

*Maryland-National Capital Park Police  
Prince George's County Division*

**DIVISION DIRECTIVE**

TITLE <b>CDS LAB PROCEDURES</b>			PROCEDURE NUMBER <b>PG1200.1</b>
SECTION <b>Property Procedures</b>	DISTRIBUTION <b>A</b>	EFFECTIVE DATE <b>09/01/04</b>	REVIEW DATE <b>06/01/06</b>
REPLACES <b>PG1200.1 "CDS Lab Procedures", issued 05/01/02</b>			
RELATED DIRECTIVES <b>PG1200.0</b>	REFERENCES <b>CALEA 83, 84</b>	AUTHORITY <b>Commander Larry M. Brownlee, Sr.- Division Chief</b>	

**I. PURPOSE**

This directive establishes guidelines for submission of evidential material(s) for laboratory analysis to Prince George's County Police Laboratory, Palmer Park, Maryland.

**II. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Prince George's County Division of the Maryland-National Capital Park Police to submit all evidential CDS through the facilities of the specified laboratories of the Prince George's County Police and, in doing so, to adopt a procedure compatible with the latter agency. It is, therefore, the policy of this agency that all officers will completely follow the prescribed procedures for submission of all evidential CDS.

**III. DEFINITION**

For the purpose of this directive, the term "evidential material" is defined as follows:

"Any species of proof, or probative matter, legally presented at the trial of an issue, by the act of the parties and through the medium of witnesses, records, documents, concrete objects, etc., for the purpose of inducing belief in the minds of the court or jury as to their contention."<sup>1/</sup>

<sup>1/</sup> Black's Law Dictionary, Revised Fourth Edition 1968, West Publishing Co., See "Evidence", Page 656, Para. 1.

**CDS LAB PROCEDURES  
PG1200.1**

**IV. RESPONSIBILITIES**

The following procedures have been established for the handling of all alleged or known CDS as may be seized by members of this agency. Particular attention should be given to these procedures when preparing evidence and laboratory request forms for submission.

- A. CDS, upon seizure as evidential material(s) or contraband, will be heat sealed in an official Maryland-National Capital Park Police polyester pouch (evidence bag) and labeled with the MNC Park Police tamper proof evidence label.
- B. All CDS seized, whether evidential or contraband (to be destroyed), shall be recorded on a Maryland-National Capital Park Police Property Record recording the quantity, description, and weight of each item submitted next to its description.

<u>SAMPLE</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
3	2.0 grams	Tin foils of marijuana treated w/PCP
1	.05 grams	Clear zip-lock plastic bag containing cocaine.

No other property will be entered on a property record that has seized CDS listed on it.

- C. All CDS Laboratory submissions for chemical analysis shall be accompanied by a Maryland-National Capital Park Police Property Record and a Prince George's County Police Department Chain of Custody Log/Analysis Report (PGC Form #3747).
- D. A Chain of Custody Log/Analysis Report (PGC Form #3747) will be executed for any CDS evidence requiring analysis. The five (5) page carbon copy PGC Form #3747 will be typed and submitted to the Prince George's County Police Laboratory Services Section with the CDS evidence. Upon acceptance of the evidence by the Prince George's County Police Laboratory Services Section, a receipt will be issued. This receipt will be returned to our agency and filed with the applicable property record.
- E. On the front of Form #3747, under "List of Articles", if additional space is necessary, use Chain of Custody Log/Analysis Report Continuation Sheet (PGC Form #3747A).

**CDS LAB PROCEDURES  
PG1200.1**

- F. The weight of each item submitted shall be recorded only on the Maryland-National Capital Park Property Record.
- G. All CDS laboratory submissions must reflect the name of a defendant. If there is known or suspected CDS but no name of any defendant, laboratory submission is not to be made.
- H. On the laboratory request Form #3747, the name of each individual handling the seized evidence will be typed on the Chain of Custody Log, and that individual's signature should appear above his/her name.
- I. The District Court tracking number from the charging document must be typed in directly above the Incident Report Number (IRN), in the upper right corner of the Chain of Custody Log.

**V. CHAIN OF CUSTODY**

- A. Laboratory Analysis
  - 1. All evidence necessitating a laboratory analysis will be transported to the Prince George's County Police Laboratory by authorized evidence personnel as designated by the Division Chief.
  - 2. Anyone transporting evidence should check all reports and evidence to prevent a useless trip to the Laboratory should the evidence not be accepted due to an error in paperwork or mistake(s) in the counting of submitted items. Sign the Chain of Custody Log immediately when receiving the evidence; not when arriving at the Laboratory.
- B. Court Custody
  - 1. No CDS will be released for court or for any other purpose prior to the date needed.
  - 2. All CDS requests for custody must state the purpose for its release on the Maryland-National Capital Park Police Evidence Request Form (i.e., court, laboratory analysis, State's Attorney's Office).
  - 3. In the event it is necessary to open a sealed CDS pouch for judicial proceedings or any other purpose, the contents of the CDS evidence pouch shall be verified upon return to the agency, and whenever a change of

**CDS LAB PROCEDURES  
PG1200.1**

custody takes place thereafter. Advise court officials of the additional problems created if and when the seal is broken (recounting, etc.).

**VI. PROCEDURES FOR FORWARDING CONTROLLED DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES FOR DESTRUCTION**

- A. CDS no longer required as evidence will be forwarded to the responsible evidence personnel by each officer, immediately upon court adjudication and/or final disposition of a case.
- B. CDS held as evidential material will be inventoried on a quarterly basis (January, April, July and October), and appropriate action taken upon the recommendation of the seizing officer.

(Examples: "Continue to hold as evidential material(s)", or, "Hold: Nolle Prosequi/Stet", or, "Destroy").

- C. All CDS which is no longer required as evidence will be turned over to the Property Specialist for final destruction, along with both the Maryland-National Capital Park Police and Prince George's County Police property records. Chain of custody will be maintained throughout, and arrangements will be made in advance between designated personnel and the Property Specialist prior to the submission date.
- D. In those cases where CDS awaiting destruction is creating a storage or security problem, special arrangements may be made with the Property Specialist for the transfer and/or immediate destruction of such CDS to alleviate the problem.

**VII. PROCEDURES FOR THE PACKAGING OF EVIDENCE**

Exposure to manufactured PCP, methamphetamines, fentanyl derivatives and other synthetic or designer drugs is a potential health and fire safety hazard.

In order for CDS evidence to be accepted at the Crime Laboratory, or in the Park Police Evidence Room, the following shall be adhered to:

- A. All CDS cases submitted to the laboratory for analysis must be heat sealed in a polyester pouch (evidence bag) and labeled with a tamper proof evidence label.
- B. All CDS cases being submitted to the Prince George's County Police Crime Lab for analysis shall use the 9-1/2"x16" polyester pouch.

**CDS LAB PROCEDURES**  
**PG1200.1**

- C. All CDS property, whether it's evidential or contraband, shall be packaged in the CDS evidence polyester pouch. All CDS contraband shall be placed in the smallest CDS polyester pouch available and labeled.
- D. Raw CDS will not be placed or poured into the polyester pouch without proper containment, i.e., smaller polyester pouch, zip lock bags, plastic bags, glass, or plastic capped containers.
- E. Syringes shall be placed in a Bio-hazard Sharp Object Disposable Pouch. Officers shall ensure appropriate warnings appear on the outside of these pouches.
- F. Whole plants greater than one foot in length shall not be submitted for analysis. In such instances, officers shall weigh and photograph the plant in its natural form, cut or break it apart, and then submit leaves, flowering tops, stems, and seeds for analysis, using normal routine procedures. The remainder of the plant, including mature stalks and roots, shall be submitted separately and marked for destruction.
- G. Officers seizing liquid PCP shall exercise extreme caution in handling it, giving consideration to its carcinogenic, toxic, flammable and explosive properties. Liquid PCP seizures of less than one pint may be submitted by the seizing officer after careful packaging procedures, (i.e., taping and plastic padding around the item to be submitted for analysis).
- H. More than one (1) item may be packaged in the evidence pouch. Each item, however, must be packaged individually and securely fastened. If the individual packages are not securely fastened, contamination could result and nullify any analysis. Therefore, if the individual packages are not securely fastened in order to prevent possible contamination, the evidence will not be accepted by the Prince George's County Police Laboratory Services Section.
- I. The polyester pouch will not be placed into a non-transparent evidence bag. The 9-1/2"x16" pouch serves as the evidence envelope.
- J. Proper request for laboratory examination, PGC Form #3747 must accompany the evidence envelope with appropriate chain of custody. Care should be taken not to puncture the polyester pouch. Any pouches in a questionable condition will be noted and not accepted.
- K. Evidence pouches will be distributed by the Shift Supervisor.

**CDS LAB PROCEDURES  
PG1200.1**

- L. Evidence pouches, tags and labels shall not be used for non-CDS property, nor shall they be used in any manner not in accordance with the procedures set forth.

**VIII. SEALING PROCEDURE**

- A. All CDS to be sealed in pouches shall be packaged either in a smaller pouch, zip lock plastic baggie, sealed bottle, or plastic capped container and placed in the 9-1/2"x16" evidence pouch. Submit as many items in one pouch as possible without destroying or creating the possibility of contamination, leaving at least 2" from top of pouch.
- B. Using the Impulse Heat Sealer located in lock-up follow the steps prescribed:
  - 1. Turn timer control knob to lowest setting that produces a strong even seal. Higher settings shorten the life of the element, insulator and cover.
  - 2. Place bag flat across the sealing surface and firmly depress the handle. The red light comes on while sealing occurs. Continue to hold handle down for 2 seconds after red light goes out.
  - 3. Inspect seal by holding bag to light. The seal line should be continuous and even, yet not burned.
  - 4. If the seal is uneven or not complete, raise timer setting.
  - 5. If the seal is burned or sticks to the silicone rubber lower the timer setting.

**IX. LABELING**

- A. Type in all the information on the label before adhering to the pouch.
- B. Do not affix the label to pouch until it has been completed and the pouch is sealed (to avoid the waste of the pouches once the label is affixed to the pouch, it cannot be removed from pouch). If the label is removed from the pouch, Prince George's County Crime Lab WILL NOT ACCEPT THE POUCH and it may jeopardize the case.
- C. The Maryland-National Capital Park Police tamper proof evidence label shall be affixed by holding the pouch lengthwise in a horizontal position with the heat sealed end to the right and place the adhesive label in the lower right-hand corner 2" from the bottom.

**CDS LAB PROCEDURES  
PG1200.1**

**X. SOME OF THE MOST COMMON MISTAKES OCCURRING WHEN SUBMITTING EVIDENCE FOR ANALYSIS/EXAMINATION ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

- A. At times, laboratory request Form #3747 is received with the names typed on the Chain of Custody Log, but with no signature. It is important that a signature be present. Due to the fact that some signatures are illegible, it is requested that the names be typed and the signatures be given above the typed name.
- B. Prince George's County Police Form #3747 is to be typed in its entirety, less the individual's signature. Some handwriting and printing is not legible.
- C. When preparing evidence for submission, list the items on the Maryland-National Capital Park Police property record first. After determining if all or part of the evidence will be submitted for examination/analysis, copy the wording of the items to be forwarded to the laboratory directly from the Maryland-National Capital Park Police property record onto the request for laboratory examination Form #3747. Also, make certain the evidence is labeled to correspond with the laboratory request form.

**XI. SHIFT SUPERVISOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Supervisors shall personally verify that the weight of the CDS and it's packaging is the same as the weight indicated by the officer that initially weighed the CDS. This step should be taken prior to the officer heat sealing the CDS.
- B. Supervisors shall provide that the weights are the same, initial the Division Property Records upper left hand corner and date.
- C. Supervisors will then accompany the officer to the evidence vault and witness the CDS being dropped. The officer and the supervisor will then sign/initial the property drop log form located outside the evidence vault.

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