



Indiana University Police Department

Storage & Destruction of Evidence & Property

Issue Date:	11/1/2019	Effective Date:	11/1/2019
Review Date:	11/1/2020	Number of Pages:	8
Rescinds:	None		
IACLEA Standards:	15.1		

I. Purpose

To establish procedures on the proper storage and disposal of all evidence and property procured by the Indiana University Police Department.

II. General Order

The Indiana University Police Department (IUPD) stores all property and evidence so as to protect the property and evidence from loss, damage, or contamination; to maintain the property's evidentiary value; and to minimize safety hazards, while permitting efficient storage, inventory, and retrieval. Whenever the procedures outlined herein cannot be followed, for reasons beyond the control of the officer, alternative action taken must be consistent with this directive and with a supervisor's approval¹.

III. Categories of Property

- A. **Evidence** is property related to a crime that may tend to prove or disprove a person's involvement in a crime. Evidence serves one or more of the following functions:
 - 1. provides proof or indication of a crime being committed by an individual(s);
 - 2. places or rules out an individual(s) at a crime scene;
 - 3. establishes intent to commit an illegal act(s); and
 - 4. substantiates criminal allegations against an individual(s).
- B. **Contraband** is property which, if possessed by an individual, is prohibited by law or by University policy and regulations. This includes illegal drugs, illegal weapons, etc.
- C. **Personal Property** is property that the Department maintains control over pending its return to the owner, but does not fit the definition of any other type of property.
 - 1. **Safekeeping** is personal property with no evidentiary value that is acquired at an accident or crime scene, and cannot be immediately returned to the owner, or deadly weapons as defined by Indiana law.

¹ IACLEA 15.1.1 – Property/Evidence Management



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D. **Found Property** is property that is lost by its owner, discovered by a citizen or officer, and then stored by the Department. Found property has no evidentiary value which after coming into the custody of the Department, is found to have been lost or abandoned and is not known or suspected to be connected to any criminal offense.

1. This includes items typically considered “**lost and found**” such as eye glasses, keys, key chains and/or other items that are of value only to the rightful owner.

E. **Property for Destruction** is property with no evidentiary value that a citizen has turned in with request to have destroyed, or drugs or contraband that have been turned in to or discovered by a police officer, whose ownership is unknown or from which no criminal charges will be filed.

1. Property should not be accepted from the general public for destruction unless it is contraband or dangerous in itself, such as fireworks, old or unstable ammunition, explosive devices such as hand grenades or military flares, or other similar devices.
2. Citizens with inert property such as firearms, knives, or similar equipment should be referred to dealers, auction houses, pawnshops, or the landfill.

IV. General Regulations

- A. It is the duty of all officers to care for, control, and correctly process all evidence or property which may come into their possession in the course of their official duties.
- B. Officers will not under any circumstances convert to their own use, loan, or give away any item of property coming into their possession in the course of their official duties. Nor will such property be destroyed, except consistent with the provisions of this directive in *G14.1.1 Collection & Preservation of Evidence & Property*².
- C. The following information will be detailed in a Division Order for each Division:
 1. A list of designated personnel to serve as Evidence/Property Officers and if they process evidence, property, or both.
 2. A list of additionally authorized personnel to process evidence.

² IACLEA 15.1.2 – Receipt of Property / Evidence



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3. Identify the designated, secure locations for processing and storage of evidence and property, including temporary storage³, and the access procedures for these locations.
4. Campus-specific policies regarding property, such as lost and found property, will be included.
5. Special handling considerations and instructions will be outlined based on each type of evidence/property, to include but is not limited to monies or items of value and vehicles.
6. Specific jurisdictional requirements for the processing, handling, submission, and disposal of evidence/property will be included according to the local prosecutor’s office guidance.
7. Divisions, which will not be processing or storing evidence/property at their Division headquarters but will be processing or storing evidence/property at another Department’s headquarters will also detail the above information.
8. The Division Order will also reference the content indicated in *G14.1.1 Collection & Preservation of Evidence & Property*.

V. Storage⁴

- A. Specific procedures for the submission, storage and safekeeping of evidence or property are outlined *G14.1.1 Collection & Preservation of Evidence & Property*.
- B. The impounding officer will ensure that all property/evidence/contraband seized is submitted into the appropriate Evidence/Property Management System prior to the end of their shift, and will complete all appropriate reports and forms⁵.
 1. The location of where evidence is stored must be noted in the case report and the report emailed to the Evidence/Property Officers.
 2. If a supervisor determines exceptional circumstances exist which render such action impractical or impossible, the supervisor may authorize a reasonable amount of additional time to accomplish this task. In all such cases, the property will be submitted at the earliest reasonable time.

³ IACLEA 15.1.4 – Secure Property/Evidence Temporary Storage

⁴ IACLEA 15.1.3 – Secure Property/Evidence Storage

⁵ IACLEA 15.1.2 – Receipt of Property/Evidence



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- 3. Pending submission, the property may be maintained in secure, temporary storage as defined by Division Order⁶.
- C. In all cases where evidence is seized, a report will be filed detailing the circumstances of its seizure, and describing each piece of property taken into custody.
- D. All evidence submitted for storage must be packaged and labeled consistent with the provisions outlined in *G14.1.1 Collection & Preservation of Evidence & Property*.
- E. All in-custody evidence/property will be stored within the Division’s designated and secure areas with access limited to authorized personnel, which will be identified within a Division Order.
- F. All members are expressly prohibited from storing evidence/property in their personal lockers, offices, desks, case files, or any unauthorized location unless it is necessary to continue an investigation, and it has been signed out from the Evidence/Property Officers.
- G. Access to areas under the control of Evidence Management function will be restricted as follows⁷:
 - 1. Access to the Evidence Storage Room will be limited to the Evidence/Property Officers, and sworn officers designated in writing by the Division Chief or their designee, as authorized to process evidence.
 - 2. Mechanical and/or electronic keys to the Evidence Storage Room will be held exclusively by persons expressly authorized access to those areas, and will:
 - a. not be loaned to any person for any reason; and
 - b. not be duplicated, except at the direction of the Division Chief or their designee
 - c. be kept in a secure place when not in the possession of the person assigned the key. The key shall be secured in a sealed envelope, signed by both the designee key holder and the department’s evidence custodian.

⁶ IACLEA 15.1.3 – Secure Property / Evidence Storage; IACLEA 15.1.4 – Secure Property/Evidence Temporary Storage

⁷ IACLEA 15.1.1 – Property / Evidence Management



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- d. An information/admin case shall be generated on the division record management system, with a narrative explaining why the secured evidence storage entry was accessed.
- H. Final disposition of evidence will be accomplished as mandated by judicial process⁸.
 - 1. Unless a court order directs otherwise, all property not returned to its owner, destroyed as contraband, or discarded of as trash, will be disposed of through public auction or donation to a local charity/service organization⁹.

VI. Special Handling Considerations

- A. Special handling considerations, specific to a Division’s jurisdiction, will be identified within their Division Order.
- B. Drugs¹⁰
 - 1. Drugs will be secured in packaging as detailed in their department’s divisional packaging manual whenever they are received, released, or returned to the Evidence/Property Officer.
 - 2. A bagged audit weigh of all narcotics seized shall be conducted by the impounding officer. All pills shall be counted as well by the impounding officer. The weight and count shall be noted in the impounding officer’s case report.
 - 3. An additional locked barrier shall be used within the divisions secured evidence storage area for all narcotics.
- C. Firearms¹¹
 - 1. An additional locked barrier shall be used within the divisions secured evidence storage area for all narcotics.

⁸ IACLEA 15.1.8 – Timely Disposition of Property
⁹ IACLEA 15.1.8 – Timely Disposition of Property
¹⁰ IACLEA 15.1.5 – Security of Controlled Substances/Weapons
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2. If a firearm is secured within the divisions secured evidence storage area, the storage label for the item shall indicate if the item is evidence, found property, or being held for safe keeping.

D. Explosives¹²

1. Call EOD/Bomb Squad on suspected explosives, as stated in a Division Order.

E. Money & Items of Value

1. For currency see VII. Cash Deposits, below.
2. Found credit cards may be destroyed at any time upon request from the issuing financial institution.

F. Questionable Documents

1. Will be packaged in paper, in accordance to their divisional property & evidence training order.

G. Perishable Evidence¹³

1. For perishable property seized by IUPD, items should be photographed using Department-camera, and discarded. The photographs will then be submitted as evidence.
2. If the item is to be retained by the IUPD, said item shall be packaged and stored in accordance to the divisional property & evidence packaging training order.

H. Contaminated Evidence

1. Evidence contaminated with bodily fluids shall be dried, and in accordance to the divisional property & evidence packaging training order.

I. Alcohol

1. Alcohol shall be packaged & stored in accordance to the divisional property & evidence packaging training order.

J. Vehicles

¹² IACLEA 15.1.5 – Security of Controlled Substances/Weapons

¹³ IACLEA 15.1.5 – Security of Controlled Substances/Weapons



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1. When vehicles are seized as part of a criminal investigation, they shall be towed by a private tow company, and directly to the company's lot for storage.
2. If the vehicle must be processed or searched as part of an investigation, it will be brought to a location as set forth by the divisional property and evidence training order.
 - a. Processing should be completed without undue delay.
3. At the conclusion of processing or searching of the vehicle, it may be returned to the owner or towed by a private tow company for storage on their lot.
 - a. If a vehicle being returned to the owner has evidentiary value, the owner will be provided with notice that the vehicle is being returned on condition that it will be made available for subsequent judicial proceedings as necessary.
4. Vehicles in custody may be stored on the premises of the IUPD for up to 5 days. Express permission of the Division Chief or designee must be obtained to store a vehicle on IUPD premises for more than 5 days.
5. Vehicle Theft recoveries will be handled according to divisional property & evidence training order.

VII. Inspections¹⁴

- A. Each divisional designee responsible for property room inspections and the Evidence/Property Officer will conduct an inspection of the Evidence/Property Management System. The inspection will include an assessment of the following:
 1. At least semi-annually, the person responsible for the property and evidence control function, or his or her designee, conducts an inspection of the property room for adherence to policies and procedures used for the control of property and evidence;
 2. An annual audit of property and evidence held by the agency is conducted by an employee not routinely or directly connected with the property control; and

¹⁴ IACLEA 15.1.7 – Audit and Inspections



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- At least once a year, the agency’s chief executive officer directs the completion of an unannounced inspection of all property storage areas.

VIII. Related Information

Indiana University Police Department:

G14.1.1 Collection & Preservation of Evidence & Property

S12-01 Asset Seizure and Forfeiture

IUPD Manuals / Guidelines / Instructions:

Property & Evidence Packaging Manual

IUPD Exposure Control Plan

Division Evidence Collection and Packaging Manual

Indiana Code:

IC 35-43-4-4 (b)-(h) - *Evidence*

IC 35-47-14 – *Chapter 14. Proceedings for the Seizure and Retention of a Firearm*

Benjamin Hunter (11/01/2019)
Superintendent of Public Safety