

## EVIDENCE CUSTODIAN

PAY RANGE: 39-44

REPORTS TO: Police Chief

### **Summary:**

As evidence custodian is responsible for the proper documentation; collection, preservation, and submission of physical evidence to forensic laboratories may provide the key to a successful investigation and prosecution. Physical evidence appears in many shapes, sizes and forms, thereby necessitating various recovery, preservation, and submission techniques. The evidence officer shall be prepared to package the evidence so that it will not be changed in form and value when it reaches the laboratory. The evidence officer shall maintain a chain of custody of that evidence in order to ensure that it is presented to the court professionally and in compliance with the law.

### **General Duties and Responsibilities:**

- a. When possible, check all property against NCIC or NMCIC records.
- b. Property that may be lawfully released to the owner, an immediately attempt to notify the owner (by telephone or letter) notifying them that the department is holding their property and to make arrangements to retrieve the property.
- c. Shall check the files as frequently as possible for property and evidence that is unclaimed or of no further evidentiary value. He shall then make arrangements for returning property to the owner or its proper disposal/destruction as required by the district attorney's and the 7th Judicial District Court.
- d. Shall ensure that final disposition of found, recovered, and evidentiary property is accomplished as soon as possible after legal requirements have been satisfied, unless title to the evidence or property has been awarded to the department by court order. The evidence officer shall report any exceptions to the chief or assistant chief of police.
- e. The evidence custodian shall obtain an authorizing signature from the District Attorney's office for release of any evidence on a case pending prosecution or appeal. The evidence officer shall ascertain from the prosecutor when contraband may be destroyed and, upon approval, arrange for witnessed destruction or other disposal as soon as possible.
- f. The evidence custodian shall have administrative control over all found or confiscated property that enters the property storage room and shall ensure that all stored confiscated or found property has been documented appropriately.
- g. The evidence custodian shall ensure that the property storage room is clean, orderly, and secure, and shall take necessary steps to ensure that all found or confiscated property is protected from damage, deterioration, or theft.

h. The evidence custodian shall restrict access to the property storage room to the chief of police or his designee. Access by other persons is prohibited as a general rule. The chief or assistant chief will grant exceptions as necessary.

i. The evidence custodian shall maintain a freezer for the storage of perishable items.

j. The evidence custodian shall maintain records on found or confiscated property, which document the chain of custody. The evidence custodian shall maintain a master inventory of all found or confiscated property, whether stored in the authorized room or elsewhere.

k. The evidence custodian shall release property only to authorized persons and may demand proof (such as a subpoena duces tecum) of legal necessity to take property.

l. Perform other duties as assigned.

m. Process Discovery requests, gathering all requested items and provide completed requests to the administrative assistant.

**Knowledge, Skill and Abilities:**

Knowledge of police investigative techniques and techniques of identification; knowledge of rules of evidence and laws of search and seizure; general knowledge of geography of the municipality and important buildings; ability to analyze evidence; ability to question and interview skillfully; ability to organize and prepare clear and concise reports; skill in the use of police equipment; physically fit.

**Education and Experience:**

A high school degree, current New Mexico driver's license, a minimum of three (3) years of experience with Socorro Police Department with an extensive background in evidence; preservation, documentation and processing.