



Evidence Collection

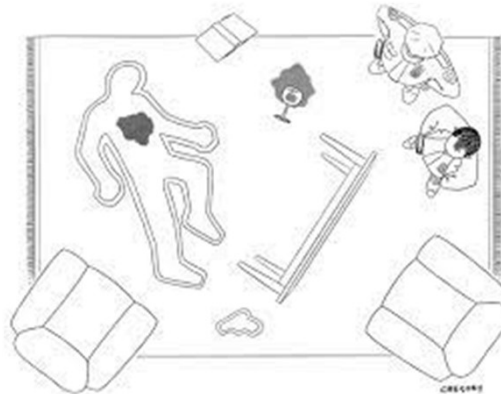
CHIEF ED ACKLEY

2024 July In-Service Training



Before we Start:

Things to consider:





Crime Scenes/Evidence collection and preservation

- ▶ Introduction:

- ▶ Crime scene investigation is the meeting point of science, logic and law.
- ▶ “Processing a crime scene” is a long, tedious process that involves purposeful documentation of the conditions at the scene.
- ▶ The collection of any physical evidence that could possibly illuminate what happened and point to who did it.
- ▶ There is no typical crime scene, there is no typical body of evidence and there is no typical investigation approach.



Investigations of Crime Scenes

- ▶ What is a Crime Scene - A crime scene is a location where a crime took place.
- ▶ What is Evidence - Evidence, broadly construed, is anything presented in support of an assertion.



Investigations of Crime Scenes

- ▶ *Conducting the Initial Survey of a Crime Scene.*

- Ask yourself these questions

1. Is the scene safe to enter?
2. Does the scene contain a person who may need medical assistance?
3. Do any hazards exist to emergency responders?
4. Is a search warrant needed?
5. Making an initial observation of a scene, is it a crime?

If so remember, the best search options are typically the most time consuming.

You can never over document the physical evidence. The initial search is the one chance to perform the search correctly.



Investigations of Crime Scenes

- ▶ *Conducting the Initial Survey of a Crime Scene.*

- Precautions at the Scene.

1. Approach the scene safely - First Priority.
2. Be aware of discarded items that may be evidence - Weapons, hazardous materials...
3. Always secure and protect entry to the scene - atmospheric and or Dangerous persons.
4. Are you going to need assistance – Notify Supervisory Personnel



Investigations of Crime Scenes

- ▶ Once you have answered your initial concerns, you will start to make a plan on how you will start to conduct the crime scene.
- ▶ The safety and physical well-being of officers and other individuals, in and around the crime scene, are the initial responding officer(s) first priority. The responding officer(s) should:
 - ▶ Approach the scene in a manner designed to reduce risk of harm to officer while
 - ▶ maximizing the safety of victims, witnesses, and others in the area.
 - ▶ Survey the scene for dangerous persons and control the situation.
 - ▶ Notify supervisory personnel and call for assistance/backup.



Investigations of Crime Scenes

- ▶ *Conducting a Crime Scene Search.*

1. Prepare a narrative description.
 2. Make notes-for your written report later.
 3. What are you observing.
 4. Contacts-people interviewed/arrested.
 5. Evidence found and recovered-Tagged (time and location), packaged, photographed, all items listed on a property page.
- * Make sure you have the correct equipment and supplies to process the crime scene. Start with the plan you have made to conduct the search. Documentation of a crime scene is extremely important. Do not touch, move or alter any evidentiary item until you document the scene.

Photographing Crime Scenes





Photographing Crime Scenes

- Photographs allow a visual permanent record of the crime scene and items of evidence collected .
- Photographs should be taken as soon as possible, to depict the scene as it is observed before anything is handled, moved, or initiated into the scene.
- The photographs allow a visual permanent record of the crime scene and items of evidence collected from the crime scene.

Photographing Crime Scenes

- ❑ Taking crime scene photographs:
 - ❖ - Photographs should be taken as soon as possible.
 - ✓ - Three Positions or views:
 - ✓ - Overall scene.
 - ✓ - Mid-range photographs.
 - ✓ - Close up.





Photographing Crime Scenes

- ❑ There are three positions or views that the crime scene investigator need.
 - Far, which is the overall scene photographs showing the most view possible of the scene.
 - Mid-range photographs showing the relationships of items and a close up of the item of evidence.
 - Close up should be taken of items that have serial numbers, tags and vin's.



Photographing Crime Scenes

Photographs start to finish:

1. Photograph entire area before it is entered.
2. Photograph victims, crowds, and vehicles.
3. Photograph entire scene with Overall, Medium, and close-up coverage.

Use of a measurement scale when appropriate.

A second photograph adding a measuring device should be taken of items where the photo will assist in the analytical process.



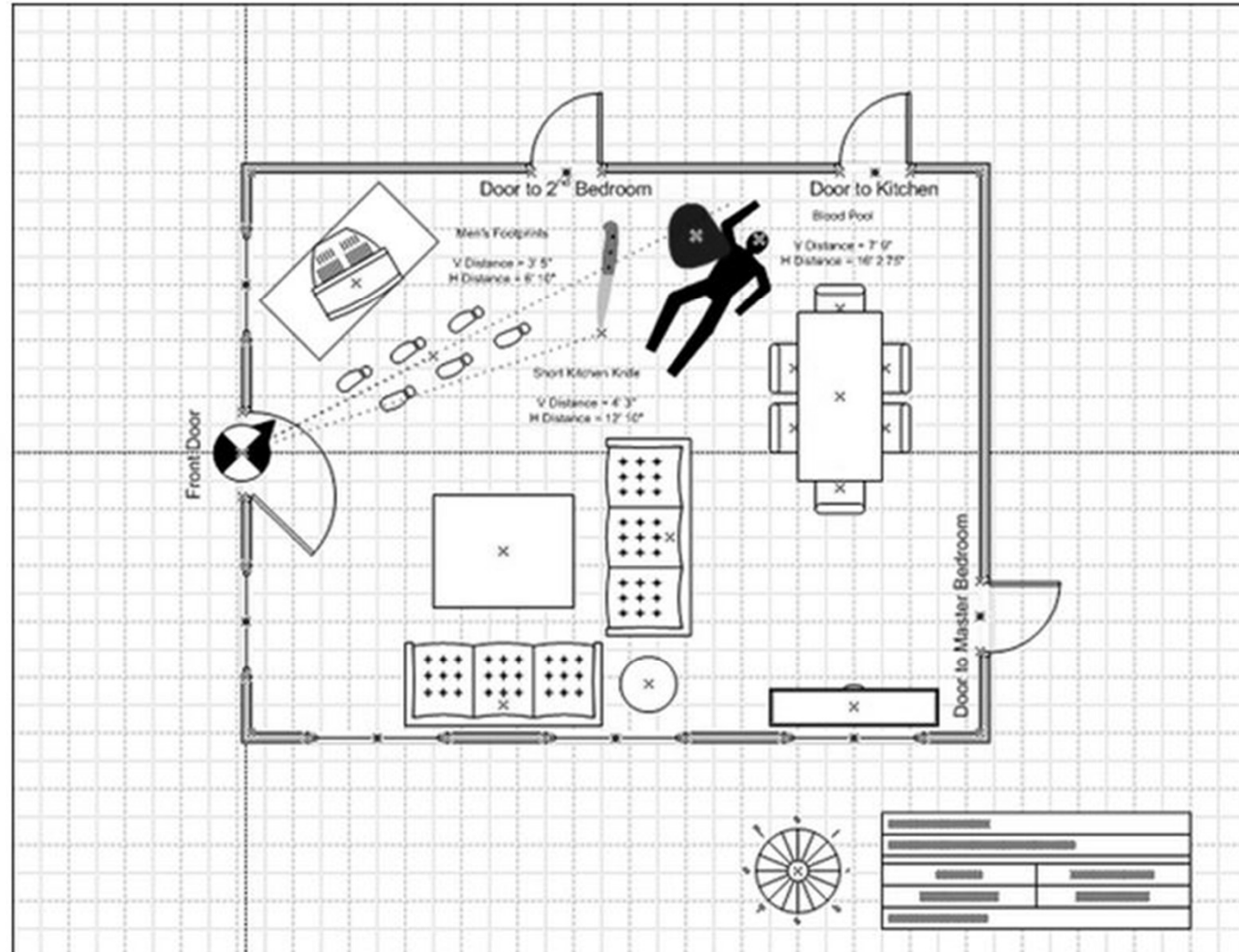
Photographing Crime Scenes

Photographs start to finish:

4. Photograph major evidence items before they are moved.
5. Photograph all latent fingerprints and other impression evidence before lifting and casting are accomplished.
6. Prepare photographic log and photographic sketch.

Photograph major evidence items before they are moved

Crime Scene Diagram.





Prepare a diagram/sketch of the scene

- A diagram establishes a permanent record of; items, conditions and distance/size relationships.
- Diagrams supplement photographs and videos.
- A rough sketch is drawn at the scene and changes are not made once you-have left the scene.
- Sketches should contain sufficient measurements, locations of evidence items and details to be used as a model for a drawn to scale diagram.
- Take accurate and consistent measurements and triangulate for exact distance.
- Follow all department procedures for completing a sketch/diagram.



FIELD NOTES

1. What is a Field Note?
 - to remember and record the behaviors, activities, events
2. Why take notes?
 - basis to produce meaning and an understanding
3. What should you be writing down?
 - observation, statements and any other information to assist in the preparation of reports



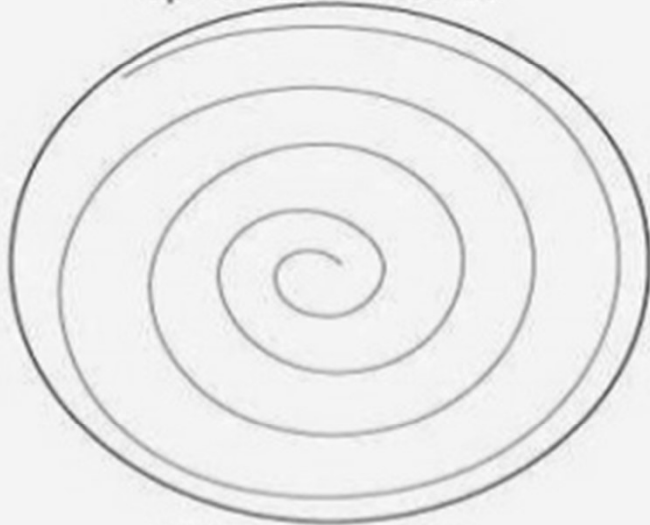
Survey/Search Methods

1. Purpose of crime scene investigation?
 - A. To help establish what happened
 - B. To Identify the responsible person.
2. Method.
 - A. Carefully documenting of conditions at the scene.
 - B. Recognizing all relevant physical evidence.

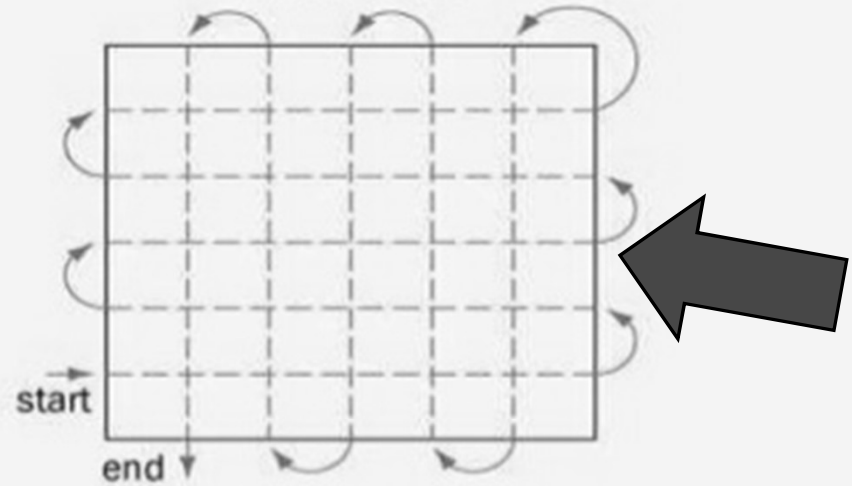
The ability to recognize and properly collect physical evidence is oftentimes critical to both solving and prosecuting violent crimes. It is no exaggeration to say that in the majority of cases, the law enforcement officer who protects and searches a crime scene plays a critical role in determining whether physical evidence will be used in solving or prosecuting violent crimes

SEARCH METHODS

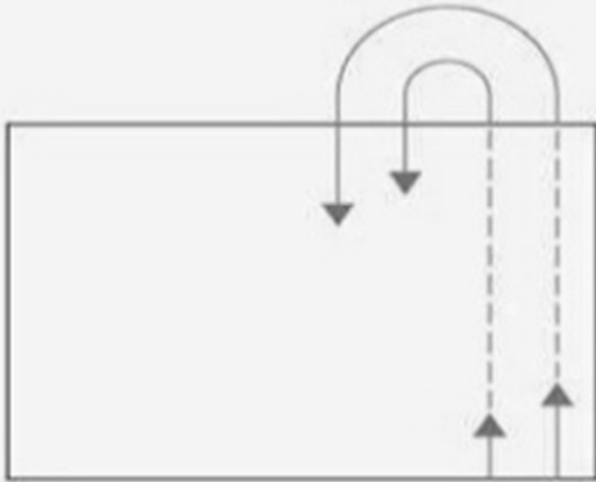
Spiral search method



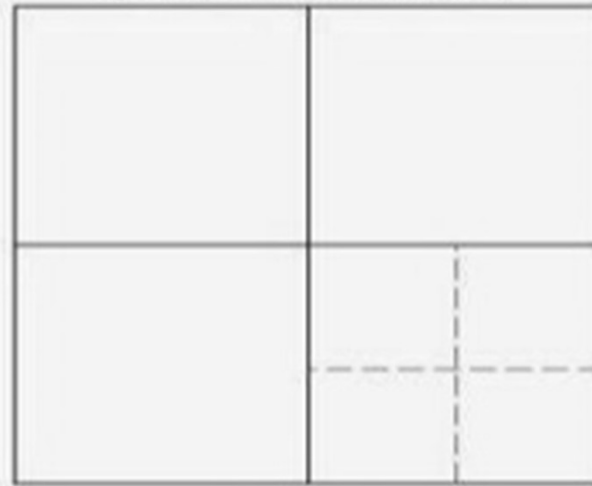
Grid method



Strip or line search



Quadrant or zone search





Search Methods

- Strip Search: (lower left picture) Commonly used when searching a large area looking for a large object.
- Several Explorers will stand in one long line and all walk the same direction. Stakes and string can also be used to create "Lanes" for which each Explorer would be responsible.
- Grid Search: (Upper right) This is the **most thorough search technique**. Similar to a strip search but also done in opposite directions.
- Elevation Zone Search: This type of search is used with indoor crime scene where evidence may be on the walls or in the ceiling (example: bullet holes, blood splatters etc.)
- Zone Search: (lower right) The Team Leader should observe and supervise the search while other team members perform the search. With a zone search items are unlikely to be missed.
- Spiral Search: (upper left) Commonly used when looking for an object that is suspected to be a specific distance from another, for example: shell casing from a gun or an object thrown by hand from a specific location, but thrown in an unknown direction. A stake in the center with a string attached will assure proper distance and avoid overlapping already searched areas or missing areas not yet searched.

Precautions at the scene

- -A deliberate, methodical, disciplined approach to collection and preservation of evidence is essential.
- One exception.....
 - ❖ Evidence Integrity is at Risk.



Precautions at the scene

Types of Equipment Include:

- Tyvek white paper body suit.
- Paper mask which covers nose and mouth.
- Eye Protection.
- Latex or Nitrile gloves.
- Sleeve protectors.
- Shoe covers.
- Hair net.



Evidence Collection and Removal

Types of Evidence
Include:

- Fingerprints
- Footwear impressions
- Hair
- Fibers
- Biological fluids
- Materials for DNA analysis
- Anything used to commit the crime



Evidence Collection and Removal

- ▶ The Crime scene Investigator should prioritize the order in which evidence is collected.
- ▶ Biological evidence, trace materials, and evidence of a fragile nature should be collected first.
- ▶ Collection methods used to gather and package this crime scene evidence vary.
- ▶ The use of an alternate Light Source (ALS) or oblique lighting may be necessary.
- ▶ A sample detected with the ALS should be properly packaged with a notation alerting the analyst that it is a luminescent sample.



Preservation of Evidence

From the Crime Scene....

All evidence must be inventoried and secured to preserve its integrity. Crime scene evidence admissibility in court is predicated upon an unbroken chain or custody. It is important to demonstrate that the evidence introduced at trial is the same evidence collected at the crime scene, and that access was controlled and documented.

To the courtroom.

Cell Phones

Seizure of Devices Containing
Electronic Evidence...





Computer Crimes Evidence


- ▶ **Cellular Telephones**
- ▶ **Computers**
- ▶ **Media Players such as Ipods or (Purchased MP3 Player from store are approved.)**
- ▶ **Evidence should handle evidence as little as possible and under no circumstances should staff turn these devices on or attempt to extract information form them.**

Senate Bill S2615



Senate Bill S2615

- ▶ New York electronic communications privacy act; search and seizure of electronic devices and electronic communications.
- ▶ Section one amends the criminal procedure law by adding the new article 695.
- ▶ This bill would require government agents and agencies to obtain a search warrant for physical or electronic access to electronic device information.
- ▶ The warrant must be described with particularity and the government agency must provide contemporaneous notice to the target of the warrant, with exceptions for emergency situations.




Chain-of-Custody

► Proper evidence packaging includes:

Appropriate packaging and labeling of all items, each item properly

- 1) sealed,
- 2) marked,
- 3) correct and
- 4) consistent information recorded on:
 - A) labels and
 - B) procedural documentation.



Chain-of-Custody

The rules governing chain-of-custody is vital for an investigator. For example:

In a sexual assault incident, the victim is typically transported to another location to have a sexual assault examination performed.

Many jurisdictions have established teams to perform these examinations, and they go by several names such as: sexual Assault Victim Examination (S.A.V.E.), sexual Assault-Nurse Examiner (S.A.N.E), sexual assault Response Team (S.A.R.T) .

The examination involves the collection of the victims clothing, hair samples, swabs for body fluids, and documentation of bruising and bite-marks. The materials collected are packaged by the team members.

Chain-of-Custody

RECEIVED BY: _____ DATE: 00347953

00347953

EVIDENCE

(TO BE OPENED BY AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY)

NOTE
 A) DO NOT USE THIS BAG FOR ANY EVIDENCE THAT HAS WET/DAMP BODY FLUIDS ON IT.
 B) TO SEAL BAG, PEEL OFF RELEASE LINER, THEN SEAL BAG BY PRESSING DOWN ON GLUE LINE.

CASE NUMBER: _____
 DESCRIPTION OF ENCLOSED EVIDENCE: _____
 SUBMITTING AGENCY: _____
 TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____
 EVIDENCE RECORDED BY: _____
 VICTIM'S FULL NAME: _____ (PRINT NAME)
 SUSPECT'S FULL NAME: _____
 EVIDENCE BAG SEALED BY: _____
 DATE SEALED: _____ TIME SEALED: _____ AM/PM

CHAIN OF CUSTODY			
ITEM DATE TIME	NO. QTY.	RELEASED BY: NAME, BADGE NO., SIGN	RECEIVED BY: NAME, BADGE NO., SIGN
1			
2			
3			
4			

FOR CRIME LAB PERSONNEL ONLY

CONDITION OF EVIDENCE BAG UPON RECEIPT AT LAB: _____ CRIME LAB CASE NO.: _____
 SEALED OTHER _____ NOTES: _____

FINAL DISPOSAL ACTION

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS EVIDENCE

EVIDENCE
 FOUND PROPERTY
 SAFEKEEPING

(TO BE OPENED BY AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY)

Do not use this bag for wet items, items containing biological fluids which may spoil or metal objects which may rust.

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

E.R.P.: _____ CUC # _____
 Facility: _____ Phone # _____
 Offense: _____ Charge: _____
 Description: _____
 Item(s) Description: _____
 Victim(s): _____
 Suspect(s): _____
 Location seized: _____
 Collected by: _____ PP: _____
 Date: _____ Time: _____

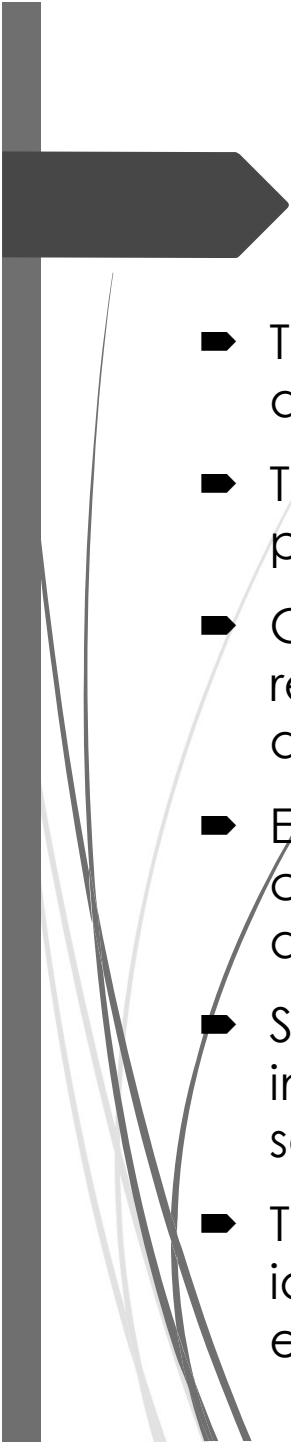
CHAIN OF CUSTODY		
FROM	TO	DATE

FOR CRIME LAB PERSONNEL ONLY

Condition of evidence bag upon receipt at lab: Sealed Other (describe): _____
 Crime Lab Case No.: _____
 Notes: _____

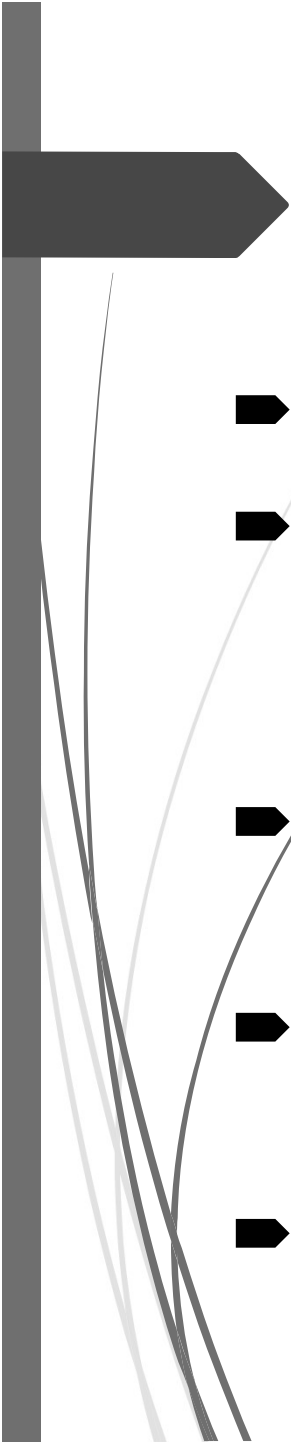
INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Use a ballpoint pen to complete all information before loading bag.
- 2) Tear where indicated and retain receipt.
- 3) Peel away the same backing and fold the same strip over the bag to seal.



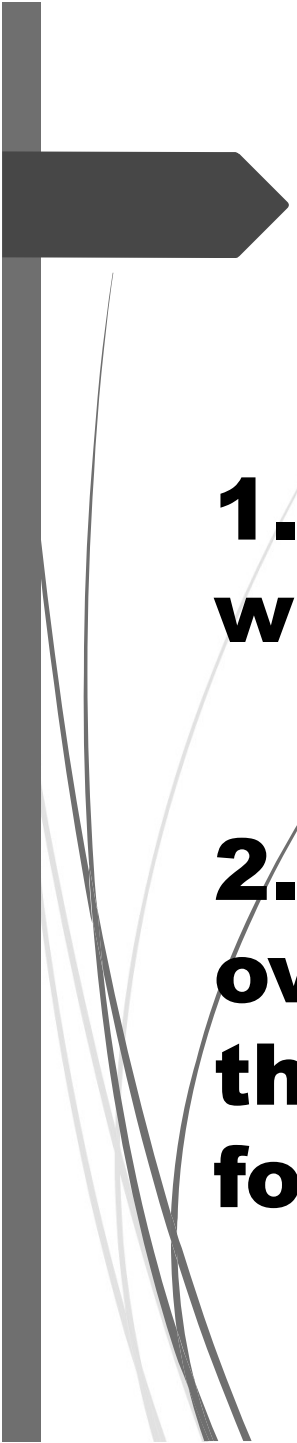
Chain-of-Custody

- ▶ The evidence is marked and packaged for submission to a department's property and evidence section.
- ▶ This may start by placing evidence in a locker or bin (agency policy and storage capabilities).
- ▶ Generally, submissions to the forensic laboratory are done on a request for analysis form, listing the evidence items, and a documented chain of custody. NYS Lab Form 2 10/19.
- ▶ Each individual assuming custody of the evidence from collection through analysis signs the chain of custody document.
- ▶ Some departments have automated this process using an information management system, whereby all transfers are securely done using barcodes.
- ▶ The chain of custody report (or the form used for packaging) will identify each individual contributing to the analysis of the evidentiary materials.



Chain-of-Custody

- ▶ Make sure your information is accurate
- ▶ Information must be consistent on all paperwork; who, what, when, where, etc..
- ▶ Do not use generic terms when describing contraband (i.e. shank, etc.)
- ▶ Be as specific as possible to describe item, i.e., (Hat, Shirt, Syringe, Knife).
- ▶ Don't make assumptions, report facts.



Chain-of-Custody

- 1. The chain of custody begins when the item is collected.**
- 2. Any time contraband is turned over from one person to another, the person receiving it shall sign for it before taking possession.**

Chain-of-Custody

► Biological Fluids and Stains:

-Proper handling is essential

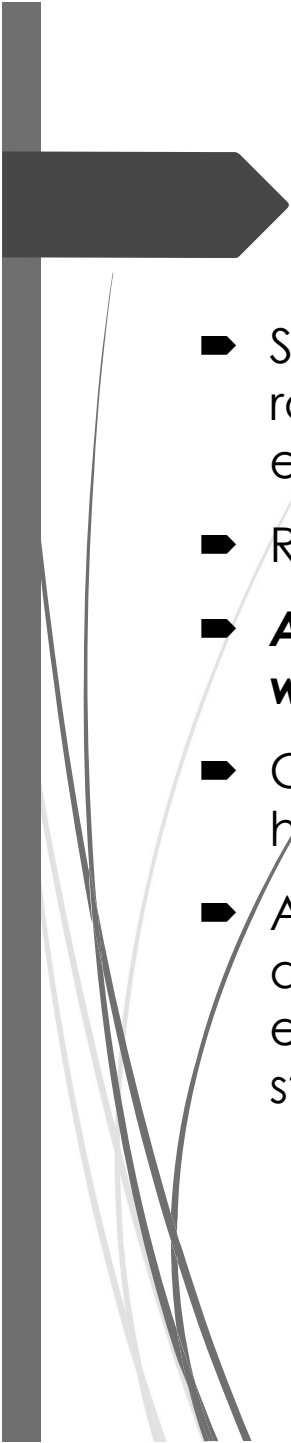
A. Use disposable gloves.

B. Any item confiscated that has blood, semen, urine, etc., should be handled with extreme care.

C. Most items should be packaged in paper bags and all should be marked with

“Biohazard.”





Chain-of-Custody

- ▶ Since blood and other body fluid evidence is biological and is rapidly decomposed by bacteria and mold, it is absolutely essential that such evidence is handled properly.
- ▶ Remember safety measures for biological hazards.
- ▶ ***Always wear disposable gloves when handling material stained with blood or other body fluids.***
- ▶ Check with your agency's safety protocols for biological hazards.
- ▶ All items should be sealed and labeled for identification per your department policy. Evidence collection materials such as envelopes, bags, etc. will dictate how you package fluids and stains.

Chain-of-Custody

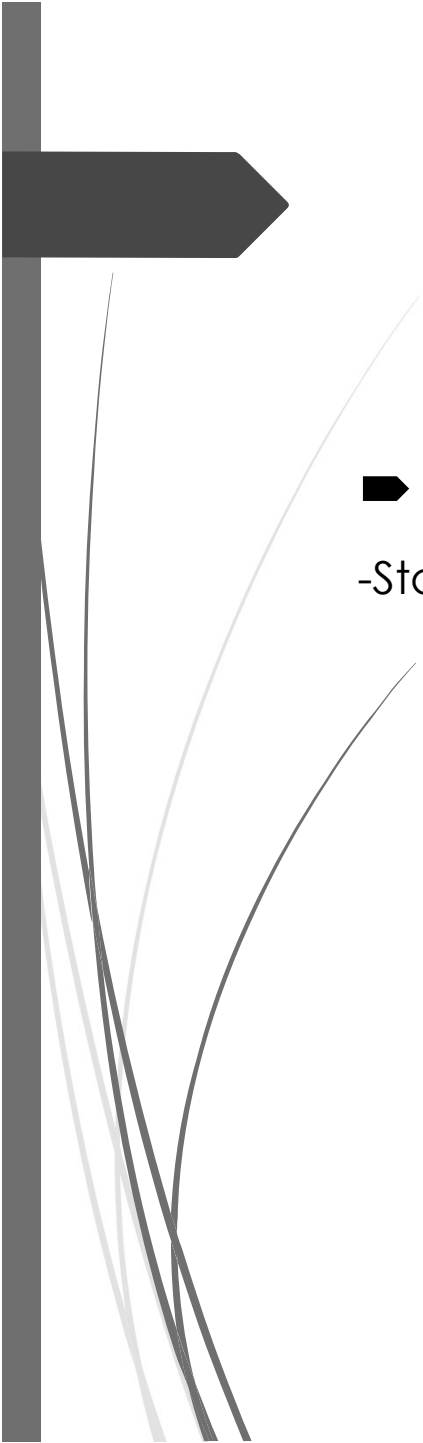
► Biological Fluids and Stains:

-Rape Evidence

- Evidence normally collected in **rape or sodomy cases** includes a variety of samples which are relatively constant from case to case.
- In the case of a violent crime such as a sexual assault, attention may be directed to the clothing and the person of the victim(s) and the suspect(s).
- An investigator might find body fluids, stains, torn clothing, fingerprints, fibers, hair, and other trace materials in the areas where the attack took place. Potential crime scene evidence such as saliva, bite marks, semen, hair, skin tissue under the fingernails, and other trace materials may be found on the victim(s).

Transferred evidence such as cosmetics, vaginal fluid, hair from the victim, and blood may also be found on the suspect. Once potential evidence is located and documented, the next step is to collect and package the items in a manner that prevents contamination, loss, and deleterious change.



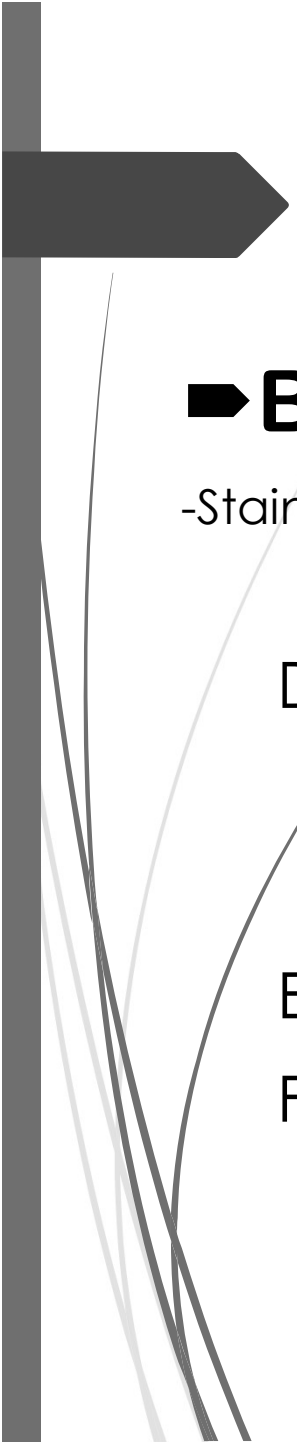


Chain-of-Custody

► **Biological Fluids and Stains:**

-Stains on Garments or Fabrics

- A. Wet stained fabrics must air dry.
- B. Package multiple items separately
- C. DO NOT USE PLASTIC BAGS

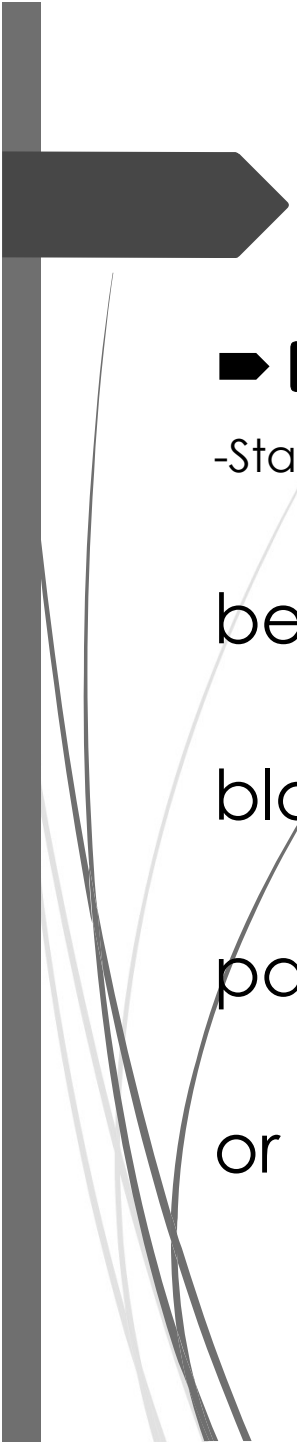


Chain-of-Custody

► **Biological Fluids and Stains:**

-Stains on Garments or Fabrics:

- D. Avoid unnecessary handling of garments with:
 - A) blood or
 - B) seminal stains.
- E. Initial and dated in an area away from the stain.
- F. Label and seal all items

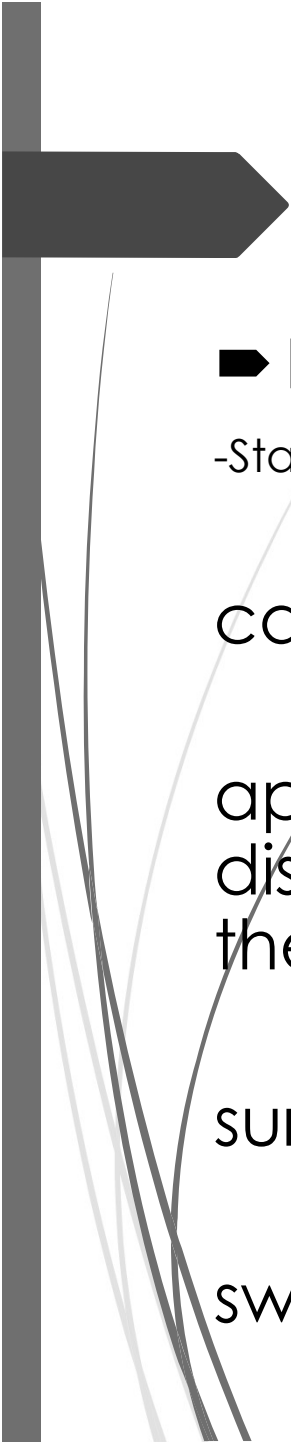


Chain-of-Custody

► **Biological Fluids and Stains:**

-Stains on Surfaces

1. Items to be checked for blood should not be dusted for Prints.
2. Whenever possible, submit the bloodstained item itself for analysis.
3. If this is impractical, detach or cut out the part with the stain for submission.
4. Carefully package to avoid contamination or loss.
5. Do not put any tape directly on the stain.



Chain-of-Custody

► **Biological Fluids and Stains:**


-Stains on Surfaces

6. Bloodstains can be swabbed off items which cannot be submitted.

7. Swab the blood onto a cotton-tipped applicator that has been slightly dampened with distilled water, in a manner which concentrates the sample.

8. Swab an unstained area of the same surface in the same manner for a control.

9. Air dry and package the stain and control swabs separately in paper.




Chain-of-Custody

► **Biological Fluids and Stains:**

-Stains on Surfaces

10. Concentrated stains on walls, floors, etc. (i.e., items that cannot be cut out and submitted), can be scraped off into a piece of paper which is then carefully folded and then placed in a pillbox or other suitable container.

11. This container and the paper should be initialed and dated or otherwise identified.



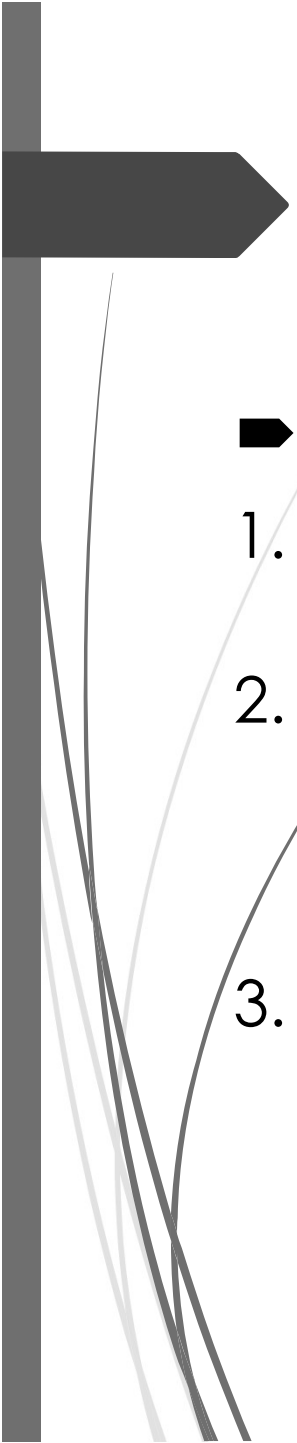
Chain-of-Custody

► **Biological Fluids and Stains:**

-Stains on Surfaces

12. If the stain is moist, let it air dry first, or swab it onto a cotton tipped applicator then air dry.

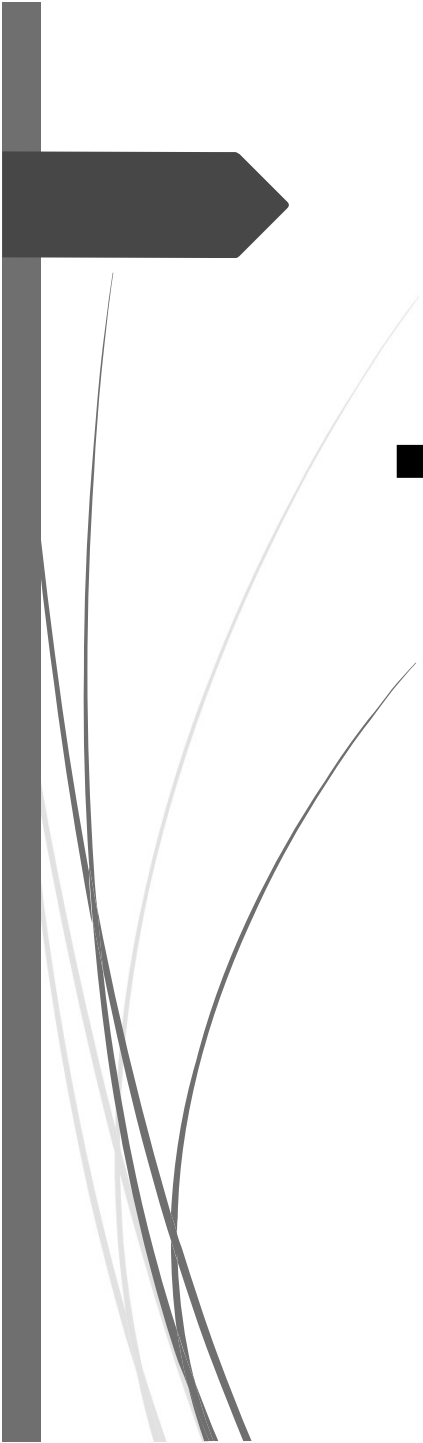
13. The sample should then be submitted to the lab as soon as possible, along with the rest of the evidence. In the period between obtaining the blood sample and transporting it to the lab.



Chain-of-Custody

► Firearms & Ammunition

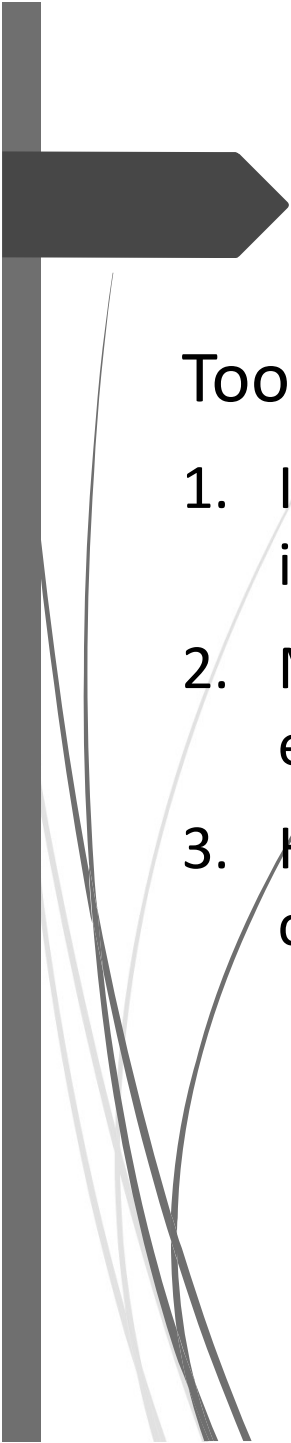
1. Always unload the firearm before submitting it for evidence.
2. The sample should then be submitted to the lab as soon as possible, along with the rest of the evidence. In the period between obtaining the blood sample and transporting it to the lab.
3. The sample should then be submitted to the lab as soon as possible, along with the rest of the evidence. In the period between obtaining the blood sample and transporting it to the lab.



Chain-of-Custody

► Hairs and fibers

- A. Hair evidence is generally small.
- B. Detecting hair by conducting a visual search, alternate light sources, and magnification search. Picking, scraping, combing, or vacuuming are means of collecting.
- C. If the location of a foreign hair is important, they should be collected and packaged separately.
- D. Wrap clothing or evidence items separately.
- E. All items should be sealed and labeled for identification.



Chain-of-Custody

Tool marks and tools:

1. Impression, cut, gouge, or abrasion caused by a tool coming into contact with another object.
2. May be photographed , if easily removed it may be taken as evidence.
3. Hard to accurately reproduce the tool mark for future comparison.



Overview

► **Finishing processing:**

- Final survey is a review of all aspects of the search
- Discuss the search with all personnel
- Photograph the scene showing the final condition
- Ensure all evidence is secured
- Ensure all equipment is retrieved
- Ensure hiding places or difficult access areas have not been overlooked



Overview

► Release:

- Release the crime scene after the final survey
- Crime scene release documentation should include the time and date of release, to whom released, and by whom released
- Ensure that the evidence is collected according to legal requirements, documented, policy and marked for identification
- Consider the need for specialists such as a blood-pattern analyst or a medical examiner to observe the scene before it is released



Overview

► Release:

- Once the scene has been released reentry may require a warrant
- The scene should be released only when all personnel are satisfied that the scene was searched correctly and completely
- Only the person in charge should release the scene



Chain of Custody for Evidence

► **The Chain of Custody requires three Types of Testimony:**

1. Testimony that a piece of evidence is what it purports to be.
2. Testimony of continuous possession by each individual.
3. Testimony by each person who had possession of that the particular piece of evidence did remain in substantial same condition from possession of one person to another.



Packaging

All packages should contain the following information:

1. Description of the item – use generic terms, not jail lingo like “shank”
2. Where it was found
3. Person's name and number (if applicable)
4. Date and time found
5. Name of staff seizing the item

PAPERWORK ATTACHED TO PACKAGING IS NOT ENOUGH!!



Conclusion

Take Your Time

