PURPOSE:

Effective investigative law enforcement requires information to be obtained from the application of scientific knowledge and methods. There is no practical alternative to Forensics Science. Research indicates physical evidence must be identified, collected, preserved and promptly transmitted to a laboratory if lab support is to be useful. Physical evidence is normally the best support of a criminal investigation and prosecution. Detectives and officers will use physical evidence to corroborate testimony, facilitate arrests, and obtain convictions, as well as clear innocent suspects wrongfully accused. The Sheriff's Office is committed to professional collection and preservation of evidence.

CRIME SCENE RESPONSE:

The first deputy on scene secures and protects the scene while determining seriousness of the crime. If additional support is required to preserve the scene, a field supervisor is notified. Crime scenes may be secured by various means, such as: verbal commands, ropes or lines, blocking paths with vehicles or officer presence. A field supervisor may request the services of the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) and/or Crime Scene/Forensics Investigators if the scene is beyond the processing abilities of the field officers.

CID personnel assume control of the investigation immediately upon arrival at the crime scene. The Crime Scene/Forensics Investigation Unit is notified at the discretion of CID. Forensic personnel take no action until they have conferred with CID.

A supervisor on the scene is responsible for briefing the Sheriff or PIO and any member of the Command Staff immediately upon their arrival. A similar briefing is provided to the Coroner, if present.

Only personnel essential to the investigation of the crime and security of the scene are authorized in the area. All other personnel are politely, but firmly, denied access**. The identity of all persons entering the crime scene is to be recorded including: name, agency, time and purpose.**

CRIME SCENE TRAINING:

Training for crime scene processing is provided to all deputies and deputy trainees. Personnel responsible for crime scene processing receive specialized training to ensure development of specific skills to perform these tasks. Specialized training includes:

- Recovery of latent fingerprint and palm prints
- Recovery of foot, tool and tire impressions
- Photographing crime or collision scenes
- Preparing crime or collision scene sketches
- Collecting, preserving, and transmitting physical evidence, including biological materials

Qualifications for Crime Scene/Forensics Investigators (CSFI):

- Certified (SCCJA) Officer
- Full-time employee of the Anderson County Sheriff's Office
- Additional (preferred but not required) training includes: Medical Training, EMS, Paramedic, Nurse, Pharmacology, Fingerprint Specialist, Photographer, etc.

Qualifications for Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) Operator:

- Meet all qualifications for Crime Scene/Forensics Investigator (listed above)
- Basic and Advanced Fingerprint Training
- A minimum of two years experience as a fingerprint examiner
- Within one year of training with the terminal, take and pass the SLED AFIS Certification Exam

After receiving specialized training in fingerprint/palm print collection, Deputies may be used to photograph and/or process finger and palm prints at crime scenes. This is a limited crime scene function and does not require further specialized training. This is intended to expedite processing.

CRIME SCENE SPECIALISTS:

Crime Scene/Forensics Investigators are on-call to the Sheriff's Office twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

When required at a scene, the Crime Scene/Forensics Investigator is notified within one (1) hour. This is required because, in many cases, the continuation of the investigative process must await the completion of certain aspects of a crime scene specialist's work. Instructions can be obtained on how to proceed until a specialist arrives.

Crime Scene/Forensics Investigators work under the direction of the investigating deputy in charge of a scene. If Uniform Patrol investigates a crime scene, the patrol supervisor determines need for a crime scene specialist. If CID investigates the scene, CID personnel determine the need for a Crime Scene/Forensics Investigator.

PROSECUTION COORDINATION:

Supervisors from the Criminal Investigation Division and the Crime Scene/Forensics Unit will meet with the solicitor and judges for coordination purposes, when needed. This coordination is necessary to ensure the solicitor and judges are made familiar with the latest crime scene processing techniques and laboratory capabilities, as well as to address any investigative or procedural concerns of the solicitor and the court.

PROCESSING AND PRESERVING EVIDENCE:

The primary responsibility for ensuring a crime scene is processed lies with the investigating deputy. Processing can be accomplished in a detailed manner with fully trained Crime Scene/Forensics Investigators or in

a limited manner with trained Deputies. Functions to be performed may include:

1. Photographing and/or sketching the scene
2. Examination for fingerprints
3. Protecting, collecting and preserving evidence

The investigating deputy or Crime Scene/Forensics Investigator will adhere to the following steps to properly process the scene:

1. Establish whether a Search Warrant or Consent to Search has been secured or is needed
2. Conduct a survey of the Crime Scene
3. Document the existing conditions at the scene (wet, raining, hazardous, etc.)
4. Photograph the scene
5. Videotape the scene, if necessary
6. Prepare a sketch of the scene (including measurements of items for sketch, if necessary)
7. Conduct a detailed search
8. Record and collect all physical evidence
9. Review previous steps with the Case Officer and/or assigned detective to verify completeness and accuracy
10. Release the crime scene only when the Case Officer or assigned detective are ready and all evidence has been photographed, gathered and documented

NOTE: *It is at the discretion of the investigating deputy and/or his supervisor to omit any of the previous steps that do not pertain to the type or severity of the incident under investigation.*

CRIME SCENE VEHICLES – Crime Scene/Forensics Investigators will maintain forensic supplies for processing all types of crime scenes in an effective and timely manner. Crime Scene/Forensics Investigators are responsible for restocking crime scene response vehicles with sufficient supplies to conduct the following:

1. Recovery of latent fingerprints
2. Photography
3. Crime scene sketches
4. Collection and preservation of physical evidence
5. Vehicle collision investigation (In collisions requiring reconstruction, we will contact SCHP Major Collision Investigation Team for assistance.)

Uniform Patrol supervisors and officers will carry latent print kits and designated officers will carry Polaroid, 35mm, or digital cameras in their vehicles for use and timely response.

Three important factors to be considered when collecting evidence:

1. Evidence must be material and relevant
2. An article must be properly identified

3. Continuity or chain of custody must be proven

Most mistakes committed in connection with evidence take place in the collection phase. Improper collection techniques can result in a failure to realize the full value of evidence. When deemed necessary, supervisors have the discretion to modify collection and preservation procedures in order to obtain the best substantiating evidence.

COLLECTION AND PRESERVATION PROCEDURES:

Personnel involved in the collection and preservation of evidence adhere to specific collection procedures. Evidence is properly sealed and labeled for identification as it is collected or as soon as practical. This is accomplished by:

- Sealing articles in containers and dating and initialing the containers; and
- Labeling articles with affixed tags or gummed labels.

PACKAGING AND MARKING OF EVIDENCE:

1. Packaging Evidence

    a. It is recommended to use paper (i.e.: paper bags or envelopes) in the packaging of most evidence.
    b. Due to the size and nature of evidence it may be conducive to use different size boxes.
    c. When feasible, drug evidence should be placed in zip lock or sealed plastic to ensure it does not evaporate or dry out (this would change the weight of those items).
    d. Appropriate packaging should be chosen in order to keep the evidence as neat as possible for long-term storage.
    e. To save space in the storage area, packages should be as close to the same size as the item(s) to be stored.

2. Marking Evidence

    a. Evidence tags will be filled out by the collecting officer and properly attached to the evidence container.
    b. The marking/labeling of evidence or evidence containers is to include:

        - Case number.
        - Date article was found.
        - Name and/or description of the article.
        - Location of article when found.
        - Initials of the person who collected or discovered the article.

    c. Evidence submitted to the Property & Evidence Department is bar-coded for further identification.

3. Chain of Custody

   The officer who takes initial custody of any evidence is responsible to complete the evidence sheet or enter the information into the evidence computer to establish primary chain of custody. Each person who subsequently touches the evidence will be listed on the chain of custody. The incident report and the evidence sheet should reflect this information.

   If, in any case, the initial custody officer does not fill out the evidence sheet the incident report should explain why.
   For example: *"Initial custody officer injured at scene and hospitalized. I took the narcotics from Deputy Jones and placed them into evidence."*

   Evidence sheets will be filled out on all evidence and property that is confiscated, recovered, or turned in and will include the following:

   - Case number;
   - Incident Type;
   - Date article was found;
   - Name and description of the article;
   - Victim's name and address, if known;
   - Suspect's name and address, if applicable; and
   - A description of where the article was located should be noted either on the evidence sheet or in the incident report.

Property and Evidence (P&E) has the responsibility of storing evidence pending laboratory examination and/or court presentation. Forms provided for transmittal of evidence to P&E are to be completed as thoroughly and accurately as possible. P&E forms include a detailed description of the evidentiary items, including size, color, serial number and other identifying data.

LATENT PRINTS – Evidence of latent prints on non-absorbent, hard, smooth surfaces can be collected at the scene. Evidence of latent prints on absorbent, porous, non-smooth surfaces are not collected at the scene. These articles are sealed within a container and transported to the Sheriff's Office marked "To be processed for latent prints."

The following guidelines will be followed when processing a crime scene for latent prints:

1. The processing officer will use the appropriate methods to develop latent prints (see Appendix).

2. After latent impressions are developed, it is at the officer's discretion to photograph the latent prior to lifting.

3. The latent print will be placed on a lift card with the following information:

- Case number
- Date
- Processor's name
- A drawing of the object processed if necessary to show the location found
- Victim's address, when necessary
- The officer assigned to the case should be noted on the evidence computer when submitting prints.

4. Lift cards submitted to the Property & Evidence Department are bar-coded for further identification.

HOMICIDE – If a homicide victim is on the scene when the Crime Scene/Forensics Investigator arrives, the CSFI will perform all necessary evidence collection procedures on the victim's hands. If the victim is transported to a medical facility prior to the CSFI's arrival, the homicide victim's hands are carefully covered with paper bags secured to the arms with tape. The entire body is carefully covered with disposable sheets before transport to the hospital. The entire body will be examined for blood, hair, and fibers. The disposable sheets, along with the paper bags, are removed at the hospital and placed into P&E for further analysis.

PERISHABLE EVIDENCE – Evidence in the form of organic matter, such as blood or tissue, present special problems in preservation. Unless the following preventative measures are taken, decomposition will destroy this type of evidence prior to laboratory examination:

1. Putrefaction of blood can be avoided by allowing it to air dry before sealing in an airtight container. Wet or bloody clothing is air-dried and packaged in plastic or paper biohazard containers, in accordance to P&E needs.
2. Physiological fluid is frozen.
3. Items supporting latent fingerprints are protected from movement or action that may destroy or contaminate the prints.
4. Semen samples are either air-dried or refrigerated.
5. Saliva samples are collected on blotter paper or cotton applicators and air-dried.

Crime Scene/Forensics Investigators process crime scenes to collect wet bloodstains and other body fluids. Stained evidence is placed in the space provided for complete drying after logging items into P&E. All appropriate evidence forms are completed. All perishable evidence is preserved and transmitted to a forensic laboratory in a prompt and timely manner.

A space is provided at the Sheriff's Office for the air-drying of blood-soaked articles and articles presenting evidence of human excretions or secretions.

TYPES OF EVIDENCE – The following procedures will be followed when processing specific types of evidence:

1. Liquids

    a. No flammable liquid will be brought into the department. If there is flammable liquid evidence that is of evidentiary value, contact a Crime Scene Investigator and/or arson personnel to handle.
    b. All liquid evidence will be placed in the appropriate container with the proper identifying information listed on the container.
    c. All flammable liquid evidence will be sealed with the case number, date, collecting officer's name, and the word "flammable" written on the container.
    d. If unsure whether the liquid is flammable, it is to be stored in an outside storage facility.

2. Drugs

    a. All drugs will be submitted in a plastic evidence "best bag" envelope sealed with the proper information and secured in the evidence locker.
    b. Narcotics will be initialed, dated, and timed like any other evidence. If the nature of the evidence prohibits this, the evidence bag will be initialed instead.
    c. If large amounts of narcotics are recovered, the Captain over CID, Lieutenant over Narcotics and the Anderson County evidence custodian will be notified, in order to assist in packaging and to provide ample area for storage.
    d. All drugs collected by the Anderson County Sheriff's Office will be turned in to the evidence custodian and stored in accordance with State and Federal guidelines and departmental policy.
    e. The custodian or a certified SLED Crime Scene Technician will test all Marijuana submitted to the evidence custodian.
    f. All other drugs will be submitted to the Anderson County Sheriff's Office custodian and be taken to the Anderson/Oconee Forensic Lab (AOFL) for Chemical analysis.
    g. When dealing with clandestine laboratories (i.e.: Methamphetamine Labs), the AOFL chemist should be notified and he, or another trained and qualified person, will make the determination of whether a DHEC-Certified Hazardous Material Clean-up Team will be needed to remove suspected chemicals. All materials of this nature are to be treated as Hazardous Material.

NOTE: *It is important to properly handle Hazardous Materials. If handled improperly, both the Sheriff's Office and the collecting officer could be responsible for incurring the cost of clean up. Hazardous Materials should never be taken into the ACSO Forensics Department nor placed in the ACSO Property & Evidence Locker.*

3. Firearms

    a. On all firearms collected, the reporting officer will make an NCIC inquiry and attach the original Teletype message to the property sheet.
    b. If there is no serial number on the firearm, this will be noted on the property sheet.
    c. All ammunition will be placed in a separate container (from the firearm) and be appropriately packaged; unless the ammo is to be processed for latent prints. In that case, DO NOT HANDLE! Request assistance from a Crime Scene Investigator.
    d. All firearms will be "cleared" when possible or an evidence technician will be notified ASAP to make the weapon safe for handling and/or processing.
    e. All firearms will be turned over to the evidence custodian or secured in a property locker before the end of shift.

4. Bloody Clothing / Fabric

    a. All bloody items will be handled using the proper Personal Protective Equipment and procedures outlined in the department's policy on Blood Borne Pathogens.
    b. Wet items will be transported to the Crime Scene/Forensics Unit's blood-drying area where they will be dried and then placed into paper for long-term storage. Wet items should not be placed in plastic bags for storage.
    c. All items or their container will be marked, when feasible, with the case number, date, victim's name, description of contents and collecting officer's name. Evidence submitted to the Property & Evidence Department is bar-coded for further identification.
    d. No clothing or fabric will be stapled with a tag.
    e. Any bloody clothing or fabric to be submitted to SLED for analysis will have a written report prepared and sent with the items.

5. Criminal Sexual Conduct (Rape) Evidence

    a. All victim and suspect collection kits will be placed in the specified evidence refrigerator.
    b. Submitting officer will mark the victim's name, case number and date on the outside of the submitted kit. Evidence submitted to the Property & Evidence Department is bar-coded for further identification.
    c. An evidence sheet will accompany all evidence. If a suspect is arrested, a booking sheet will also be submitted.
    d. The evidence custodian or a Crime Scene Technician will be notified in order to place the rape kit into the evidence refrigerator.
    e. The investigator will notify the evidence custodian when to submit the kit to SLED. The investigator is also responsible for submitting the incident report to SLED, if necessary.

f. The investigator will provide the evidence custodian with a disposition on the case as soon as possible.

6. Perishable evidence

a. Perishable evidence such as meat, live plants, etc., will not be kept. A photo will be made of the item(s). The collecting officer will return the items to the rightful owner. If unable to locate the owner, the items will be destroyed. (The only exception will be Marijuana plants. After being photographed they will be pulled from the pots and stored until the case is cleared.)
b. Perishable evidence such as blood, urine, criminal sexual conduct kits and suspect kits will be turned over to crime scene personnel or the evidence custodian immediately for refrigeration. If this occurs during non-working hours, on-call personnel will be called to receive and store the evidence.

7. Documents (Checks, Notes, etc.)

a. All checks will be placed in an envelope or (preferably) a clear plastic bag or sleeve. Officers and victims will handle evidence documents as little as possible.
b. When feasible, all documents will be placed in separate containers, envelopes or sleeves.
c. Do not staple or tape any documentary evidence.

8. Money

a. Large amounts of monetary evidence will be turned over to the evidence custodian. If the money is to be processed for prints, the money should be handled as little as possible. A Lab Request form should accompany the evidence sheet.
b. On the evidence sheet, money will be broken down into denominations: (for example, (2) ten dollar bills = $20.00; (5) one dollar bills = $5.00, etc.)
c. Two officers should be present when counting money and it should be counted at least two times before turning it over to the evidence custodian or the evidence locker.
d. Any unusual markings on the money should be noted.
e. Money will be kept and stored as evidence at the Anderson County Sheriff's Office except in cases where it has been deemed necessary to deposit the money in an Anderson County bank account, where the money can be secured until its return to the rightful owner upon clearance of the case. The funds will be returned as either a check or currency, not the "same" currency.

9. Bicycles

a. After checking stolen records and attempting to locate the owner, recovered or found bicycles will be turned into

Property & Evidence following proper evidence collection procedures. The evidence custodian or On-call Crime Scene Technician should be notified. The technician will place the bike in the fenced storage area on Highway 24 (near the maintenance shop). If the officer is unable to transport the bicycle, a shift Lieutenant or Sergeant will notify personnel to transport via truck.

b. Bicycles involved with an arrest (if not stolen) may be turned over to a family member and documented in the incident report. If no one is available to take possession, follow the above procedures.

COMPARE KNOWN EXEMPLARS – Whenever possible, if the following types of physical/trace evidence are collected from the crime scene, a known exemplar will also be collected for comparison:

- Blood
- Hairs
- Saliva
- Fingernails
- Textile fibers
- Paint
- Glass
- Wood
- Metal
- Soil
- Footwear
- Tool mark impressions

These substances are packaged and marked with the date, location, and initials of the collecting crime scene specialist and a P&E form is completed.

CRIME SCENE SKETCHES:

The initial sketch may be of a rough nature but is to include sufficient information to allow for a final drawing made to scale, when requested. A sketch is to include at least the following information:

1. Deputy's full name, rank, and unit number
2. Date, time and case number
3. Full name of any person assisting in taking measurements
4. Address of crime scene, its location within a building and specific landmarks
5. When a sketch is not drawn to scale, it is to be identified as: "Not to scale, dimensions and distances tape measured."
6. When feasible, locations of major items of physical evidence and critical features of the crime scene indicated accurate from at least three fixed points; GPS may be substituted.
7. A legend of symbols used to identify objects or points of interest on the sketch. Color may be used to distinguish objects or features; however, the use of a large number of colors can be confusing and eliminate the ability to reproduce the sketch rapidly.

CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHY:

It is the policy of the Anderson County Sheriff's Office to employ the use of digital imaging technology and ensure that all personnel, who utilize digital imaging in the performance of their duties, follow the guidelines set forth in order to maintain the integrity of the digital image taken and ensure its admissibility in court.

DEFINITIONS:

IMAGE - an imitation or representation of a person or thing, drawn, painted, photographed, etc.

ARCHIVE IMAGE - either the primary or original image stored on media suitable and intended for long-term storage.

BITMAP - image composed of a pattern of pixels, the more pixels used for one image, the higher the resolution.

CAPTURE - the process of recording an image.

COMPRESSION - the process of reducing the size of the data file.

COPY IMAGE - a reproduction of the information contained in a primary or original image.

DIGITAL IMAGE - an image that is stored in numerical form.

DIGITAL IMAGE FILE - a record that includes image data and related data objects.

DUPLICATE IMAGE - an accurate and complete replica of an original image, irrespective of media.

FILE FORMAT- the structure by which data is organized.

IMAGE ENHANCEMENT - any process intended to improve the visual appearance of an image.

IMAGE OUTPUT - the means by which an image is presented for examination or observation.

IMAGE PROCESSING - any activity that transforms an input image into an output image.

IMAGE PROCESSING LOG - a record of steps used in the processing of an image.

ORIGINAL IMAGE - an accurate and complete replica of the primary image, irrespective of media.

MEMORY CARD - temporary storage media of the original digital image.

PIXEL - Picture Element, the smallest unit of a digitized image – the square screen dots that make up a bitmapped picture. Each pixel carries a specific tone and color.

PRIMARY IMAGE - refers to the first instance in which an image is recorded onto a separate, identifiable object or objects. Examples include: digital image recorded directly to a hard drive, a digital image recorded on a flash card.

PROCESSED IMAGE - an image output (see Image Processing).

REMOVABLE STORAGE MEDIA - storage media that can be removed (and replaced) from a camera or other digital device. See MEMORY CARD.

RESOLUTION - amount of sharpness/detail in the image. Resolution is dependent of pixels in a digital image; the higher number of pixels the better the resolution.

STORAGE - the act of preserving an image.

STORAGE MEDIA - any object on which an image is preserved.

WORKING IMAGE - any image subjected to processing.

PHOTOGRAPHIC PROTOCOL – All deputies and Crime Scene/Forensics Investigators adhere to the following protocol regarding photography in general and photography occurring at crime scenes:

1. At the scene of a crime, collision, property recovery or other call for service requiring photographic support, overall photographs are taken first, encompassing the entire area or subject involved. Photographs include reference points to major landmarks, street signs, or permanent structures. Overall photographs are taken to indicate where victims, perpetrators, witnesses or objects were prior to an incident and where they came to rest after the incident occurred, if different than original positions.

2. Designated Uniform Patrol officers will carry Polaroid, 35mm, or digital cameras in their vehicles to insure a timely response.

3. In order to ensure proper photographic perspective, the relativity of objects concerning their size and position, a scale is used to reflect dimensions of a specific item of evidence in relation to the entire crime scene. When feasible, a photograph is made before introduction of a scale and a second made with the scale lying adjacent to the object.

4. Information recorded when photographs are taken includes: date, time, location, and case number. Videotaping can supplement photography, but cannot replace it.

PHOTOGRAPHY PROCEDURES:

1. The Officer or Case Investigator assigned to an incident/case will be responsible for having the crime scene and/or evidence photographed. It will be at the discretion of the Case Investigator and/or Case Officer to determine whether or not the scene and/or evidence are to be photographed and/or videotaped. This pertains to major cases as well as minor cases. In minor cases the Case Officer or Investigator may elect to photograph the scene or items himself or have the scene processed by evidence personnel using a 35mm, Polaroid, or digital camera.

2. When photographing latent prints, tire impressions, footwear impressions, or any item(s) of evidentiary value, a scale will be placed next to the item(s) to be photographed. When feasible, a photograph will be taken with and without the scale.

3. It will be the responsibility of the Officer or Investigator in charge to include the name of the photographer in the incident report. Photographs should include a cover photo showing the case number, date, and officer/photographer's name.

4. All negatives, photographs, Polaroid photos, etc., will be turned in to the evidence custodian or evidence locker with an evidence sheet.

5. Requests for copies of photographs or the originals for court must be submitted in writing no less than three duty days before they are needed.

6. **Requests for copies of photographs by anyone other than the investigating officer(s) or the Solicitors office must be accompanied by a subpoena**. The cost for copies is $35.00 per roll to cover printing, storage and handling.

IMAGE CAPTURE PROCEDURES:

1. Photographs are taken when a Department member believes that visual documentation will assist to further the investigation or prosecution of criminal acts, incidents, or traffic collisions. The photographs should be of high quality and accurately represent the scene as it appeared at the time it was photographed. Generally, the image should be captured at the highest possible resolution.

2. Photographs that will require analytical processing, i.e. fingerprints, shoeprints, tool marks, etc., may be captured in a digital format or 35mm film camera. Any time an officer believes the photograph may be used for this purpose they will notify their supervisor, who will ensure that the Crime Scene Unit is notified to respond in order to take these photographs.

3. Only officers trained in the use of the digital cameras may operate these in the manner that is consistent with the training received, as well as this order.

4. Officers will review the photos taken in the camera's viewing screen prior to taking the next photo, or clearing the scene, whichever is appropriate.

5. No enhancement or alteration of any type may be made to the original captured image. If an image appears unsuitable, officers will make the necessary camera adjustments and retake the photo in order to achieve the desired results.

6. At the beginning of each tour of duty, each officer assigned a digital camera will inspect the camera and its accessories to ensure its operability.

TRAINING – Prior to utilizing a digital camera for agency purposes, employees will receive training from the Crime Scene Unit. This training will include but not be limited to:

- Camera operation
- Proper usage
- Photographic techniques
- Proper completion of all associated paperwork
- Integrity considerations

At the conclusion of the training program, officers may be assigned a digital camera at the discretion of their supervisor.

EQUIPMENT – The technology of digital imaging is rapidly changing and improving. The Department is constantly reviewing the equipment and components utilized for digital imaging and processing. When practical, the Department may replace certain components, therefore, general terminology will be used for purposes of this order.

- Digital Cameras: this includes all associated accessories contained in each camera kit.

- Stand Alone Photo Printer: compatible with memory cards, but *not* connected to any computer, in order to facilitate the printing of images taken by the officers.

- CD-R: Compact Disc storage media.

- Dedicated computer: to include associated software designed for digital imaging.

PRINTING FROM MEMORY CARD – A stand-alone printer is available in the Crime Scene Unit area for the sole purpose of printing from memory cards. This will allow for the printing of desired photos to assist with their investigation or identification.

Pictures on photo quality paper will only be available through, and produced by, the Crime Scene Unit. Requests for photos on the photo quality paper

will be made through the officer's supervisor to the supervisor of the Crime Scene Unit.

SUBMISSION OF MEMORY CARDS – Each camera kit will contain memory cards. The amount and size capability of the memory card will be determined by the annual review. If the officer taking the photographs believes they will not have enough available memory to capture all the images needed from the scene, they will request, through their supervisor, that a member of the Crime Scene Unit be called in order to photograph the scene.

Officers may photograph more than one scene or incident on a memory card, but they are reminded they are not permitted to delete any photo from any memory card.

Any officer that utilized a digital camera will remove the memory card(s) used. They will place the card in a digital photo card envelope and complete the required form printed on the envelope.

The envelope will be placed in the slot in the Crime Scene Unit or given directly to a member of the Crime Scene Unit during their regular duty hours.

STORAGE OF IMAGES – The Crime Scene Unit will be responsible for processing and storage of digital images. The original and primary image will be retained and will not be subjected to compression for retention.

A member of the Crime Scene Unit will transfer the image from the memory card to the dedicated digital imaging computer's hard drive, or another hard drive specified for this purpose.

Each case report number will have a separate folder created on the hard drive. Additional digital images taken by separate personnel under the same case number will require the creation of sub folders in the case file folder.

Upon completion of the image transfer, the Crime Scene technician will delete all images contained on the memory card. The memory card will then be returned to the appropriate camera kit.

Requests for a working copy of digital images will be made through the officer's supervisor to the supervisor of the Crime Scene Unit.

SERIOUS CRIME SCENES – Whenever photographs are not taken or physical evidence is not recovered from the scene of a serious crime, the investigating deputy prepares a report citing reasons why.

DNA EVIDENCE:

The Crime Scene Investigator or individual processing crime/incident scenes will be properly equipped to collect, identify and package evidence so that it will not be changed in form and value when it reaches the laboratory. It will be the responsibility of the individual collecting evidence to maintain a chain of custody of that evidence in order to ensure that it is presented to the court in a professional manner and in compliance with all legal requirements.

The Crime Scene Investigator or individual gathering evidence must always be aware that physical evidence collected might someday have to be presented in a court of law; therefore, it is imperative that each individual exercise care in processing of a crime/incident scene so as not to overlook valuable evidence or contaminate or destroy collectable items.

FIRST RESPONDER RESPONSIBILITIES – Every person, from the first responding Deputy to the experienced detective, crime scene investigator, and evidence technician should be aware of important issues involved in the identification, collection, transportation, and storage of DNA evidence. Because extremely small samples of DNA can be used as evidence; and due to the possibility of secondary transfer of DNA from one object to another after the alleged incident, greater attention to contamination issues is necessary.

Evidence can be contaminated when DNA from another source becomes combined with DNA relevant to the case. This can happen when someone sneezes or coughs over the evidence or touches his or her mouth, nose or other part of the face and then touches the area of the evidence containing the DNA, or through simple contact between items of evidence.

PRECAUTIONS – Potential contamination of physical evidence can occur at the crime scene, during the collection, packaging, and transportation of the evidence to a secured facility or laboratory, and during evidence analysis and storage.

- While forensic scientists in the laboratory are sensitive to the issue of contamination and have developed protocols to identify and reduce the risk of contamination, law enforcement has been slower to incorporate precautions in contamination prevention.

- Recent advances in forensic DNA technology are making it even more important that law enforcement personnel become more sensitive to the issues of contamination.

Crime Scene Contamination - Crime scene contamination usually results through the actions of the personnel at the scene. In general, the greater number of personnel at the scene, the more likely it is that the scene/evidence could become contaminated. Because of the analyst's ability to analyze very small amounts of DNA from biological evidence, reducing the potential for contamination at crime scenes becomes ever more significant.

1. **Pre-Secured Scenes** - The potential for evidence (or crime scene) contamination increases as the number of people entering a crime scene also increases. Once a scene has been secured, the risk of contamination is greatly reduced.

2. **Post-Secured Scenes** - Once the scene has been secured, the potential for contamination still exists. Only one officer usually secures the scene.

Securing the Crime Scene - The risk of contamination in all crime scenes is reduced by thoroughly protecting the scene. Determining the dimensionality of the scene should be the first priority. Indoor scenes, by virtue of being enclosed structures, seem easier to secure. Outdoor scenes, on the other hand, are more difficult to secure because of the potential

contamination by agents such as weather conditions and crowds. As a result, these types of scenes require more personnel to properly protect.

1. **Restricting Access** - Providing visual boundaries to the scene will assist in restricting access and reducing contamination risks. Barrier tape is used to identify the outer perimeter of the scene.

2. **Command Post** - Once the area is defined, a command post should be established. Forming a command post reduces the potential for contamination of the scene by limiting personnel access to the scene and identifying persons entering and leaving the scene at specific times.

3. **Equipment** - The equipment used in documenting and processing crime scenes also represents a possible source of contamination. Crime scene personnel need to be cognizant of the possible cross contamination that can be caused by their equipment. This contamination can be easily controlled if crime scene personnel decontaminate their equipment before moving between areas at a crime scene, and before and after each crime scene.

    - Equipment which should be decontaminated includes, but is not limited to, their clothing, their note pads, photography equipment, sketching equipment and all processing equipment in their crime scene kits. Crimes involving multiple scenes have similar contamination issues, particularly if a suspect or more than one suspect commits a series of crimes in the same time frame.

    - The use of PPE is an effective mechanism to reduce contamination potential and subsequently, increase the investigative value of biological evidence that may be subjected to forensic DNA analysis. Appropriate PPE should be worn based on the circumstances of the scene. All of these items must be disposable. Most crime scene personnel wear booties, a mask and gloves. This is usually done as a biohazard exposure precaution rather than for reducing contamination risk.

4. **Decontamination Zone** - To reduce the potential for cross scene contamination, a decontamination zone must be established. This safe zone is the area where crime scene equipment and PPE can be safely cleaned, removed and properly discarded.

    - The decontamination zone must contain the appropriate cleaning and garbage disposal supplies, and all equipment for the decontamination of the person as well as their equipment.

    - Usually, decontamination involves the removal and discarding of disposable clothing and the wiping down of all equipment with a 10% solution of bleach. Other disinfectants may be appropriate for different equipment, but the most convenient as

well as the 'standard' of the safety industry is a 10% solution of bleach in water.

5. **Order of Evidence Collection** - Even after the crime scene is well secured, contamination risks may still exist.

   To reduce the risk of contamination, crime scene personnel should follow a protocol for evidence collection that inhibits evidence destruction and contamination. A sequence of evidence collection that could reduce contamination is to recover: trace, hairs and fibers first, then biological fluids, tool marks, visible finger print or footwear patterns, then finally, evidence that requires powder or chemical enhancement.

   The decision on what processing steps are needed in the crime scene is left to the judgment of crime scene personnel based on the evidence potential of that item.

DNA Collection Training Requirements - Each member of the CSI Division will receive training on the proper collection of DNA evidence. This training includes the best practices for the identification, preservation, and collection of DNA evidence along with packaging of DNA for submission to an accredited laboratory.

DNA COLLECTION PROCEDURES:

1. Air-dry evidence thoroughly before packaging (not in direct sunlight).

2. As with fingerprints, the effective use of DNA may require the collection and analysis of 'elimination samples'. These samples are necessary to determine whether the evidence came from the suspect or from someone else.

DNA STORAGE PROCEDURES:

1. Each piece of evidence will be packaged separately in clean paper bags or paper envelopes and sealed properly.

2. Do not use plastic bags, or staples.

DNA TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES:

1. When transporting and storing DNA evidence, keep the evidence dry and at room temperature.

2. Liquid specimens should be stored in the refrigerator.

3. Once the evidence has been secured in paper bags or paper envelopes, it must be sealed, labeled and transported in a way that ensures proper identification of where it was found and proper chain of custody. Never place DNA evidence in plastic bags because the moisture retained in the bags can be damaging to the DNA.

4. Direct sunlight and hot conditions also may be harmful to DNA. Avoid keeping evidence in places that may get hot, such as a room or cruiser without air conditioning.

SUBMISSION OF DNA EVIDENCE – The Deputy or Investigator assigned to a particular case is responsible for requesting laboratory examinations and for identifying what forensic test(s) is to be performed. An examination request form is completed and accompanies the evidence submitted to the forensic lab by the responsible Investigator, or Deputy.

Packing and Transportation Requirements - All evidence will be packaged in accordance with the procedures established by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division. Evidence must be preserved so as to retain its integrity and original condition to the maximum extent possible.

Documentation Requirement - To maintain the chain of custody, the following documents will accompany evidence brought to the lab:

- ***Property Report*** (for evidence brought in from the field)
- Appropriate laboratory evidence examination request form

Evidence Receipts - All evidence delivered to the specified forensic laboratory will be properly receipted for by having the official accepting custody, sign and date the ***Property and Evidence Sheet***. When evidence is released from the specified laboratory, the agency official that receives custody of the evidence will sign and date the ***Property and Evidence Sheet.***

The specified forensic laboratory generally provides a written report of examination findings as standard procedure for all agency requests. An examination request form may be completed and submitted to the specified forensic laboratory by the responsible Investigator or Crime Scene Investigator requesting a written report of examination findings.

CODIS - One investigative tool available to law enforcement is CODIS (Combined DNA Index System). CODIS, an electronic database of DNA profiles that can identify suspects, is similar to the AFIS database. All states have implemented a DNA index of individuals convicted of certain crimes. Therefore, law enforcement officers have the ability to identify possible suspects when no prior suspect existed. The CODIS system is available through the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division if requested by law enforcement.

LABORATORY ANALYSIS:

It is the responsibility of the primary investigating deputy of a crime scene to request laboratory examination or analysis of evidence. The primary investigating deputy is the deputy to whom the criminal incident is assigned. The primary investigating deputy is responsible for completing all necessary forms required for the examination. It is also the investigating deputy's responsibility to periodically check with P&E to ensure evidence is transmitted to the lab for examination.

The primary investigating deputy may, at his own discretion, transport evidence himself or appoint a designee for transport. It is the responsibility of the Crime Scene/Forensics Supervisor or his designee to check with P&E on a daily basis to determine if there is evidence awaiting in-house laboratory examination.

Sheriff's Office personnel requesting lab examinations conducted by SLED should complete a P&E form listing only those items to be analyzed. Items of the same case not requiring lab analysis are listed on a separate P&E form. In addition to the P&E form, a SLED Laboratory/Forensics Services Request form is completed.

Both lab analysis forms document:

1. Date and time of transfer
2. Receiving person's name and functional responsibility
3. Reason for transfer
4. Name and location of the laboratory, synopsis of the event, and examinations desired when transferred to a laboratory not within the agency

Evidence collected at a crime scene may identify a specific suspect, but only when a known exemplar is available for comparison. When a known exemplar is not available, the evidence is preserved and stored in P&E, pending collection of comparison items. Once these are obtained, the evidence is forwarded to the appropriate laboratory for examination purposes.

Records on Physical Evidence submitted to a laboratory for examination continue the chain of custody by documenting:

1. Name of the officer last having custody of item;
2. Date and time of submission or mailing, and method used for transmission;
3. Date and time of receipt in the laboratory; and
4. Name and signature of the person in the laboratory receiving the evidence.

In all cases of laboratory examination, submitting Deputies request written reports of lab results. In-house and SLED forms for laboratory analysis include the name of the person to whom the laboratory report is to be sent.

Whenever submission of evidence to a crime laboratory is delayed for any reason, such as awaiting a known exemplar, the reason is noted on the report accompanying the evidence to the laboratory when it is submitted.

STOLEN VEHICLE EVIDENCE PROCESSING:

When a stolen vehicle is recovered, the agency that reported it as stolen, the owner of the vehicle, and any other appropriate persons are promptly notified. **Before the vehicle can be released, the reporting deputy processes it for evidence**. If owner notification occurs before processing is complete, the owner is advised the vehicle will be released after evidence

processing. If the vehicle is in a condition inhibiting immediate processing, such as wet from dew or hot from probable arson, it is towed with "hold - pending evidence processing" and a Laboratory Request Form is completed and turned in.

It is the reporting deputy's responsibility to ensure the vehicle is processed for evidence and to notify the registered owner and/or tow service that the vehicle can be released. If the "hold" is placed or requested by an on-call investigator the on-call investigator assumes this responsibility. If circumstances dictate a need, supervisors may use discretion in varying from these requirements.

COMPUTER EQUIPMENT EVIDENCE PROCESSING:

Computer equipment can be severely damaged or data may be lost due to improper shutdown procedures. Computers can be programmed to erase or destroy data when normal start-up or shutdown procedures are not followed. If a computer is seized as evidence and it is activated at the time of seizure, a CID on-call investigator is to be contacted for shutdown procedures. If the computer is deactivated at the time of seizure, it is to be placed in Property and Evidence. CID will provide a Forensic Computer Specialist to aid with retrieving evidence from the computer's hard drive. Disks (all types), drives, and peripheral equipment are to be examined by a Forensic Computer Specialist for retrieval of data.

The investigating case officer will ensure that proper probable cause exists or consent has been signed or a valid search warrant exists prior to the seizure of any computer equipment or software.

Care should be taken in the seizing of computer equipment to ensure that the evidence is not erased or destroyed:

1. Separate the victims or suspects from the equipment.

2. If the computer is discovered to be powered on at the time of seizure, the case officer, at his discretion, may contact ACSO computer personnel for advice on shutting the system down or waiting on a trained forensic expert. **If it appears that files are in the process of being erased, pull the power from the rear of the computer and disconnect any internet connections immediately.**

3. If the computer is on or off, pull the power cord from the rear of the computer. Pulling the power from the wall could cause a power surge. **Do not attempt to shut down the computer using the mouse or a power button.** Any action performed on the computer is recorded onto the hard drive and will alter evidence.

4. Labeling and tagging of computer equipment will be performed in accordance with proper evidence collection.

5. Devices capable of storing data, such as printers, external hard drives, CD/DVDs, floppy discs and flash drives, should be taken as well and entered into evidence, if the seizure is computer related.

Extra care should be taken when handling any storage device as damage could occur from excessive movement or exposure to extreme temperatures.

6. Cell phones that are collected as evidence should be powered off and the battery removed before placing into evidence. Cell phones can be erased by the carrier remotely, if accidently turned on or left on and a signal is acquired. In the event that a battery is inaccessible, extra care should be taken when placing and storing the phone in evidence; do not power on the phone. The same procedure should be used when collecting IPods or any other media related devices that operate on battery.

7. To ensure that all evidence will be admissible in court and to save evidence from destruction, only an authorized Anderson County computer technician and/or the FBI, ATF, US Secret Service or SLED designated computer technician may perform analysis or investigation of the computer or software.

EVIDENCE STORAGE: An inventory of all evidence seized is prepared to include the following:

1. Description of items, such as make, model and serial numbers
2. Source from whom or where obtained
3. Name of person collecting items

All evidence is placed into P&E before the end of tour-of-duty. There are no exceptions to this rule without supervisory approval. In the event evidence is seized during an out-of-town investigation, the supervisor who grants approval for delayed entry into P&E is to complete a descriptive inventory over the phone.

EVIDENCE COLLECTION REPORTING: All personnel involved in the collection and preservation of evidence are to complete supplemental reports to the original incident report to include the following:

1. Case number
2. Date and time requested to respond to scene
3. Date and time of arrival
4. Location of the crime
5. Victim names, if known
6. Suspect names, if known
7. Action taken at the scene, including a list of physical evidence recovered
8. Disposition of collected evidence after seizure
9. Name of investigating deputy

Before the end of tour-of-duty or as soon as feasible, it is the investigating officer's responsibility to submit a detailed report describing the sequence of events that relate to the collection of evidence. The first responding officer will submit a crime scene log with the incident report, unless designated otherwise by the shift supervisor or Captain.

EVIDENCE CONTROL: All evidence will be controlled in accordance with GO-139 (Property Management).

Approved by:
John S. Skipper, Jr., Sheriff

APPENDIX
Appropriate Method to Process Latent Prints

When dusting a non-porous surface such as glass, soda cans, mirrors, or metal surfaces such as refrigerators etc., use a standard brush and black powder. Charge the brush by placing it into the powder jar then gently twist the brush and shake off the excess over the powder jar. Gently twist the brush handle between the thumb and forefinger and brush lightly (in a circular motion) over the surface to be processed. When a latent becomes visible, stop dusting. Gently blow the excess dust off of the surface and then apply the lift tape.

When applying the lift tape, pull enough tape off of the roll to place it over the entire latent print. Once in place, use your fingernail or eraser-type object to rub out the air bubbles beneath the tape. This will cause the tape to adhere to the powdered latent. Then, simply pull off the tape in one (non-jerking) motion. Place the tape on an **unlined** card and once again rub out the air.

If the surface is porous such as paper or cardboard, it is recommended that the Deputy submit the item to Evidence for processing by an evidence technician.

If you have any questions about the proper technique that should be used to process an item or surface, contact the Crime Scene Unit or submit the item to an evidence technician with a request for processing. *Training on any technique for dusting and lifting of latent prints is available at the Crime Scene Forensic Unit upon request.*