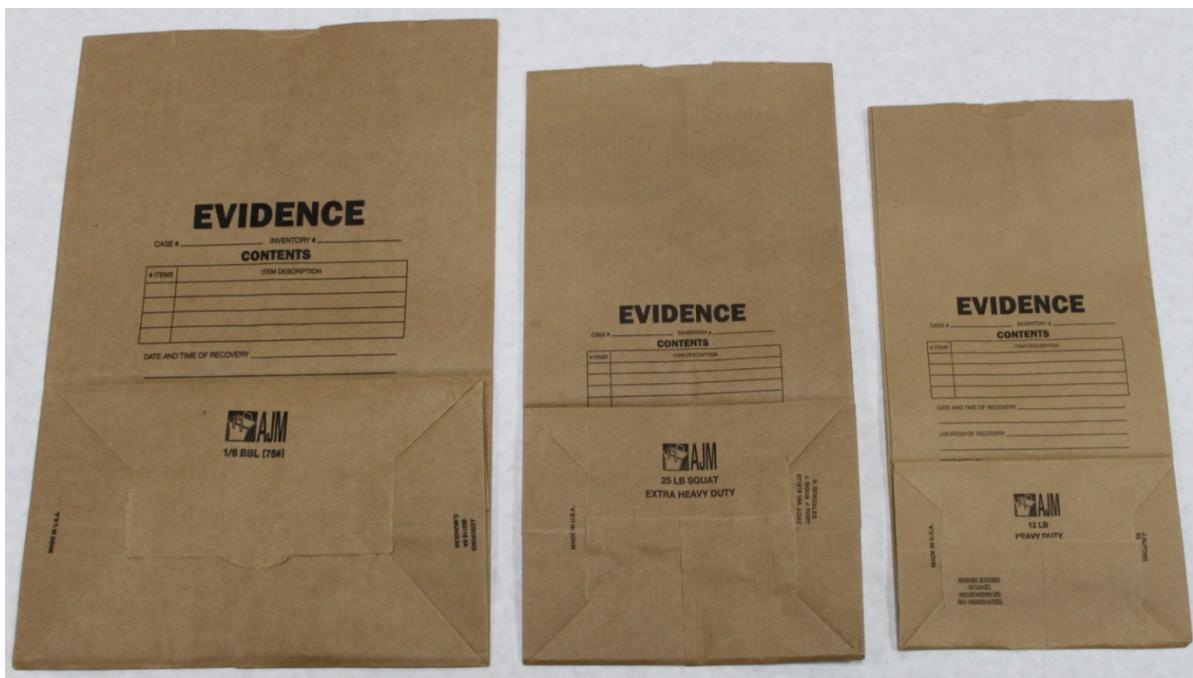
UCR CODE		 CERES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY 2727 THIRD STREET CERES CA, 95307 PROPERTY REPORT / RECEIPT PROPERTY DESK 538-5744										ORIGINAL FILE NUMBER	
DATE		CODE	NAME: LAST			FIRST	MIDDLE	DOB.	PAGE: <input type="text"/> OF: <input type="text"/>				
CAD EVENT NO.		HGT	WGT	HAIR	EYES	DL / ID NUMBER		STATE	<input type="checkbox"/> HOLD FOR OBSERVATION <input type="checkbox"/> HOLD W&I (5150 / 8102) <input type="checkbox"/> FOUND PROPERTY <input type="checkbox"/> EMBEZZLED <input type="checkbox"/> DOMESTIC VIOLENCE <input type="checkbox"/> EVIDENCE <input type="checkbox"/> SAFEKEEPING <input type="checkbox"/> STOLEN				
BIN NO.		ADDRESS			CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE						
TYPE OF CRIME		HOME PHONE			BUSINESS PHONE		EMPLOYER						
NO	QTY	DESCRIPTION/MAKE/MODEL/COLOR			VALUE	SER. NO.	CAL	TYP	FCN	ID			
TOTAL \$													
FOUND PROPERTY CALIFORNIA CIVIL CODE 2080 REQUIRES THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT TO BE SIGNED BY THE FINDER					RELEASE DATA (PROPERTY BUREAU ONLY) I hereby acknowledge that I have received the item(s) listed below from Ceres Department of Public Safety.								
I DECLARE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE ABOVE LISTED ITEMS HAVE BEEN SURRENDERED, AND I DON T KNOW WHO THE OWNER IS.					I declare under penalty of perjury that I am the owner, or authorized by the owner, to take possession of these items.								
SIGNATURE					Name: _____ DL/ID _____ Item No. _____ Phone _____ Signature: _____ Rel. By _____								
NARRATIVE:													
DATE TIME RECEIVED	ITEM NO.	BIN NO.	DATE-TIME OUT	RELEASED TO	DATE -TIME RETURNED	RETURNED TO							
PROPERTY OFFICER													
OFFICER	DATE	W/C	DATE										

Packaging Supplies

- 1) Barcode
 - a) Printed in RIMS and must be affixed to each package for each individual item in the package.



- 2) Paper bags
 - a) Small (7x4x13 1/2")
 - b) Medium (8x5 1/4 x15 1/2")
 - c) Large (12x7x17")



3) Texas kraft bags - *Option for clothing, bats, swords, wooden sticks, metal bars, broom handles, bolt cutters, etc.*

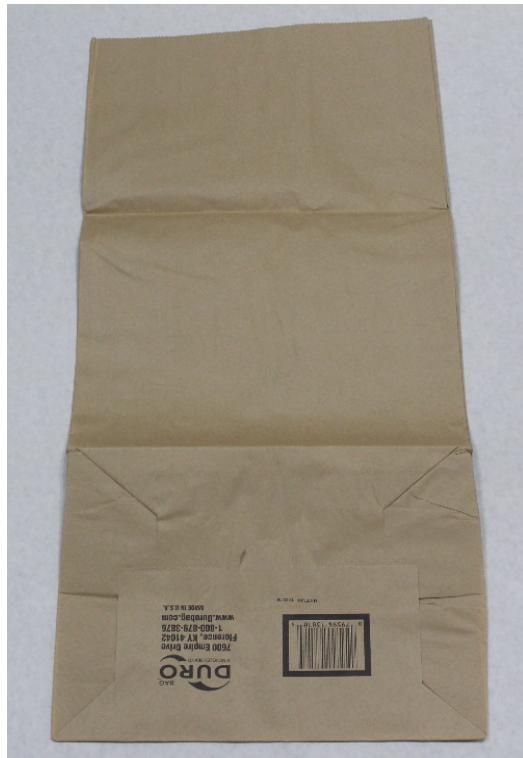
- a) Small (21x30x7")



- b) Medium (21x44x7")



c) Large (34x16")



d) Kraft bag (9x61") - *Option for clothing, bats, swords, wooden sticks, metal bars, broom handles, bolt cutters, etc.*



4) Butcher paper (*located in Detectives*)



5) Plastic bags

- a) 3x3 (For DOJ envelopes only)
- b) 3x5 (For DOJ envelopes only)
- c) 4x6 (For DOJ envelopes only)
- d) 6x8 (For DOJ envelopes only)



6) Roll of plastic (21 1/2 x30") *Heat seal option for large or odd shaped items, or DOJ samples.*

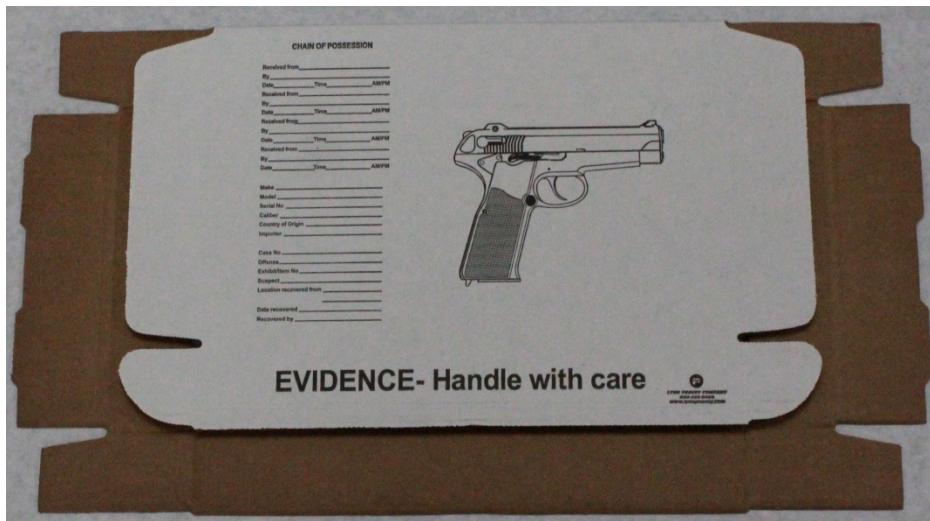


7) Biohazard bag

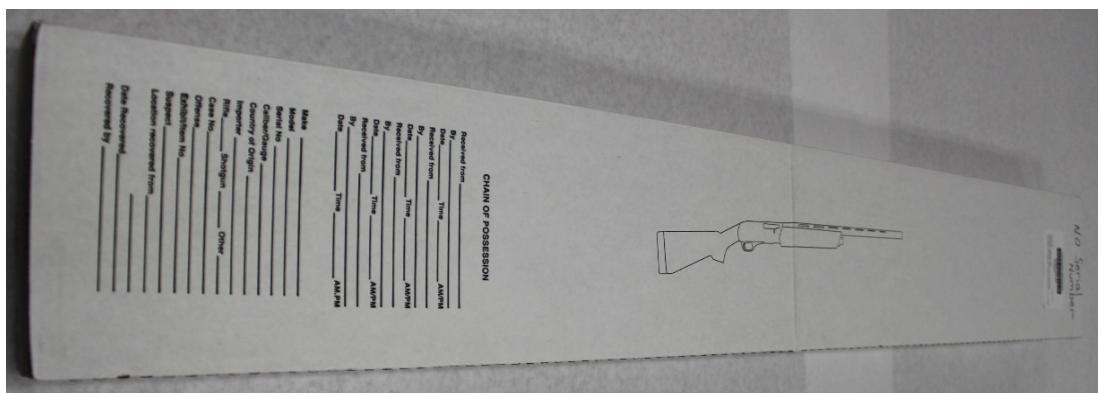


8) Boxes

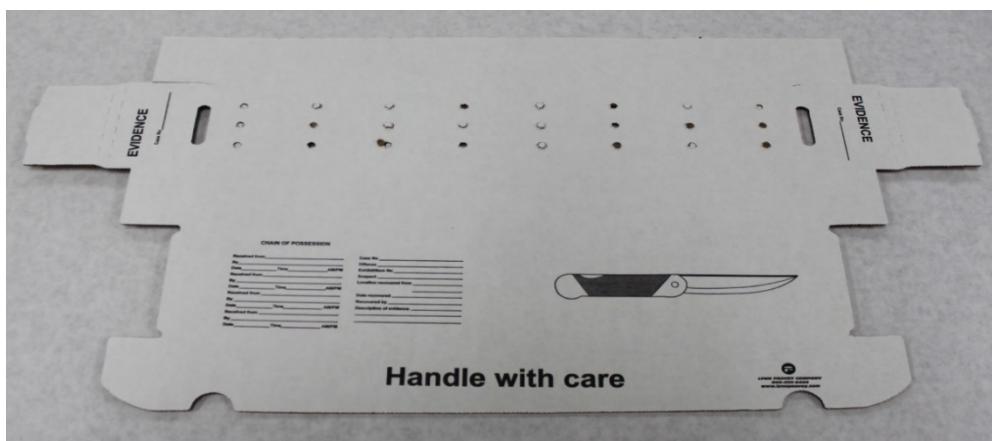
a) Handgun



b) Long gun



c) Knife



d) Blood Kit



e) Urine Kit



9) Crime Scene/Detective Supplies

a) Swabs



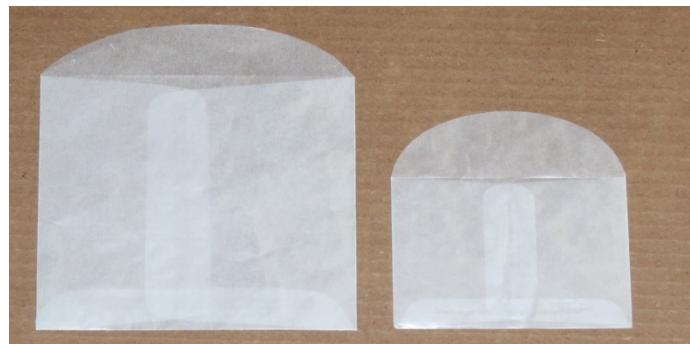
b) Swab box



c) Gunshot residue kit



d) Glassine envelopes (3x5) and (2x4)



e) Collection jars



f) Evidence collection boxes



g) Evidence tin



h) Water sterile applicator



10) Labels

a) Firearm Unload Safe



b) Biohazard



c) Warning (Glass, Blades, Needles)



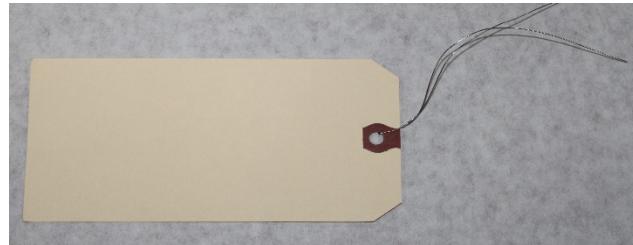
d) Suspected fentanyl



11) Tags

a) Wire tags

i) Used to attach to large items that cannot be packaged (i.e., computers, bicycles, and toolboxes).



12) Twine

a) Use to secure large items together or to attach a wire tag to an item.



13) Zip ties – 8" and 11"

a) Use to create a secure lock on items. Can be used to secure a weapon.



14) Evidence tape

- a) All packaging must be sealed. If the items are evidence, use the tape printed as "Evidence". All other items for release, destruction, etc. can be sealed using the clear packing tape.
- b) DO NOT USE STAPLES – they can create the risk of injury when the bags are handled.

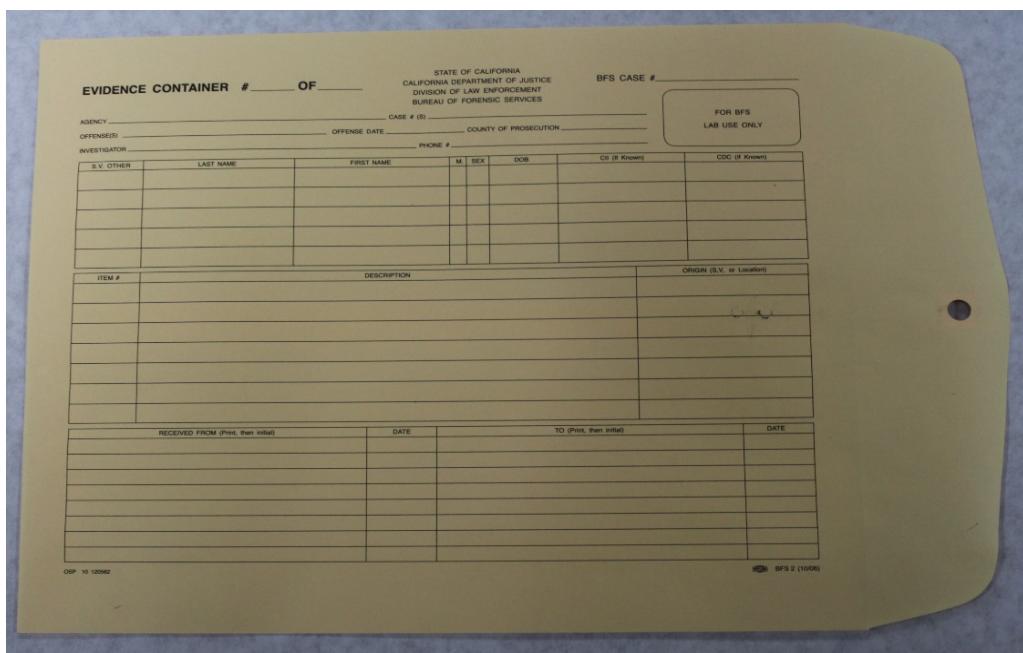


15) Envelopes

- a) Currency (6x9)

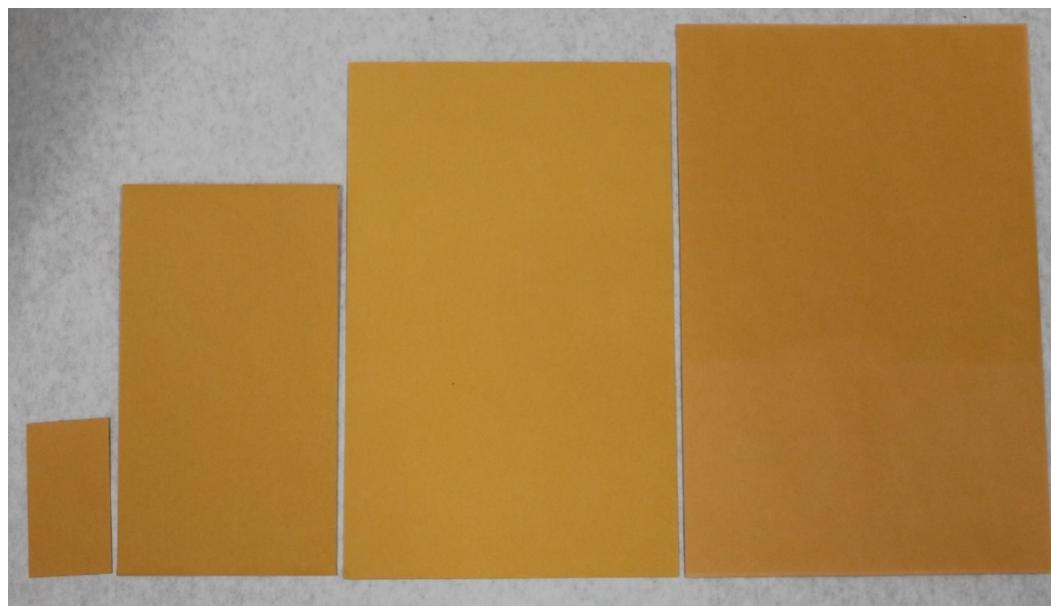


b) DOJ envelope – used for Narcotics/Marijuana testing



c) Manilla envelopes

- (1) Manila envelope Extra small – (2 1/2 x3 1/2)
- (2) Manila envelope Small (6x9)
- (3) Manila envelope Medium (9x12)
- (4) Manila envelope Large (10x13)



d) Compact Disc sleeve



16) Vials

- a) Small (black top)
- b) Medium (purple top)
- c) Large (red top)
- d) Snap Cap (clear)



17) Heat sealer



AUTHORIZED STORAGE LOCATIONS

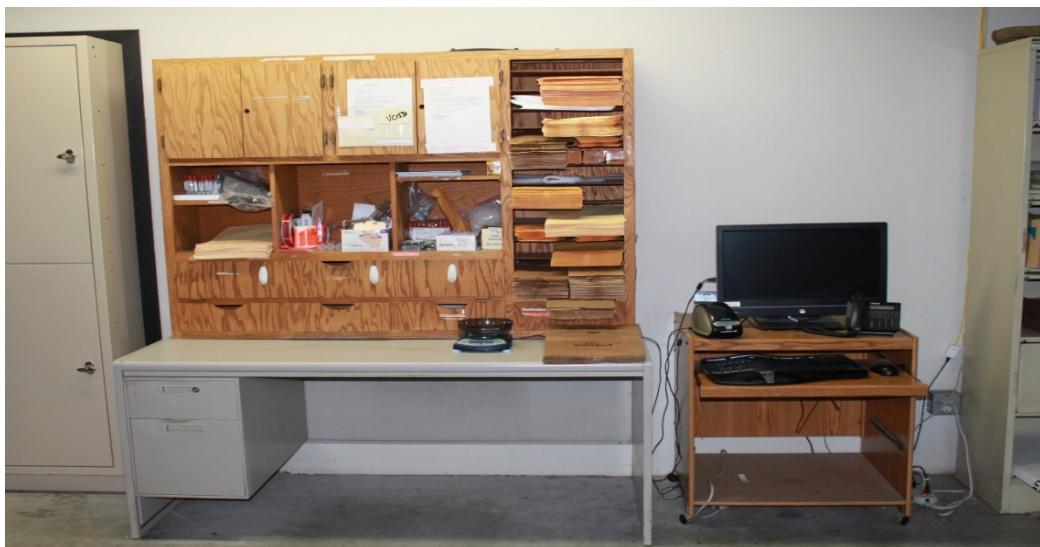
The following are storage areas for all types of evidence. Use the appropriate size lockers.

1) Basement annex lockers

- a) Property and evidence may be submitted by placing the items into a storage locker located in the basement annex.
- b) The lockers are "keyless". Once an item is placed inside the locker, close the door, and turn the handle to the locked position. Once this is done, the locker cannot be opened again.
- c) Available lockers are identified when the lock is in a horizontal position. Unavailable lockers are identified by a vertical position.



2) Basement annex





3) **The refrigerator unit** is on the lower left side of the evidence lockers and should be used for rape kits, biological samples and/or anything needing refrigeration.



- a) Clothing collected from sexual assault cases can be stored in the evidence lockers which maintain adequate temperature.
- b) If you have evidence that is too large to place into an evidence locker, leave in property annex booking area or choose another storage location in the location drop down menu in RIMS.
- c) If all lockers are unavailable and you need to submit items after hours, please contact the watch commander for further instructions.

4) **Bicycle rack**

- a) Located in the officer booking area. Bicycles should be temporarily placed in the bicycle rack with the barcode properly attached until property officer can retrieve for storage.



5) **Temporary holding locker**

a) Located off the patrol briefing room. Evidence can be stored here for **TEMPORARY** holding only. **In no circumstances** should guns, drugs or money be stored after the officer's shift.



6) **Detective sallyport**

- a) Used for overly large or hazardous items with evidentiary value (e.g. cars, scooters, motorized bikes, etc.).



7) **Outside bicycle lockers**

- a) Located across from detectives sallyport. Used for large quantities of marijuana plants and samples.



8) **Drying cabinet**

a) Located in detectives sallyport. Used as a temporary storage location to dry wet, bloody, and/or biohazard items. ***It's the officer's responsibility for packaging and booking dried items.***



9) **Connex box**

a) Located at the range at 4200 Morgan Road (access from Blaker Road). Items that create a potential risk for storage can be taken to the range and stored in the connex box. Example: Biohazard Homicide evidence, cars, car parts, large marijuana plants, grow lights, etc. (use detective's discretion).



10) **Corporation yard** (Harold St. location)

a) Items that are too heavy or hazardous to be in the building can be stored here.



ELEMENTS OF PACKAGING, LABELING, SEALING, OPENING AND RESEALING

- 1) What type of packaging is optimal?
 - a) **Size** of container is important
 - i) Too small and the packaging is likely to fail over time.

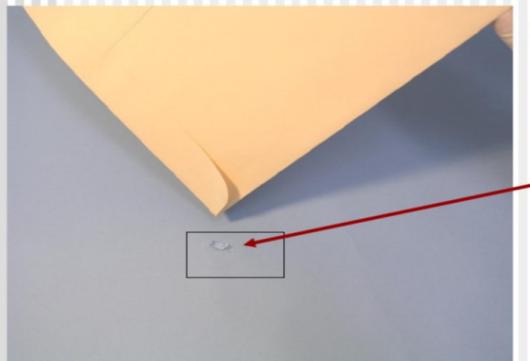
Elements of Packaging Evidence



- This envelope is **too small** for the evidence it is holding

- ii) Too big and evidence can be dispersed throughout container and difficult to recover (e.g. powder, trace evidence).

Glass Fragments Deposited into Large Envelope



- Small glass fragments can be lost from poorly sealed envelopes. Ideally, these fragments would be packaged into a bindle first

- b) **Always** choose the appropriate size packaging to contain the property being booked.

Protocol for Sealing Evidentiary Items

- 1) Sealing evidence properly is a requirement of most crime labs.
- 2) Ways evidence can be sealed
 - a) Heat seal
 - b) Tape seal
 - c) Lock/clasp seal
- 3) To ensure security and document the chain of custody, all seals must be initialed and dated.
It is preferable that the initials and date be written parallel (horizontal) on the evidence tape, not across (vertical).
- 4) Utilize the sealing tape authorized by the department located in the evidence booking area.
- 5) Stapling DOES NOT constitute a sealed package and is PROHIBITED.

How to **Correctly** Seal Evidence



- Tape seal across entire "flap" of bag
Seal is initialed and dated

How **Not** to Seal Evidence



- Seal should **completely** seal bag flap

How **Not** to Seal Evidence

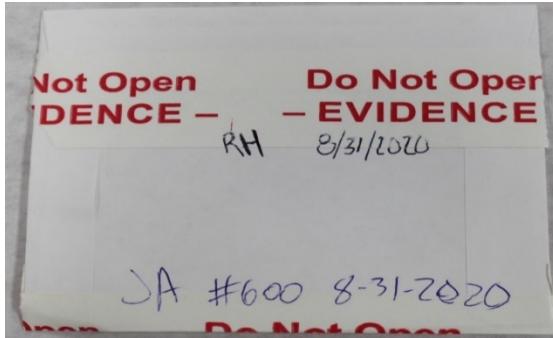


- Staples are not an appropriate evidence "seal"

Protocol for Opening and Resealing Evidentiary Items

- 1) An examination of the outside of the package should reveal a complete chronology of everyone who opened the package and when they did so. This helps ensure the integrity of the chain of custody is maintained.
- 2) Leave the original seal intact.
- 3) Select a new area on the package to open.
 - a) If you must remove part of the envelope, place the cut off piece inside the packaging.
- 4) If the original packaging has been opened numerous times and cannot be properly resealed, the item should be repacked:
 - a) Make sure to put the original barcode number on the evidence label on the new packaging.
 - b) Place the original packaging inside the new packaging, along with the evidence.
- 5) To ensure security, every seal must include sealer's initials and date. When using evidence tape initial across the tape and onto the package.

Sample #1

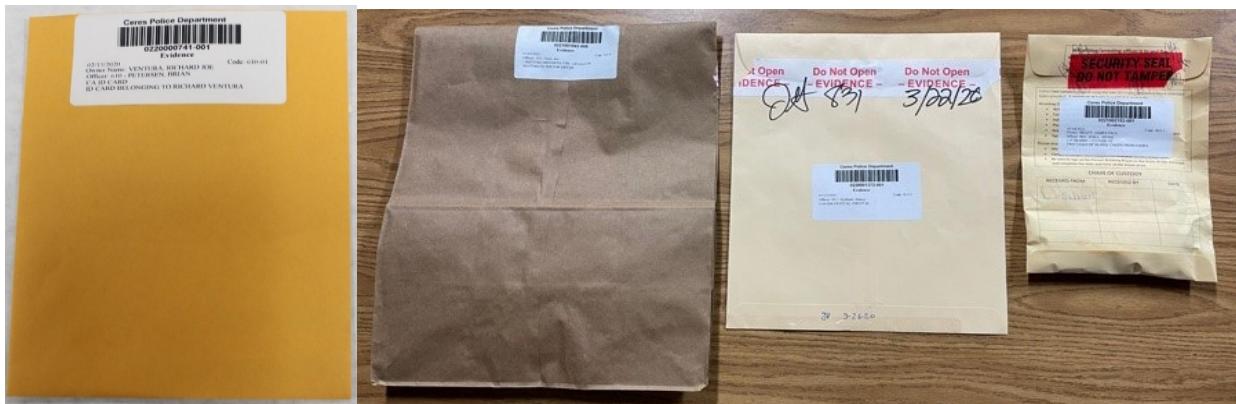


Sample #2



Package Labeling

Barcodes are to be placed on the top center portion (front side) of all evidence envelopes and bags. The exception is DOJ envelopes and Blood/Urine envelopes. (See example below) barcodes are to be placed on the back of the envelope (so the chain of custody section on the front of the envelope is not blocked).



Notice – Barcode placement for DOJ envelopes goes on backside of package

SAMPLE PACKAGING

1) ALCOHOL

- a) In the case of a misdemeanor, it is acceptable to photograph the container of alcohol, pour out the contents and discard the container.
- b) If the nature of the offense requires the alcoholic container to be booked into property, adhere to the following:
 - i) Always choose the proper sized packaging for the property being booked.
 - ii) Place the evidence into the packaging.
 - iii) Seal the packaging, initial, and date.
 - iv) Secure in the evidence locker.

2) AMMUNITION

- a) Place all ammunition in the smallest envelope. List all caliber rounds separately.
(example: 9MM, 38 CAL) ***Ammunition should not be packaged with firearms.***
- b) Packaging a large quantity of ammunition is dependent upon how it is delivered to the police department. Factory boxes are preferred, and these may be placed in a large kraft bag with a barcode affixed to the front portion of the bag.
- c) Ammunition submitted in a bulk commercial box, or military ammunition can be submitted with a wire tag (with barcode affixed) attached to the handle.
- d) Live ammunition in large quantities of more than 100 rounds should be transported to the range.



3) ARSON

- a) Evidence submitted for arson testing must be properly packaged in a coated aluminum can.
- b) Size of the can should be proportional to the size of the sample.
- c) Cans should be sealed with the lid, and then sealed with evidence tape (initial/date over tape).

Please Note: Arson evidence will be stored in the outside bicycle lockers.



4) AUTO PARTS

- a) If it fits, package in appropriate size evidence paper bag with the barcode affixed to the outside of the bag.
- b) If item is too large for a bag, place a wire tag (with barcode affixed) using twine or a zip tie through a mounting hole.
 - i) Use packaging tape if unable to use zip tie, wire, or string.
- c) Small pieces should be placed in a bag and attached to the bumper as an additional item.





5) BACKPACKS

- a) The booking officer shall inventory **ALL** backpacks.
- b) Contraband items shall be removed and marked for destruction or held as evidence as appropriate.
- c) Cash and coins shall be removed from all backpacks and booked separately in a currency envelope.
- d) Attach a wire tag (with barcode affixed) to the backpack handle.
- e) Place backpack in evidence locker and secure the locker.



6) BICYCLES

a) Bikes

- i) Bicycles not being held for forensic examination can be submitted with a wire tag attached to the handlebars. The wire tag must have the barcode affixed.



b) Bikes – Evidence held for forensic examination

- i) Bicycles being held for forensic examination shall have the seat, handlebar and grips protected by paper bags and/or kraft paper wrap.



c) Bikes - Found property and safekeeping

- i) Most bicycles submitted will fall into these categories. Generally, no bagging of handlebars and seat is necessary.

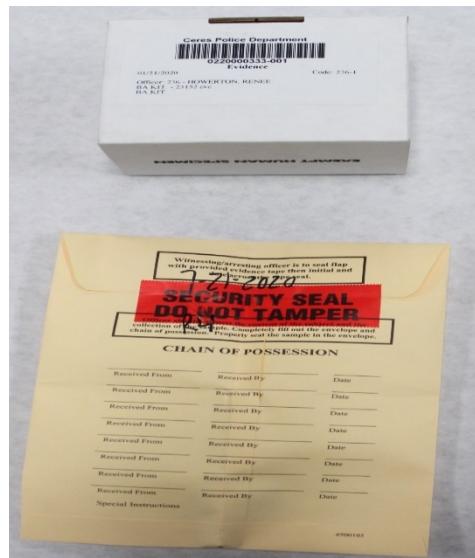
d) Bikes - Special handling

- i) Note the serial number, make, and model description for the report. Some bikes may have a State of California license sticker on the bottom bracket that may help identify the owner.

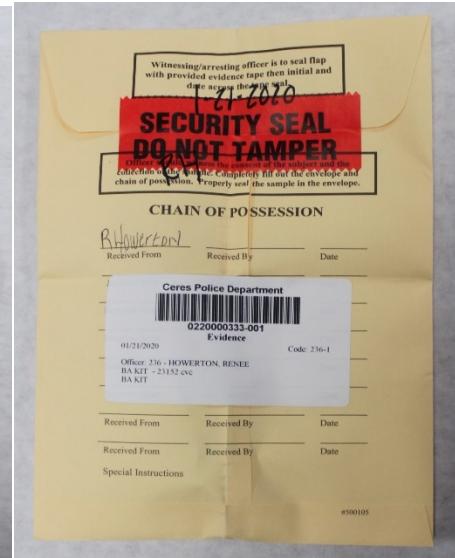
7) BLOOD/URINE/SEXUAL ASSAULT KITS

- 1) Blood/Urine samples
 - a) Deposit all blood/urine kits in the drop box located on the far-left side of the lockers.
- 2) Kit selection
 - a) Empty blood/urine kits are stored on the far-right shelf against the wall in the officer booking area.
 - b) White box
 - i) *Driving offenses* involving alcohol, (e.g., 23152, 23153, 192 pc).
 - ii) Samples having an alcohol concentration less than or equal to 0.08% are automatically forwarded to DOJ Sacramento toxicology lab for drug testing.
 - iii) *Driving offenses* involving alcohol, drugs, or alcohol and drugs.
 - iv) *Non-DUI offenses*, (e.g. 647(f), 1203.2, 245 pc), etc.
 - (1) Samples are analyzed for alcohol first, then are automatically submitted to the DOJ Sacramento toxicology lab for drug testing regardless of the alcohol results. A BFS-1 (Bureau of Forensic Services) form is required with all non-alcohol offenses.
 - c) White rectangular box
 - i) *11550 H&S* (follow booking procedure below). Sample will be mailed to an independent lab in Clovis, California.
- 3) Booking procedure for blood alcohol/urine kits.
 - a) Complete all fields on the front of the DOJ envelope and sign the Chain of Possession on the back side of the envelope.
 - b) Place the sample DOJ in the envelope.
 - c) Seal the envelope flap with evidence tape.
 - d) Initial and date across the tape seal of the envelope.
 - e) Envelope can either be placed in blood/alcohol box with the barcode affixed to the backside (See sample #1) **or** submitted without the box with the barcode affixed to the back center of the envelope (see sample #2). A box is primarily used to send samples through U.S. mail to DOJ.
 - f) Book the blood vial/urine sample into the drop box.





Sample #1



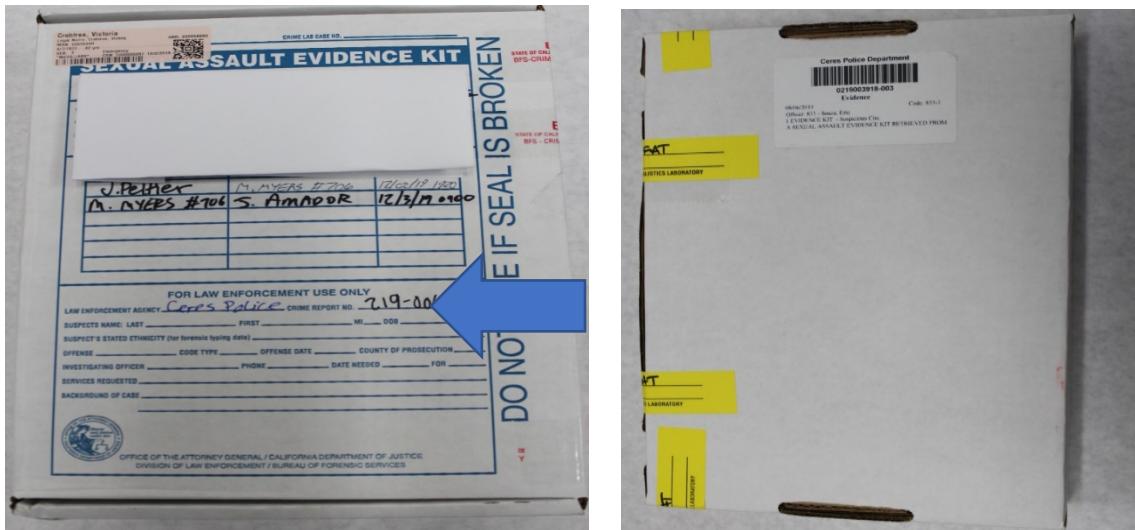
Sample #2



11550 Box

4) Sexual Assault Kit

- a) Sexual assault examination kits are provided by the examining facility. Additional blood or urine samples may also be collected during the examination.
- b) Ensure all items are labeled and sealed prior to leaving the examining facility.
- c) Blood samples, urine samples, and associated paperwork should be packaged and sealed separately from the kit.
- d) Enter kit into RIMS Property section. Enter blood samples, urine samples, clothing, and associated paperwork as **separate** items.
- e) Place the Ceres PD case number under the "Law Enforcement Use Only" section listed as "Crime Report Number". (see arrow below)



- f) Place a barcode sticker on the top center back side of the kit.



8) BODILY FLUIDS

a) Evidence that is wet or that may contain bodily fluids (blood, semen, etc.) must be air-dried completely. Such items should be packaged in paper bags/boxes or envelopes. DO NOT USE plastic of any kind. Affix biohazard emblem to the packaging.

9) BREAKABLE ITEMS/FRAGILE

- a) Always choose the proper sized packaging for the property being booked.
- b) Wrap the item in bubble wrap (or double wrap the item in butcher paper) before placing in evidence bag.
- c) Once the wrapping is placed inside the evidence bag, seal the bag with tape. Initial and date the seal.
- d) Secure the item in the locker.



10) BUCCAL SWABS (Buccal means "of or relating to the mouth or cheek")

a) Known samples can be collected by rubbing sterile swabs against the cheek, inside of the mouth. Air-dry and package in a swab container or paper envelope/bag. Do not package in a plastic or zip lock bag. The buccal swabs from each individual should be packaged separately.

11) BULKY/LARGE ITEMS/LONG ITEMS

- a) If the item can fit into a bag or envelope:
 - i) Place the item into the proper sized bag or envelope.
 - ii) Seal the packaging, initial, and date the seal.
 - iii) Place a barcode sticker on the front side of the package.
- b) If the item is too large to be placed into a bag or envelope (baseball bats, pool cues, shovels, pitchforks, etc.), consideration should be made for the use of a brown paper sleeve or butcher paper (located in detective's division) to protect possible DNA. A wire tag with the barcode affixed should be attached to the item.
- c) Long items not requiring forensic exam may be submitted without packaging.
- d) All sharp edges shall be covered to protect those who subsequently handle the item.
- e) **VERY IMPORTANT:**
 - i) DO NOT lean any long items against the back door of the evidence locker. This prevents injury to property personal when opening the locker from the back side.





12) CLOTHING

- 1) All clothing **MUST** be dry prior to packaging.
- 2) If the clothing is saturated with blood or bodily fluids, the booking officer must hang the item(s) in the dryer in detectives sallyport until completely dry. (See page 77 for drying instructions.)
- 3) Worn or soiled clothing may transmit communicable diseases or parasites and should be handled as biohazards. Place a biohazard sticker on the outside of each bag.
- 4) Place worn clothing items in separate paper bags. For instance, pants, shirts, and shoes would have three bags. Consideration should be made for the use of butcher paper.
- 5) Brand new, unworn clothing items should be placed in a kraft paper bag, no biohazard stickers are required. The bag should be folded with tape covering the folded seam and the officer's initial and date overlapping where the tape meets the seal.

***If you are booking clothing with DNA evidence, make sure to book each item separately to prevent any type of cross-contamination.**



13) COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

- Towers: Affix a wire tag with barcode attached to the back of the tower with a zip tie or affix barcode label directly to the back of the tower.



b) Laptop: If not booked in the original box, place in the appropriate size evidence bag with barcode label affixed to the outside of the box or bag.



c) Monitors: Attach wire tag (with the barcode affixed) to the base of the monitor.
Do not affix stickers to the screen to avoid damaging the screen.



- d) Printers and scanners: Place a wire tag with barcode label affixed directly onto the printer or scanner with clear packaging tape.
- e) Cables: Should be wound and placed in an appropriate size bag with barcode attached.
 - i) TV power cords should be removed and coiled and packaged in a paper bag as a separate item and barcode.
 - ii) Remotes should be packaged separately in an evidence bag with separate barcode.
- f) iPad and tablets: Place in appropriate packaging. Affix barcode to outside of package.

Special Handling

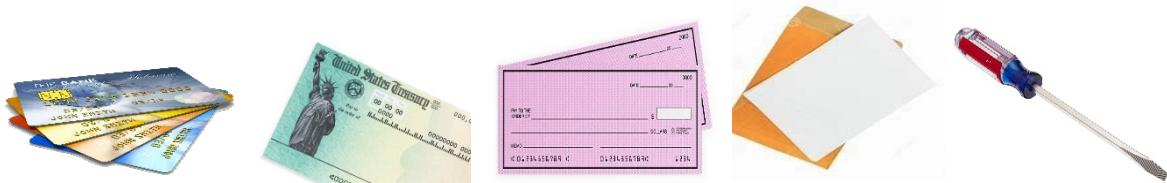
- When collecting computer equipment from the scene, do not manually alter the on/off switch. Simply unplug the computer in the state it resides. This will allow for processing of this equipment later. Place a piece of tape over the power switch to secure it in the position it was at the time of seizure.

14) CONTAINERS, CASES, AND LUGGAGE (CONTAINERS – LOCKED AND CLOSED)

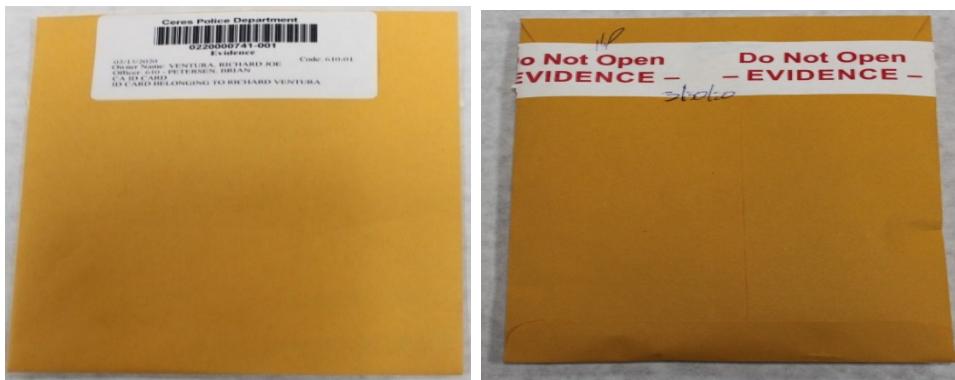
- a) Locked containers and packages described as containing “unknown contents” shall not be accepted.
 - i) Briefcases, metal cases, plastic cases, etc.
- b) Cases should be unlocked prior to booking and labeled with appropriate attached barcode label.
- c) Contents may need to be individually itemized and tagged depending on the type of items found within.



15) CREDIT CARDS/DRIVER'S LICENSE/CHECKS/PHOTOGRAPHS/DOCUMENT/ SMALL FLAT ITEMS



- Place in 6"x9" envelope with the barcode label horizontally at the top of the envelope. Seal the back of the envelope with tape. Initial and date the seal.



16) CURRENCY, U.S. (NON-CURRENCY NOTES, COLLECTABLES)

- All United States money (cash/coin), shall be booked using a currency envelope. If the amount is too large to fit in an envelope, you may use other packaging consistent with normal evidence packaging procedures. In these instances, attach the completed currency envelope on the outside of the package.
- The booking officer shall complete the currency envelope by filling out the denominations of bills and coins contained in the envelope and the total amount contained.
- It is always best to have a two person count for large sums of money.
- Place the legal tender into the currency envelope and seal the package with evidence tape.
- Initial and date the seal.

Note: All currency and coin, regardless of the amount, should be booked separately from all other items of evidence, safekeeping, and found (i.e., purses, backpacks, and wallets).

Counterfeit currency shall be booked in a basic evidence envelope, not a currency envelope. Counterfeit bills should be entered into RIMS/Property section as a "Document", not money. If there is no suspect in a counterfeit currency case or the case will not be prosecuted, please make a note in the RIMS/property section to send the counterfeit notes to Secret Service.



Collectable coins and cards should be maintained in their original packaging when possible. Collectable coins do not require a currency envelope but should be processed as most other pieces of evidence. They should be clearly documented with a detailed description.



Foreign currency shall be packaged in a 6x9 envelope and sealed.

- Foreign and counterfeit currency shall be packaged separately from US currency.

Contaminated currency Coins or cash which have come into contact with a contaminant such as blood or bodily fluids or is heavily contaminated with narcotics.

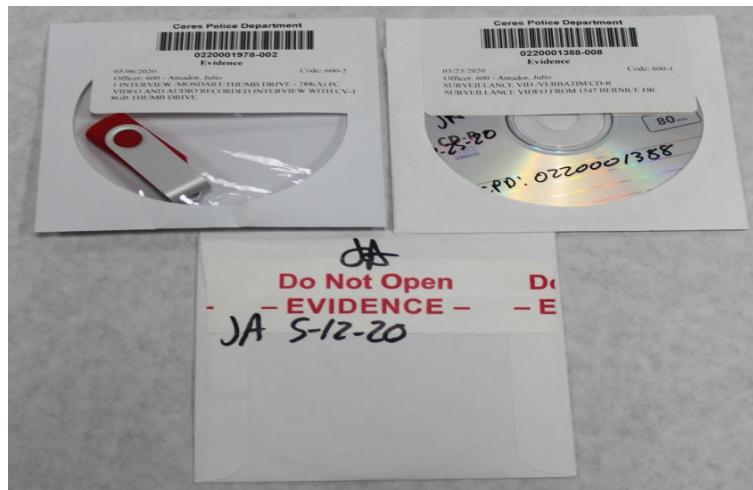
- Shall be booked separately from non-contaminated currency.
- The officer shall place a biohazard sticker on the evidence envelope.

Mutilated currency is cash or coins which are damaged to the point where it is difficult to determine the value of the currency, or where it is not clear that at least of the note is present.

- Mutilated currency (cash and coins) must be booked separately from non-mutilated currency.

17) DIGITAL MEDIA (DVD/CD/THUMB DRIVE)

- a) All digital media on compact discs and thumb drives are stored in a file storage box in the property and evidence Room. For this reason, CD's and thumb drives must be packaged in a special way. Due to space constraints, submit all digital medial sealed in paper CD sleeves only. Do not use any other type of CD containers.
- b) Place the digital media into a CD sleeve.
- c) Place a barcode label on the top front center portion of the sleeve.
- d) Seal the back of the envelope with tape.
- e) Initial and date the seal.



18) DOCUMENTS

- a) Generally, a document may go in an 8x11 envelope. Use the smallest appropriate bag that *FITS WITHOUT FOLDING* the document.



19) DRUG PARAPHERNALIA/SHARPS

- a) Drug paraphernalia taken as part of an investigation/case should be **PHOTOGRAPHED and MARKED FOR DESTRUCTION**. Drug paraphernalia should not be booked into property and evidence under normal circumstances unless there are specific reasons.
- b) A sharp is any object capable of puncturing the skin

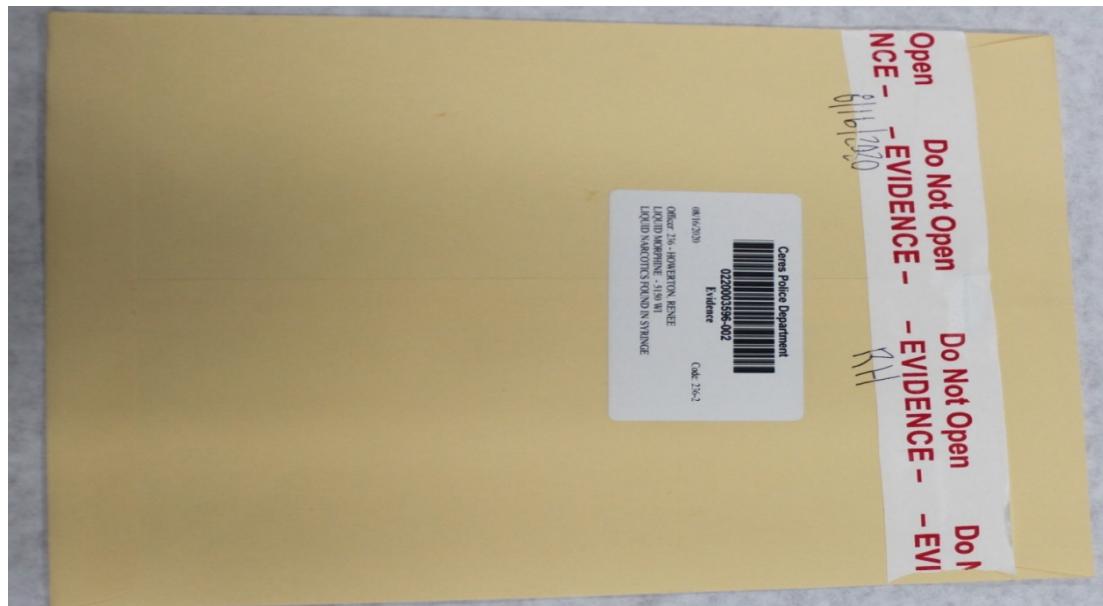
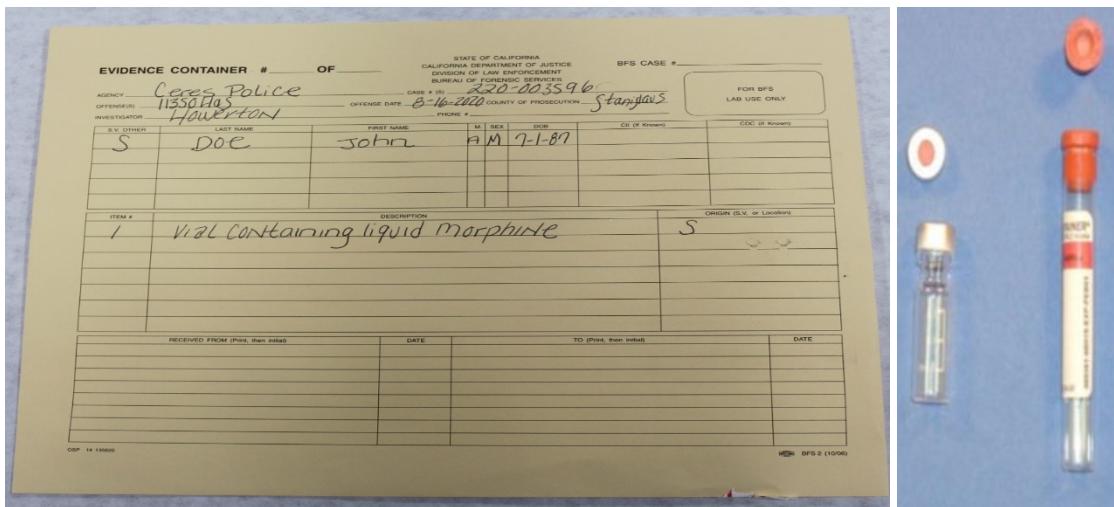


- c) All syringes/glass pipes shall be photographed and destroyed per the district attorney's policy.
- d) If the syringe/glass pipe is **EMPTY** and no lab analysis is required, dispose of the syringe/glass pipe in a sharp's disposable container.



e) Syringes containing liquid:

- If you have a loaded syringe and need the contents to be sent to DOJ for testing, it is the booking officer's responsibility to empty the contents into a glass vial and book it as a separate item. **DOJ WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY SYRINGES.**
- Insert the tip of the syringe into a sealed liquid sample vial.
- Download the contents into the vial and cap the vial.
- Place the vial in a DOJ Narcotics envelope.
- Fill out the front of the envelope.
- Seal the back of the envelope with tape.
- Initial and date the seal.
- Affix barcode on **BACK** top center portion of DOJ envelope.



f) Syringes taken as evidence in a major crime:

- All syringes which are evidence in a major crime (i.e., I87 pc) shall be properly secured and booked into the property section.
- Place the syringe in a biohazard tube and seal with packaging tape. Initial and date the seal.
- Place the entire tube inside an envelope, seal with evidence packaging tape. Initial and date the seal.
- Place the barcode on the front top center of the envelope.



g) Controlled substances

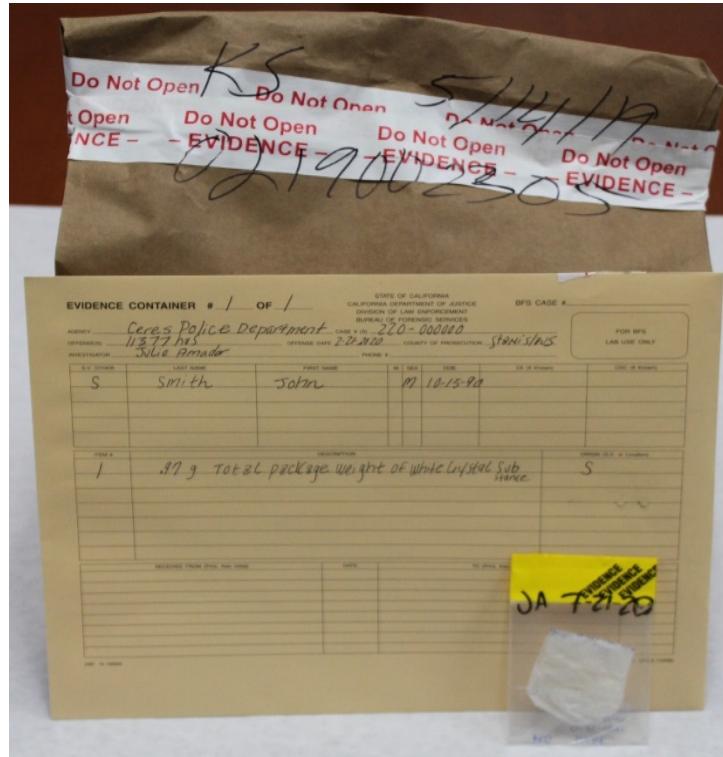
i) ***Evidence, Destruction, Found property, Safekeeping***

- Seal the drugs in the appropriate size envelope.
- Place a barcode label on the front top center portion of the envelope.
- Seal the back of the envelope with tape. Initial and date the seal.



- **Lab testing**

- Package controlled substance in the appropriate envelope or plastic baggie. (plastic baggies are only to be used for testing samples)
- Do not use sealed plastic containers to package fresh or wet plant material for long term storage – evidence can get moldy. Use paper envelopes or bags – they allow fresh plant material to dry.
- Seal the inner test sample package with tape. Initial and date the seal.
- Place the inner package in a DOJ evidence envelope. (There can be more than one item in a single DOJ evidence envelope.) Seal the package with tape. Initial and date the outer seal.
- If the drugs were found in a large container (e.g., glass jar), package the container separately from the drugs and separate a test sample.
- If the quantity of drugs is too great to fit inside a DOJ evidence envelope, take a sample of the drug to put in the envelope. Package the rest in a large paper bag.
- The test sample in the DOJ envelope should have a different item number than the large bag.



Note: **Place barcode on the back of the DOJ envelope.**

h) Marijuana



All marijuana including buds, leaves, and mature plants shall be packaged in evidence bags, burlap sacks or evidence envelopes. Contents shall be weighed and documented prior to packaging. If large amounts of marijuana are collected, you can contact the Detective Supervisor or Stanislaus County Drug Enforcement Agency (SCDEA).

If the marijuana is contained in a sealed glass container, it can be kept intact and placed in an evidence bag.

DO NOT PACKAGE IN PLASTIC!

20) ELECTRONICS:

- a) Cell phones, TV's, stereos – record the make, model, and serial number.
 - i) Place in the smallest envelope.
 - ii) Affix the barcode to the top center portion of the envelope.
 - iii) If the item is too big to package, attach a wire tag (with the barcode affixed to the tag).



21) EXPLOSIVES/COMPRESSED GAS/COMBUSTIBLES/FIREWORKS

a) Explosives

- i) **Explosives shall not be brought into the building.**
- ii) Some examples of items that may contain dangerous explosive materials:
 - (1) Bombs
 - (2) Blasting caps
 - (3) Fireworks, firecrackers, cherry bombs, M-80s
 - (4) Gunpowder
 - (5) Incendiaries
 - (6) Military munitions, grenades
- iii) Contact the Stanislaus County Bomb Squad to handle any explosive device or device thought to contain any explosive material.

b) Compressed Gas/Combustibles

- i) Compressed Gas
 - (1) This category includes nitrous oxide, acetylene, hydrogen, oxygen, CO2 cartridges, helium tanks, oxygen tanks, and other compressed air apparatus.
 - (2) When in contact with any of these items, contact the detective sergeant for storage and/or disposal options.



ii) Combustibles

(1) All efforts should be made to avoid taking custody of flammable materials (acetone, gasoline, acetylene, ethanol, acetic acid, etc.)



If unavoidable, contact the Stanislaus County Dept. of Environmental Resources and speak to the "on call" responder for disposal advise. Their number is **(209) 525-6700**.

a) Associated with a criminal case (residue)

- i) Place evidence items that may contain residue of a combustible material (e.g., rag with gasoline on it, fragment of exploded propane tank) in a metal can.
- ii) Do not mix different items in the same can. Package each item in a separate can.
- iii) Close the lid tightly and seal with packing tape. Seal the can in a paper bag.
- iv) Place a hazard sticker on the outside of the package.
- v) Place the item in the bicycle locker behind the Detectives Sallyport.

b) Fireworks

- i) Book in an outside storage facility (e.g., bicycle locker) to be transported to the Range.



Handling Firearms Evidence



- This weapon is loaded and ready to fire
- **NEVER PACKAGE A LOADED WEAPON**
 - Remove the magazine & make sure chamber is empty

Handling Firearms Evidence



- Once the firearm has been rendered safe, it can be placed into a cardboard box and
- Immobilized with a plastic tie
 - Make sure the tie goes BEHIND the trigger

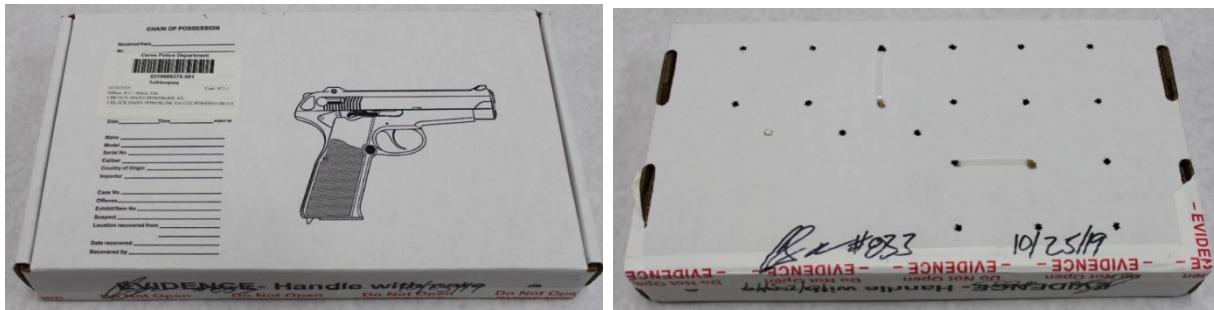
Handling Firearms Evidence



- This packaging will permit fingerprint, blood and trace evidence to be recovered
- The evidence now needs to be appropriately labeled and sealed
- Write "Unloaded" notification on outside of container



- 1) Additional plastic cable ties may be used to secure the weapon.
- 2) It is the officer's responsibility to check the serial number of any firearm with dispatch to determine if it is reported stolen, crime gun, etc. **DOUBLE CHECK YOUR SERIAL NUMBERS!**
- 3) It is the officer's responsibility to have the firearm entered in CLETS by dispatch.
- 4) All serialized firearms shall be given an FCN by the end of the booking officer's shift.
- 5) In the rare event you are unable to unload the firearm, personally alert property & evidence staff as well as the rangemaster. Indicate on the box "**LOADED FIREARM**".
- 6) Remove magazines from the pistol and package separately.
- 7) Remove live rounds from the cylinder of a revolver and package separately.
- 8) Gun cases shall not be confiscated with the weapon unless required for evidentiary purpose. If necessary, to book them into evidence, gun cases shall be packaged separately from the weapon and assigned a separate item number.
- 9) If the firearm has any bio-hazard material, place the required label on the outside of the firearms box.
- 10) Place a barcode on the front upper left side of the box. Seal the back of the box with tape. Initial and date the seal.



Handling Firearms Evidence



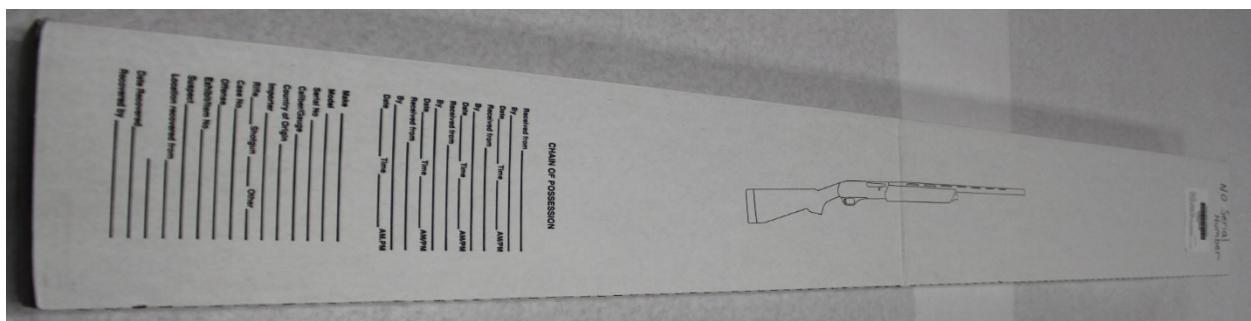
- Fired bullets need to be carefully handled to protect critical markings on the bullet surface and any adhering trace evidence
- Do NOT mark bullet

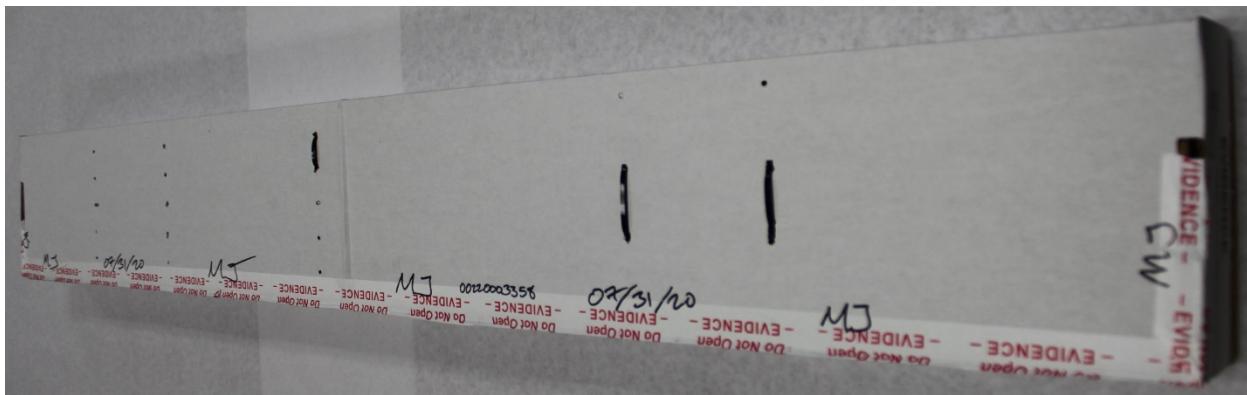
Handling Firearms Evidence



- The wrapped bullet can now be placed into an appropriate size container
- This container must be labeled and then
 - Placed into a large evidence container

b) Long Guns – Rifles, shotguns or any type of long gun should also be unloaded and secured in a rifle box with a cable tie behind the trigger. Seal the box with tape. Initial and date the seal. Affix the barcode on the front upper portion of the box. Initial and date the seal.





23) JEWELRY

- a) Separate fine jewelry from costume jewelry and book separately from other evidence.
- b) All jewelry should be separated by type: rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, watches, etc. and listed individually. No "assorted jewelry".
- c) These can be packaged in small plastic baggies or envelopes and then placed in paper evidence envelopes.

Costume jewelry

1. All costume jewelry can be packaged together in the same envelope with a description of the contents.

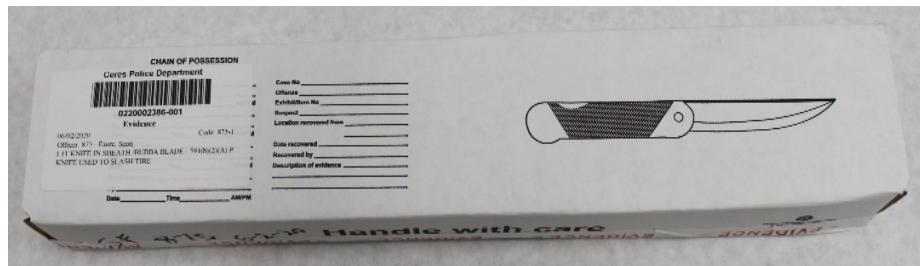


24) KNIVES/DIRKS/DAGGERS/SWORDS

- a) All knives/dirks/daggers/swords shall be secured prior to booking. Tape shall be wrapped around the knife to assure it will not open later.
- b) Folding knives taped closed should be placed in an evidence envelope or bag.
- c) Seal the envelope with evidence tape. Initial and date the seal.



- d) Open/fixed blade knives with no sheath must be secured in a knife box.
- e) Seal the knife box with tape. Initial and date the seal.



4. If the knife is larger than the box, secure the blade with cardboard or tape and place the knife in the appropriate size paper bag or box. Seal the knife bag/box with tape. Initial and date the seal.



5. If the weapon has any biohazard materials, place a biohazard label on the outside of the box.
6. Swords can be secured in rifle boxes. Follow the same procedure as knives by wrapping the blade with tape or cardboard.

25) LATENT PRINTS

a) Latent Print Cards

- i) Place the latent print cards into the evidence envelope.
- ii) Seal the envelope with tape. Initial and date the seal.
- iii) Place the latent print package into an evidence locker.

All latent prints will be forwarded to detectives (by evidence personnel) for transport to the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department Fingerprint ID Unit for processing.

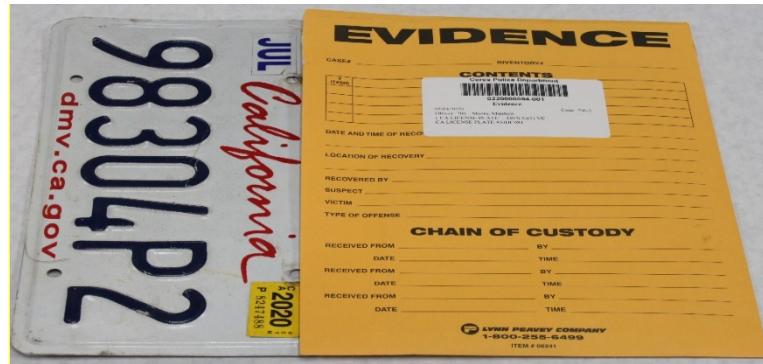


b) How to submit an item for latent fingerprint processing:

- i) Package and seal the item as usual.
- ii) Submit a request for latent processing by filling out a BFS-1 form and submitting with your evidence.
- iii) Property personnel will forward your items and BFS-1 form to DOJ for processing.

26) LICENSE PLATES

- a) Always choose the proper sized packaging for the property being booked.
- b) Place the license plate into an evidence envelope (*Wire tags attached to license plates tend to get torn off*).
- c) Seal the back of the envelope with tape.
- d) Initial and date the seal.
- e) Affix the barcode on the front center portion of the envelope.



27) PERISHABLES



- a) No perishable food items shall be booked into the property room. Items will mold and decay over time which can destroy the evidence and create negative health conditions, etc.
 - (1) Photograph the perishables and dispose of them appropriately.
- b) If forensic analysis is needed, contact the DOJ laboratory for packaging instructions.

28) TOOLS

- a) All tools must be itemized. **NO** "Assorted Tools".
- b) List tools individually (example: 5 flathead screwdrivers, 3 Phillip's head screwdrivers, 2 wrenches, etc.)
- c) If they are power tools, list the make, model, and serial number.

29) TRACE EVIDENCE

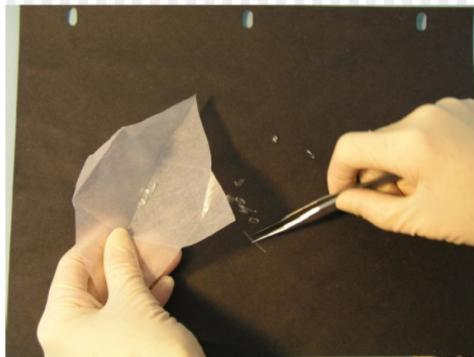
- a) Trace evidence is small evidence and can be easily lost. Therefore, packaging must be appropriately sized and designed so that this small evidence cannot fall out of the container,
- b) If it is a small amount of trace, it should be packaged in coin envelopes, paper bindles or small boxes. The small envelope can be packaged together in a larger evidence envelope.
- c) Examples of trace evidence:
 - i) Hairs
 - ii) Glass fragments
 - iii) Paint flakes
 - iv) Fibers
 - v) Fingernail scrapings
 - vi) Scalp combings
 - vii) Vacuum debris from clothing.
- d) Items must be visually examined, and trace evidence identified.
 - i) Trace evidence can be removed with tweezers and placed into appropriate packaging.
 - ii) Trace evidence can also be removed with tape lifts.

Glass Fragments



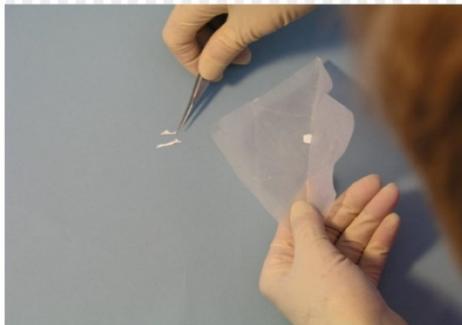
- Glass fragments are small and can be lost from poorly sealed envelopes

First Step: Placing Glass Evidence into a Bindle



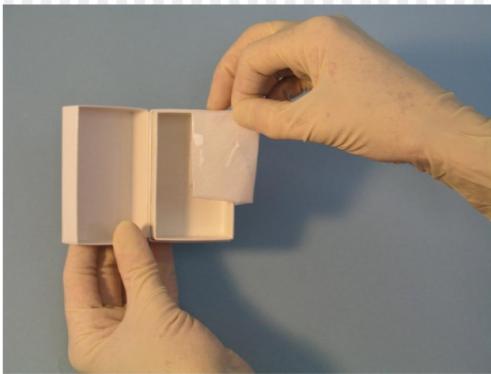
- The glass is collected and placed into a paper bindle. The bindle is then sealed before it is inserted into an envelope

Packaging Paint Fragments



- Bindles can also be used to package paint fragments

Packaging Paint Fragments



- Rigid boxes can then be used to hold paper bindle with fragile paint fragments. Box is then placed into paper evidence envelope

30) Wallets/Purses

- a) Remove all currency from the wallet/purse and place in a currency envelope.
- b) Remove any perishables and/or prescription drugs.
- c) Place a wire tag with barcode attached through the strap. You may also place it in an appropriate size bag.
- d) Seal the packaged item with tape. Initial and date the seal.



PACKAGING AND LABELING REMINDERS

1) Containers

- a) Closed container and packages described as containing “**unknown contents**” shall **not** be submitted or accepted by property and evidence personnel.
- b) Always use the smallest appropriate size packaging to reduce the need for extra storage space.
- c) Do not staple bags, the staples can cause injury.
- d) Paper bags
 - i) The open end of the paper bag may be sealed by folding over and using one strip of evidence tape to cover the folded seams only. **Do not wrap evidence tape all the way around the bag.**
 - ii) It is preferable that the initials, ID# and date be written parallel (horizontal) on the evidence tape. Use the sealing tape authorized by the department.
- e) Envelopes
 - i) Close the folded clasp or gummed opening, then seal by placing evidence tape over this flap only.
 - ii) Do not place evidence tape on all seams. Write initials and date where the edge of the tape and seal meet.
- f) Long items
 - i) May generally have an item tag affixed by a zip tie or twine.
 - ii) If the long item was used as a weapon or a tool to commit a crime, it may be useful to protect the handle with kraft paper for DNA analysis.
 - iii) Use a kraft paper sleeve or wrap entire item in kraft paper to prevent cross-contamination.

2) Barcodes

- a) Barcoding each item is extremely important when it comes to recording the movement of property and evidence accurately and efficiently in and out of the property room.
- b) All barcodes shall be created and printed through the property module in RIMS.
- c) The placement of the barcodes is very important due to the way the items will be stored in the evidence room.
- d) Every item of identifiable property or evidence should have its own unique identifying barcode that shall be affixed to the front top center portion of the bag, envelope or directly to the item with string or zip tie.
- e) The exception would be a DOJ envelope and currency envelope where the barcode should be affixed on the back side.
- f) The barcode must be flat and not wrinkled so the barcode can be scanned.
- g) If the items are packaged or labeled improperly, they will be returned to you for correction.

3) Biohazard Labels

- a) Whenever potential biohazards are submitted, the package must be labeled with the appropriate size biohazard label. Materials must be dried prior to submission.

4) Forensic Testing

- a) Hold for prints/DNA, or other forensic examination, shall be packaged in one of the following ways:
 - (a) Place item into kraft paper bag
 - (b) Insert into a kraft paper sleeve
 - (c) Wrap in kraft paper
- b) All packaging held for forensic testing shall be sealed with evidence tape and initial and dated where the edge of the tape and seal meet.

5) Safety Concerns

- a) Sharp tools shall always have the blade(s) or points protected to keep them from poking through a bag. A simple piece of folded cardboard may prevent a future injury.

Note:

The following items of evidence must always be packaged separately. (Like-items may be packaged together.)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Live ammunition- Bullets & Fragments'- Shell casings- Gunshot residue kits - Paint chips and scrapings- Glass fragments- Tool marks & castings- Currency- Electronics- CD's/DVD's- Narcotics- Prescription medication- Hazardous materials- Audio and video tapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Photo lineups- Items to be refrigerated- Items to be frozen- Items to be stored in DNA controlled environment- Elimination prints- Latent prints- Known prints- Sexual assault kits- Physiological fluids- Hairs and fibers- Representative samples- Magnetic items- All weapons
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Additionally, items held as evidence cannot be packaged with items held for safekeeping and as found.

Note: All items for destruction must be packaged and labeled in the same manner as evidence.

SPECIAL CATEGORIES SECTION

BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

1) Definition (defined) – Biohazard materials include any item that contains blood, semen, hair, saliva, skin tissue, fingernail scrapings, bone, bodily fluids, or any other identifiable biological material that was collected as part of an investigation.

2) Recommendations for Handling Biological Evidence

- a) Attempt to ensure that *anything* that contacts biological samples during collection is free of anything that might contain human DNA.
 - i) Do not touch the outside of gloves to face or hands or use personal items such as cell phones or radios.
- b) Work on clean surfaces.
- c) Use disposable latex gloves to handle evidence rather than reusable uniform/tactical gloves.
- d) The use of personal protective equipment (disposable clothing, gloves, masks, etc.) both protects the individual from biohazard exposure and prevents transfer of the investigator's DNA to the evidence.

3) Recommendations for the Collection and Packaging of Biological Evidence

- a) Wet stains of blood, semen or other bodily fluids present on bedding, clothing, or other materials must be dried prior to submission into evidence. Allow stains to air dry as much as possible. Ensure that while items are drying that the stain pattern(s) are not altered or the stain(s) cross-contaminated with other wet stains. Such items should be packaged in paper bags or envelopes. When it is not possible to thoroughly dry the item, packaging in paper bags will allow the drying process to continue. Ensure that the paper container is large enough to allow air circulation.
- b) Items presumed to contain biological evidence shall be booked separately. Never allow separate stains to come in contact with each other.
- c) Sheets of paper can be used to minimize contact of stains on a bloodstained garment (see examples below).
- d) Consider packaging all biological evidence in double wrapped bags or butcher paper.
 - i) **Do not package bloody items in plastic.**
- e) All biohazard materials must be identified with biohazard labels. Label the package with a barcode sticker affixed to the upper front portion of the bag or box. Seal the package with tape. Initial and date the seal.
- f) Metal or glass evidence item (e.g., knife or broken glass bottle) should be secured with wire to the bottom of a cardboard box so that it does not pierce the sides of a paper container. If not secured, blood on a knife can become easily dislodged and lost. Do not freeze metal or glass evidence items with blood or other body fluid stains. Submit these items to the laboratory as soon as possible.



Recommendations for Collection of Biological Evidence



- To minimize the chance of cross transfer of adhering evidence; different clothing items should NOT be packaged in the same container

Packaging Bloody Clothing



- Attempt to allow bloodstains to dry as much as possible using the drying cabinet. Place clothing onto a piece of clean paper.

Packaging Bloody Clothing



Place paper between stained areas so as to prevent stain transfer

Packaging Bloody Clothing



Place paper between stained areas so as to prevent stain transfer

Packaging Bloody Clothing



- Seal and date paper package with bloody shirt
- Insert paper package into larger paper bag

How to Properly Package a Bloody Knife



- Use a cardboard box (not airtight)
Immobilize knife to protect both personnel & the blood sample on blade

What Happens When Biological Evidence is Wet?



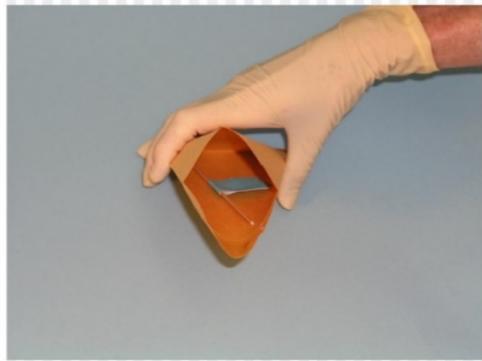
- Evidence "leaks" through to the exterior of the container

Sometimes Paper Containers are Optimal: Biological Samples



- Allows a sample that is not completely dry to finish drying and may prevent the deterioration of a biological sample if it is not completely dry when packaged

Packaging a Dry Bloodstain



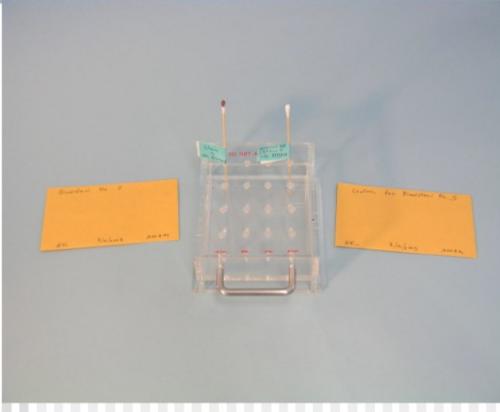
- Once the sample is dried it can be safely placed into a paper envelope and sealed

How **NOT** to Package a Wet Bloodstain



- Do **not** use any packaging device that limits air exchange
 - Biological samples will deteriorate if it takes too long for them to dry

Packaging a Wet Bloodstain on a Swab



- After samples are **dried**, package the bloodstain sample and the control into separate coin envelopes

DRYING CABINET OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

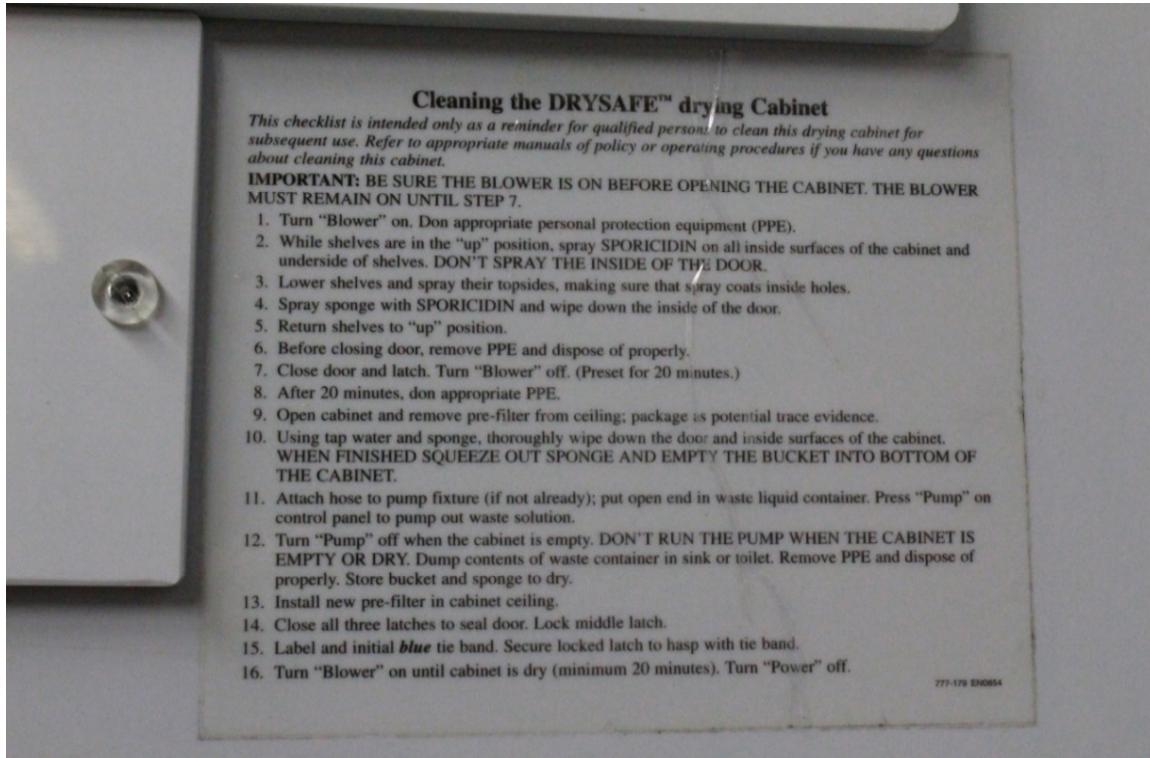
- 1) The booking officer shall use the following protocol when using the drying cabinet:
 - a) Read the directions on the front of the drying cabinet for operational use including sanitation.



- b) If the drying cabinet is empty and secured with a zip tie, it has been sanitized and is ready for use. (Note: *contact detective sergeant if cabinet is occupied.*)



- c) If the cabinet has not been cleaned, it is the booking officer's responsibility to clean it. Follow the cleaning instructions on the outside door of the cabinet. All cleaning supplies as well as protective gear are located in the area of the drying cabinet.
- d) The booking officer shall document the cleaning by filling out the cleaning log sign-in sheet posted on the outside of the drying cabinet.





- e) The booking officer shall confirm there is paper lining on the floor of the drying cabinet.
- f) The booking officer shall place items on the shelving (e.g. shoes) or use the coat rack with metal hangers. **DO NOT PLACE ITEMS ON THE FLOOR OF THE CABINET.**
Items should be arranged to allow air to pass freely around them.
- g) To avoid cross-contamination **DO NOT MIX CLOTHING.**
- h) Once adequate time has passed for drying, remove all items **along with the dirty filters** and book separately in evidence bags.





- i) Discard any gloves or protective gear in biohazard garbage can.
- j) Sanitize the cabinet.
- k) Replace the filters (inside cabinet top and cabinet door lower front).
- l) Sign the cleaning log.
- m) Place a zip tie through the drying cabinet handle.
- n) The drying cabinet is now ready for use again.

In conclusion, as personnel assigned to the Property and Evidence Division of the Ceres Police Department, it is our duty to protect the integrity of the department by ensuring that the most up to date procedures and laws are upheld. Our desire is to work with you as a team to meet that goal.

This manual will continue to be a work in progress as new laws and mandates come into place. Therefore, it is by no means complete, however, should provide guidance as to the evidence handling and processing of many of the more frequent items you will encounter.

If you have any questions about booking any property item which may not be specified in this manual, contact the Property and Evidence Division for assistance. We will be happy to assist you.