



CHEVY CHASE
VILLAGE
POLICE
DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER: 5-26.2; PHOTOGRAPHING & VIDEO-RECORDING CRIME SCENES

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DISTRIBUTION: Sworn Personnel

Police Chief: John Fitzgerald

I. POLICY

The Department recognizes that not all crime scenes require photographs. However, still or video images of evidence at a crime scene and/or of the crime scene itself are powerful tools for officers to use to enhance an investigation. Images which fairly and accurately depict the scene and the evidence are virtually always admissible in court.

II. DEFINITION

Image: A still photograph or video recording

III. PROCEDURES FOR PHOTOGRAPHING CRIME SCENES

A. Officers will evaluate each crime scene or incident to which they respond to determine the need for evidentiary images.

1. If an officer determines that images would assist the officer in documenting or investigating the event, recalling what happened or who was present, etc., the officer should take images.
2. Whenever possible, images will be taken **before** evidence is processed and collected in order to document where the evidence was found at the crime scene.
3. If an officer on the scene does not have a camera or believes that the scene should to be photographed with equipment beyond the resources of this Department, the officer should contact either an MCP Shift I.D. officer or the MCP Forensic Services Section.
4. Until the arrival of the MCP Shift I.D. or F.S.S., officers will ensure that the crime scene is protected pursuant to the guidelines and procedures outlined in General Order 5-26.
5. All aspects of the crime scene will be photographed in an effort to fairly and accurately depict the evidence or crime scene.
6. A "scale" or other reference object should be used in the photographic field for relative size comparison, in addition to any "non-scaled" photographs.

7. Whenever practical, photographs of items of evidence should show the item as well as its surroundings (how it relates to the scene) through a combination of close-up and wide shots.

- B. Officers should use their Department-issued digital camera to take images. If an officer uses her/his personal device to take evidentiary images, the device may become an issue or be examined at trial by defense counsel.
- C. Images shall be downloaded to their Officer Folder and labeled so that they can be located and retrieved when required. Additionally, officers shall request that the lieutenant attach still images to the incident report in CODY (video images cannot be loaded into CODY).

This directive voids the previous version dated 2/15/2001.