

	LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT Ardmore, Pennsylvania	
	Policy 3.14.2	
Subject:		Distribution:
Digital Photo Evidence Collection		All Sworn Personnel
Date of Issue:	Expiration Date:	Rescinds:
06-01-2014	Until Amended or Rescinded	Directive: 03-88
References:		
CALEA: N/A; PLEAC: N/A		
By Authority of:		
		Superintendent of Police

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the collection and tracking of digital photographic evidence.

POLICY

Digital photography is the standard in photographic evidence recording. Due to the nature of digital photography, the chain of custody and the integrity of the photo images must be assured. All digital camera users shall be trained in the use of the digital camera and shall maintain the chain of custody of all digital photographic evidence.

PROCEDURE

Digital cameras shall be kept in the patrol platoon sergeant's vehicles, the platoon investigator's vehicle, the Investigations Unit, and the Traffic Safety Unit.

- A.** Officers shall not use digital cameras until they have successfully completed the following:
 1. Proper training in the operation of the camera.
 2. Reviewed the provisions of this directive.
- B.** All officers using the digital camera shall follow the below guidelines:
 1. Ensure that the camera is operated and maintained according to the manufacturer's recommendations and Departmental policy.
 2. Check to make sure that the battery indicator shows an adequate charge for proper use.

3. Check the date and time and reset if necessary.
 4. Ensure that each camera case has an extra memory card prior to their tour of duty.
 5. Prior to taking any photograph, the operator shall record the incident number on the dry erase sheet that has been supplied. A photo is then taken of that incident number. After taking all evidentiary photographs, the incident number shall then be re-photographed, thereby bracketing the photos with its incident number.
 6. Protect the memory card from excessive temperatures, moisture and static electricity. The protective sleeve shall be used whenever the card is removed from the camera.
 7. Under no circumstances shall any photos be deleted from the memory card, and shall not be enhanced in any way.
- C. All officers shall follow the following guidelines for memory card storage and submission:
1. The storage capacity of memory cards allows a significant amount of digital photos to be stored on them.
 2. Platoon sergeants, platoon investigators, SOU/TSU officers and Investigation Unit personnel shall submit their memory cards to the Identification Officer on a bi-weekly basis.

RESPONSIBILITY

A. Identification Unit Responsibility

1. Upon receiving the memory cards from storage, the Identification Officer will upload all of the images to the photograph storage server. This uploading shall be done while retaining the original binary photograph number. These images will then become the original photographs for evidentiary purposes.
2. After transferring these images, the memory cards shall be re-formatted and returned for reuse.
3. In any case where a digital photograph needs enhancement, the Identification Officer shall undertake this enhancement using a copy of the original digital photograph.
4. The Identification Officer shall file a supplemental report to the incident number in question for any photograph that was enhanced.

5. All digital photographs that are subsequently burnt to a disc or printed, upon request or a subpoena, shall be stamped "Original Copy" before distribution.

B. Supervisor Responsibility

It will be the responsibility of all supervisory personnel to ensure that the Officers under their immediate supervision comply with this policy.

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