


HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL		
Issue Date February 2021	Review Date February 2022	Directive Number 3.5.3
Accreditation Index:		Rescinds: Directive 3.5.3 of November 2019
Section: Three – Staff Support Responsibilities		Chapter: Five – Evidence Handling
Chief of Police: <i>John F. Viola</i>		

**SUBJECT: EVIDENCE AND PROPERTY CHAIN OF CUSTODY
FORM**

I. PURPOSE

The recording, storage and retrieval of property turned into the Department is a function performed routinely by the Department. The proper recording of information pertaining to property in the possession of the Department is essential to ensure that a procedure is in place that will account for the type, description, ownership, and return of property (if appropriate).

II. POLICY

It will be the policy of this Department that a Property Receipt form will be given to any person who surrenders an item or items of value to any member of this Department.

III. ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY

- A. Upon the acquisition of any property of value by any member of this Department, including property turned into the Department, property seized, confiscated, impounded, a report shall be made in Alert. Any property taken from a prisoner during periods of incarceration to be returned shall be noted on the detainee intake form.
- B. An exception to this policy shall be in the service of an authorized search warrant signed by a judge. A copy of the search warrant inventory form shall serve as the Evidence and Property Chain of Custody Form. However, in the event that items seized, found or recovered that are not

listed on this inventory form, an Evidence and Property Chain of Custody Form will be completed for these items.

IV. DISTRIBUTION

- A. When an evidence custodian returns property from the evidence room, the evidence custodian shall update the evidence management system and note the release on a supplement in Alert. The evidence management system custody receipt shall be printed and then signed by the person taking custody of the property. A copy of the custody receipt shall be scanned into the report and placed in the case file.

V. CLAIMING OF PROPERTY

- A. Persons claiming property that is in possession of this Department shall present reasonable proof of ownership or authorization to take custody of the property before the property is released.
- B. The property folder in Alert shall be completed and the Evidence Property and Chain of Custody Form signed by the person taking custody of the property. The signed Property Report form will be placed in the case file within the Records Division.
- C. Vehicles that are impounded, or towed by this Department and stored at the Township authorized impound, may be released after the following procedures have been followed.
 - 1. Persons claiming the vehicle must present the bottom portion of the Towed Vehicle / Evidence Tag to the impound lot staff, who will verify there is no police hold on the vehicle and the vehicle is able to be released.
 - 2. The top portion of the Towed Vehicle / Evidence Tag remains with the impounded vehicle. "Police Release Required" shall be marked accordingly by the officer filling out the tag. If the vehicle is to be held "Yes" shall be marked. If the vehicle may be released "No" shall be marked. Any notations to hold the vehicle shall be made on the vehicle folder in Alert and in the narrative in Alert. If Police Release is Required, the authorized impound lot staff shall contact Haverford Police Records Division staff who will verify the status of the vehicle and ascertain if the conditions for release are satisfied.
- D. Another exception to this policy shall be in returning temporary found property. When temporary found property is claimed and returned, the Evidence and Property Chain of Custody form is completed and the person who is taking custody of the property shall sign in the "Received

By” box under Chain of Custody. The form is then turned into the Records Department.

VI. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Records Department shall maintain all files concerning Evidence and Chain of Custody forms.

BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE