



# GENERAL POLICE ORDER CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE



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SUBJECT: <b>HANDLING INFECTIOUS EVIDENCE/WASTE</b>			
ASSOCIATED MANUAL: <b>PROPERTY UNIT MANUAL</b>		RELATED ORDERS: <b>3.2.11, 6.2.09</b>	
CHIEF OF POLICE: <b><i>Michael McGrath, Chief</i></b>			

*Changes in italics*

**PURPOSE:** To establish guidelines to handle and dispose of contaminated property and evidence, and to comply with the State of Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) infectious waste regulations, OAC chapters 3745-27 and 3745-37.

**POLICY:** The Cleveland Division of Police shall adhere to strict safety standards when handling contaminated or suspected contaminated property.

**PROCEDURES:**

**I. Property/Physical Evidence**

Members shall treat all physical evidence or property contaminated with blood or other bodily fluids as infectious. Disposable gloves shall be worn to handle contaminated items.

**II. Collection Sites**

Districts, Medical Unit, Forensic Lab, Property Unit or units or sections that will store contaminated property and/or waste shall establish:

- A. A secure, designated area to store contaminated waste or evidence. This area is not necessarily a separate locked area, but shall restrict the general public or casual visitor from the area. *Signs warning of infectious waste shall be posted at all points of access to identify the restricted room or area.*
- B. A decontamination area used for cleaning and disinfecting and for storage of decontamination supplies. Kitchen or bathroom sinks are inadequate. In most cases this will be the “slop” sink room or area used for janitorial purposes.

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### III. Sharp Objects

Hypodermic needles, syringes, and similar objects shall be disposed of in Sharps containers or stored in rigid plastic containers as evidence, intact, with NO cutting or breaking. *Sharps containers may be obtained from the Medical Unit.* Recovering meaningful evidence from the analysis of needles and syringes is remote; therefore, they SHALL NOT be sent to the Forensic Laboratory for analysis. If a record of the needle/syringe confiscation is necessary for evidentiary purposes, it may be photographed. If it is necessary to retain a sharp object for evidence, it shall be stored in a rigid container until disposal in a Sharps container is possible.

### IV. Contaminated Evidence/Property

- A. Air-dry contaminated evidentiary property before transporting to the laboratory for analysis, or to the Property Unit for storage. If this is not possible, place the evidence in a paper bag, then in a plastic bag, left open to allow for ventilation and avoid contamination of the evidence.
- B. If possible, bags with biohazard markings shall be used for storing contaminated evidence/property. If confiscated-contaminated property is personal property of a prisoner and will be returned, or is evidentiary in nature, it shall be stored and sealed in one of these marked bags.
- C. When contaminated evidence is collected, protective clothing appropriate to the extent of contamination or exposure shall be worn. If latex gloves are not sufficient protection, fully equipped personnel from the Crime Scene or Homicide Unit shall be summoned to process the scene with complete protection (e.g. aprons, goggles, shoe covers etc.).

### V. Rape Evidence

*To avoid contamination of rape evidence, the evidence shall be double-bagged in paper bags. If there is any possibility of rape evidence leaking, then the evidence shall be placed into a non-leaking box or container.*