

Hamden Police Department

General Orders

Policy Number: 016-001

Effective Date: January 07.2011

Section: Property Management

Rescinds: August 01, 2005

Title: Responsibilities of Property Officer.

Approved By:

Approval Date:

PURPOSE

To establish the responsibilities of the property officer.

POLICY

The property officer is accountable for the control of all found, recovered, evidentiary property accepted by or stored in the Hamden Police Department. The property officer will be issued a set of keys to the property room and will be responsible for securing the room as well as the restricting of access to authorized personnel only. A visitor logbook will be maintained by the property officer to log all visitors entering the property room.

A supervisor in the detective division will secure a second set of keys and alarm codes to the property room to be used for emergency purposes only. In the event that the emergency keys are used the officer entering the property room will sign in the visitor logbook, and document his entry with a case incident report titled internal function.

Procedures

A. Duties of the property officer.

1. The property officer will maintain records of all property brought to headquarters. Property records will include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Found, abandoned, or misplaced property.
 - b. All property seized as evidence or with an evidentiary value.
 - c. Property surrendered for safekeeping.
 - d. Property voluntarily surrendered for destruction.
2. The property officer will also maintain a written log for all cash, weapons, and vehicles seized as evidence.
 - a. All weapons entered into the property room will be run through the CPS weapons tracing task force and through NIBIN (aka- "Drug

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Fire”) when required.

3. Each item entered into the property room will be labeled with a case incident number and bar code, so as to enable easy retrieval.
4. The property officer will abide by all Return of Compliance Court, (ROC), Orders regarding the disposition of evidence by.
 - a. Properly disposing of the order within statutory limits.
 - b. Using a witness, (when required), during court ordered destructions.
 - c. Returning the pink portion of the completed return of compliance order to the court that issued the order.
 - d. Filing the white portion of the of the completed return of compliance order with the case incident report in the records room.
 - e. Adjusting the property computer records to show the final disposition of the property in question.
 - f. Completing the necessary forms in cases where Asset Forfeiture is involved.
5. Maintaining a written and a computer record of *All* transferred, loaned and returned property in order to maintain a chain of custody. Officers will be required to sign out any evidence they remove from the property room for court or for further investigation.
6. All Cash submitted to the property room will be secured in the property room safe deposit box located at the Hudson United Bank as soon as possible, after it is seized as evidence. All deposits to and from the safe deposit box will require the signature of the property officer and an administrative designee.
7. Abiding by all State Statutes regarding property and evidence RE: CGS 54 and CGS 50-13.

B. Destruction or Return of Property.

1. Evidence will be disposed of as per the Judge’s order on the Return of Compliance Order.(See: # 4 above)
2. Evidence in relation to a case not listed on a Seized Property inventory will be returned to its owner as soon as possible.
3. Contraband seized without charges pending (i.e.-fireworks, liquor, etc.) shall be destroyed by the property officer, ensuring adherence to state

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statutes. When possible the items should be photographed before they are destroyed.

- a. Any property seized by this department where no arrest has been made and no criminal charges are pending, but which would constitute a criminal act if in the possession of a person(s), will be maintained in the custody of this department in a found property status for a duration of time that is consistent with the statute of limitations if probable cause were eventually developed to link a suspect to the contraband. Furthermore, personnel should designate this type of case as "Suspended" in the controlling written report.

Examples include:

An Officer is called to a wooded area off of the Farmington Canal Linear Trail where a jogger has located a firearm with a serial number that has been mutilated. The Officer seizes the firearm and forwards it to the Property Division. There is no further action or lead for the Officer to follow-up on. 18 months later, new information is received and probable cause is developed to arrest an individual for possession of the firearm.

An Officer seizes an amount of marijuana in the parking lot of the Hamden Plaza after a citizen locates it while shopping. The Officer seizes the marijuana and forwards it to the Property Division. There is no further action or lead for the Officer to follow-up on. 12 months later, new information is received and probable cause is developed to arrest an individual for possession of the marijuana.

4. Any found property remaining unclaimed for at least six months must be turned over to the finder if they claim such property within 30 days of the expiration of the six months waiting period.
5. All other property turned over to or otherwise obtained by the department will be auctioned, turned over to the State Evidence Examiner, or destroyed property per state statutes.
6. Keeping all other legal considerations in mind the final disposition of found, recovered and evidentiary property must be accomplished within the time limits established in CGS 53- 36a and 50-13.

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C. Property and Evidence Purging Procedures.

1. On a monthly basis the property officer will purge evidence where the state statutes of limitations have expired where no arrests have been made.

D. Auction of Unclaimed Property.

1. As is necessary the property officer will organize an auction to dispose of unclaimed property as per CGS 50-14.
2. All proceeds from the auction will be forwarded to the towns finance department who will in turn reimburse the Hamden Police Departments PBA as per CGS 50-14.

D. New Property Officer.

1. Whenever a new property officer is designated a random inventory of the property room will be conducted jointly by the newly designated property officer and the outgoing property officer.
2. Any discrepancies will be recorded prior to the assumption of property accountability by the newly appointed property officer.