

# SPECIAL ORDER



**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

Title  
**Procedures for Handling Seized Monies**

Series / Number  
**SO - 00-17**

Effective Date  
**October 16, 2000**

Distribution  
**A**

Related to  
**General Order 601.1 (Receiving, Handling, and Disposition of Property Coming into the Custody of the Department)**

**General Order 601.3 (Handling and Accounting for Seized and Forfeited Property)**

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## I. Policy

It is the policy of the Metropolitan Police Department that all monies seized by sworn personnel are handled in a way to maintain the integrity of monetary evidence.

## II. Regulations

- A. Members shall be required to adhere to procedures outlined in this directive. Money seized as evidence in any criminal case shall only be stored in one of three locations:
1. A District/Unit safe until delivered to the Evidence Control Department,
  2. The vault located in the Evidence Control Department, and
  3. In the District of Columbia Treasury.
- B. Any currency or coins seized in the course of an investigation shall be photographed and deposited into the District of Columbia Treasury, after being delivered to the Evidence Control Department. The only exception to this policy will be money having unique evidentiary value (i.e., fingerprints, bloodstain, marked, etc.) or believed to be rare. Money classified as unique (on a case by case basis) shall be stored in a vault at the Evidence Control Department, until summoned to court or the case is resolved and a PD Form 81-C (Property Release) has been obtained.

**III. Procedural Guidelines**

**A. Field Unit Responsibilities**

It shall be the responsibility of the member who first handles the property to ensure that all property is properly recorded and safeguarded until relieved of that responsibility. All property shall be recorded on a PD Form 81 (Property Record) and listed on the element's Property Book (PD 82). All members shall follow the procedures listed below when recovering money:

1. Members who recover monetary evidence in the course of an investigation shall prepare a PD Form 81 and explain in detail the circumstances that led to the recovery of the money. All sections of the PD Form 81 shall be filled in. The letters N/A shall be placed in sections that do not apply.
2. Money shall be separated by denominations and photographed. Except, serial numbers shall be recorded on the PD Form 81 where serial numbers are a factor in the case (e.g., pre-recorded funds, etc.).
3. In the event of recovery of a large amount of cash (i.e. \$3,000.00 or more), members shall use the PD Form 202A to record the denominations and photograph the bills. Whenever large amounts of coins are recovered, they shall also be separated by denominations and placed in individual Property Bags, with the amount in each bag labeled.
4. A minimum of two sworn members shall be present during the counting of money. The money shall be counted twice to ensure accuracy.
5. Prior to turning the money over to the District/Unit Property Officer, the recovering member shall have the money photographed by a District Crime Scene Search Officer. The recovering member shall submit the PD Form 81 to the Assistant District Commander or Acting District Commander for review and signature.
6. Once the money has been photographed and the PD Form 81 signed, the property shall be turned over to the District Property Officer or Station Clerk.
7. The District Property Officer or Station Clerk shall place the evidence in a locked safe in the District/Unit Property Room.
8. If a Property Officer is not available, the money shall be turned over to the Assistant District Commander who shall be responsible for securing the money in his or her safe.

9. **Members papering cases involving seized money shall also complete a PD Form 81 C prior to reviewing the case with either an Assistant United States Attorney or Assistant Corporation Counsel. Procedures for Handling Seized Monies (SO-00-17)**
10. **When a decision is made to "no paper" a case, the papering attorney will sign the PD Form 81 C and return it to the member. Prior to checking out of court, the member shall deliver the PD Form 81 C to the Court Property Office.**
11. **If the Court Property Office is closed, the member shall deliver the PD Form 81 C to his/her District Property Officer or Station Clerk.**
12. **When a criminal case is papered, the original PD Form 81 C will be placed in the United States Attorney's or Corporation Counsel's case jacket. This will ensure that a PD Form 81 C is on hand when the evidence is no longer needed for court.**
13. **If the papering attorney determines the money/evidence should be held and not deposited due to its unique evidentiary value, he/she shall advise the member who will be responsible for notifying the Evidence Control Department. Only currency containing fingerprints, blood, narcotic residue or other identifying substances will be excepted from this order. The Manager, Evidence Control Department, may grant an exception to this order pursuant to a written request from the United States Attorney or the Corporation Counsel for the District of Columbia, concerning cases involving currency classified as having evidentiary value. The remaining currency will be processed and deposited into the District of Columbia Treasury.**

**B. District Property Personnel**

**Unit level property members shall ensure that all items classified as evidence and all accompanying documentation are in compliance with this order prior to transporting it to the Evidence Control Department.**

1. **If the District Property Officer discovers any mistakes in the accuracy of the money or missing information on the PD Form 81 and PD Form 202A (Continuation Report), he/she shall bring this to the attention of the Assistant District Commander or Acting Assistant District Commander.**
  - a. **If the discrepancy involves missing money, the Assistant District Commander shall ensure that an investigation is conducted.**

b. If the problem involves mistakes in the paperwork, the reports shall be returned to the member for corrections.

2. District Property Officers shall transport all evidence, including photographs, to the Evidence Control Department on the scheduled property day.

**C. District Crime Scene Search Officers**

1. District Crime Search Officers (DCSSO) will be responsible for processing and taking photographs of monetary evidence.

2. Property/evidence containing fingerprints, bloodstains, or other evidentiary markings shall be processed and kept separate from other monetary evidence.

**D. Evidence Control Department Personnel**

Monetary evidence received at the Evidence Control Department, with the exception of items classified as unique (bloodstain, fingerprints, marked, etc.), shall be counted and deposited into the District of Columbia Treasury. Evidence Control Department personnel shall adhere to the following procedures:

1. All monies received by the Evidence Control Department shall be pre-counted and listed by denomination on a separate form. Money shall not be accepted by the Evidence Control Department if the money has not been pre-sorted, counted and accompanied by the proper documentation (properly signed PD Forms 81).

2. The count of the money shall be made in the presence of the Transporting/Property Officer, without referring to the accompanying denomination sheet. Any discrepancies between the counts shall immediately be brought to the attention of an on-duty Evidence Control Department Supervisor.

3. A discrepancy sheet will be completed listing the nature of the discrepancy, (amount, denomination, paperwork/computer discrepancy, etc.). A copy of the discrepancy sheet shall be given to the element property officer along with the property itself.

4. The information concerning the discrepancy shall be forwarded to the commander of the district/unit involved for resolution.

**E. Return of Monetary Evidence**

1. When the Evidence Control Department is notified that a court case has been completed, the following procedures shall be followed:
  - a. The member handling the court case shall have a PD Form 81-C (Property Release) prepared and submitted to an Assistant United States Attorney or an Assistant Corporation Counsel for signature.
  - b. The PD Form 81-C and any other supporting documentation shall be forwarded to the Property Control Branch, Evidence Control Branch.
2. If a court order has been issued authorizing the return of money, the Evidence Control Department shall be notified immediately.
3. A supervisor in the Asset Forfeiture Unit, Evidence Control Department shall review the PD Form 81-C and all accompanying reports. After reviewing the reports, the supervisor shall have a member of the Evidence Control Department extract the original PD Form 81 and forward the information to the Property Manager or his/her designee.
4. The Manager or his/her designee shall forward a Revenue Refund Voucher, a copy of the initial SOAR Revenue/Receipts Journal and a copy of the PD Form 81-C to the OCFO. The voucher must show the details of the refund including the address to which the check is to be mailed.
5. The claimant shall be notified that he/she will receive his/her check by mail. No checks will be held for pick-up from the OCFO.

**F. Manager, Evidence Control Department**

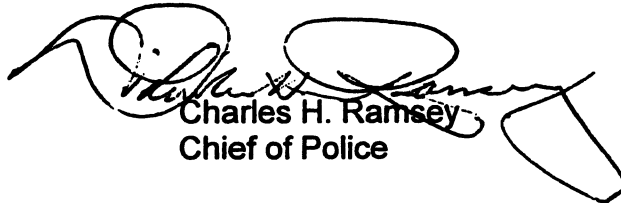
With the exception of money classified as unique, the Manager, Evidence Control Department shall:

1. Be responsible for depositing monetary evidence into the District of Columbia Treasury. (There will be a 90-day waiting period for deposit; to permit the opportunity for viewing seized cash in connection to a criminal prosecution, before depositing in the Treasury).
2. Ensure that District Property Clerk and personnel assigned to the Property Division are properly trained in the handling of property and evidence.

**G. Chief Financial Officer**

The Chief Financial Officer shall:

1. Monitor the account(s) set up for evidentiary money and issue checks upon verification that the funds can be returned.
2. Forward a monthly schedule of discretionary funds to the Chief of Police.



Charles H. Ramsey  
Chief of Police

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