



COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

SUBJECT: LATENT FINGERPRINT EVIDENCE AND ELIMINATION PRINTS

NEW REVISED RESCINDS

APPROVED: *GM*
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ACTING CHIEF OF POLICE

Effective Date 8/22/2018

I. POLICY

The Department realizes that it is impractical to process every crime scene for latent prints. Whenever practical, officers will have a crime scene or evidence from it processed for latent prints, especially in the event of a Part I Offense or serious Part II Offense.

II. LATENT FINGERPRINT PROCEDURES

- A. Only personnel trained in the recovery of latent fingerprint evidence will attempt to process surfaces for latent prints.
 - 1. Before an officer attempts to lift latent fingerprints, the surface(s) from which the latent prints will be lifted should be photographed, especially if the prints are obvious.
 - 2. All surfaces and/or articles within the crime scene or from a crime scene could potentially contain latent print evidence; therefore, the officer at the crime scene will take precautions to ensure that the scene is not unnecessarily disturbed and that articles are not handled until a determination is made regarding processing.
 - 3. If a crime or article is not printed, the officer responsible for the report will note the fact, and the reason(s) why the scene or article was not processed.

4. An officer processing a crime scene or article for latent prints for another officer will ensure that the officer making the preliminary report records all necessary information:
 - Date and time of arrival at the scene,
 - Location of the crime,
 - Name of the victim/suspect, if known,
 - Action taken at the scene, including the number of photographs taken, whether or not measurements were taken, and
 - List of physical evidence recovered.
5. When attempting to lift for latent prints, the fingerprint dust should be lightly applied to the surface(s) and will be removed from the surface using wide tape.
6. The tape should then be transferred to an appropriate-sized white card and any excess tape trimmed off.
7. The card will be labeled with all pertinent information, including:
 - Location from where the particular latent print was recovered,
 - Date and time of recovery, and
 - Name of recovering officer.
8. Until a recovered/stolen vehicle is processed, officers should avoid touching any area that an occupant would have likely touched, such as:
 - Inside and outside rear-view mirrors,
 - Door handles and doors,
 - Ashtray
 - Glove box
 - It is the responsibility of the recovering officer to ensure that all computer cancellations are made and the owner is notified of the recovery.
9. An officer touching any area or article at or near the crime scene will immediately notify the processing officer of the items and where they were touched.
10. If an item of potential evidentiary value is recovered away from the crime scene, but cannot be processed at the location where it was recovered, officers will make every effort to photograph it before they seize it, and avoid as much as possible, touching areas that might contain latent prints.

11. Officers should consider loosely wrapping the item(s) they seize in paper or placing it in a suitable container that best preserves any latent prints that might be recovered at a later time.

B. Processing and Developing Fingerprints

1. The white cards containing the recovered latent fingerprints will be placed into a "Latent Evidence" envelope by the recovering officer and sealed.
2. The recovering officer will then complete and "Evidence/Property Custody Form" and place the form and sealed envelope into a Temporary Evidence Storage Locker (TESL), and snap the lock shut. This procedure will be accomplished prior to the end of the submitting officer's tour of duty.
3. To properly document chain-of-custody, the submitting officer will ensure that the chain-of-custody area on the form is completed.
4. The Department's Property/Evidence Custodian will:
 - Remove the envelope and form from the temporary evidence storage locker.
 - Document the transfer of custody of the evidence by indicating receipt in the "chain-of-custody" area on both forms.
 - As soon as practical, transport the evidence Receipt for Property to PGPD Forensic Services Division (and subsequently to R.A.F.I.S.) for processing. R.A.F.1.5. is an acronym for Regional Automated Fingerprint Identification System.
5. The latent prints will be entered into the data base at R.A.F.1.5. in an attempt to match the recovered prints with those, already on-file. If a suspect is identified, the submitting officer will receive a receipt from R.A.F.1.5.
6. In the event an officer brings an article into the station to have it processed, the officer will follow the procedures outlined in General Order

III. PROCEDURE FOR ELIMINATION PRINTS

Elimination prints are prints obtained from a person for the purpose of eliminating him/her as a suspect. If an officer determines the need for elimination prints, he/she will follow these procedures:

- A. Obtain an "Elimination Print" card from PGPD Forensic Services Division and make arrangements with the person whose prints are needed to come to the station to be fingerprinted.
- B. The person's fingerprints are inked and placed on the card in the same manner as any other fingerprint card.
- C. The submitting officer will then place the card into a Latent Evidence envelope and follow the procedures listed in Section II, paragraph B of this General Order.