



## CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON



### Bureau of Police

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## EXECUTIVE ORDER

DATE: May 7, 2012

TO: All Bureau Members

RE: 640.02 Photography and Digital Evidence

ACTION: Significant revisions to this directive. Please read this directive in its entirety.

### 640.02 PHOTOGRAPHY AND DIGITAL EVIDENCE

Index: Title

Refer: DIR 640.10 Crime Scene Procedures

DIR 640.15 Measure 11 Archive Protocol

DIR 660.10 Evidence and Property Procedure

### POLICY (640.02)

The Portland Police Bureau recognizes there is a need to photographically document crime scenes and injuries to victims/suspects to facilitate the investigative process. There are also times in which audio and video recordings are needed to fully document a crime scene or investigation. These digital recordings are evidence in these cases and should be treated as such. This policy does not cover non-evidentiary photographs or non-evidentiary digital evidence such as training or PR events.

### PROCEDURE (640.02)

#### Directive Specific Definitions

Digital Evidence: Information of probative value that is stored or transmitted in binary form.

Digital imaging: The recording of an image via digital code, which is viewable using a corresponding computer software application.

DIMS: Digital Image Management System used for the electronic storage of digital image data from either photographic or video evidence.

### Photographing Crime Scenes (640.02)

A Forensic Evidence Division (FED) Criminalist will have the sole responsibility of photographing evidence at major crime scenes such as homicides, member involved shootings, fatal traffic collisions, questionable or suspicious deaths and autopsies. These photographs will be captured using digital SLR cameras. FED photographs will be taken in the RAW format when documenting items that may need later forensic analysis and comparison. All other photos may be taken in the format in which the least amount of compression is used.

In any other case where photographs/images may benefit the investigation, members may use a bureau issued digital camera or bureau issued cell phone with camera capabilities to document the scene or evidence. Members will not use personal cameras and/or media unless in an emergency situation and no bureau cameras are available. When a personal camera is used, the image will be downloaded to the DIMS system. When a personal camera is used there is no provision for selecting some of the images to transmit and not others. Any images, audio, or video files on a media card, whether bureau issued or personal, will be downloaded into DIMS and erased at the conclusion of the download session. All images recorded on a media will be in the format in which the least amount of compression is used. Images will not be altered in any way.

It is the responsibility of the member taking the photographs to download the images to the DIMS system using a download station. All images, regardless of quality, value or appropriateness to the investigation, will be transferred unaltered directly into DIMS.

Once the digital images have been successfully downloaded to DIMS, the DIMS program will be used to erase the images from the media card.

Members will not use the delete image(s) function of the camera to erase photographs.

Members will not attach or embed any copies of images to original police reports.

Members may record more than one crime scene or event on a memory card provided that steps are taken to ensure images are not misidentified, overwritten or assigned to the wrong case.

#### **Digital Audio and Video recordings (640.02)**

Members recording digital audio or video for investigative purposes shall store the evidence in accordance with their specific RU's SOPs. If no SOP or RU database exists, then digital audio and video recordings shall be downloaded and stored in the DIMS system.

Digital evidence (audio, video, or still images) seized in the course of an investigation may be sent to FED for downloading into the DIMS system if necessary for investigatory purposes.

#### **Minimum Requirements for Digital Cameras (640.02)**

Forensics is responsible for providing the following minimum specifications and requirements for digital imaging:

a. Digital camera requirements:

1. Minimum 5 mega pixels (minimum 3 mega pixel for camera phones)
2. External memory card for image storage

Because the digital market changes rapidly, it is suggested that any RU researching the purchase of digital cameras contact the Forensics Photo Lab personnel for the latest recommendations and considerations for quality compact camera systems.

#### **DIMS viewing capabilities (640.02)**

All members will have the capability to view/review their own photographs of cases they photographed. Members with investigative needs and certain supervisory staff may have additional access to cases depending on permission sets granted. DIMS will keep an audit trail of all photographs recording the date, time, and person accessing each digital image file. Members shall not view images except for bureau authorized purposes. Downloading an evidentiary image to save to another medium is not authorized, except as provided for by FED image processing SOPs. Members may print photographs for investigative purposes as needed. Any images needed for court purposes will be requested from Forensics using the online print ordering module.

#### **Forensic Evidence Division (FED) Responsibilities (640.02)**

It is the responsibility of FED to print or reproduce images and photographs of crime scenes, victim's injuries, and other investigative photographs/images. All evidentiary photographic images will be downloaded and stored in the DIMS system. All archived images will be retained in accordance with Bureau archive protocols, city and state requirements, and federal guidelines. Any disruptions in DIMS service shall be reported to FED. An FED/DIMS administrator will coordinate with the DIMS vendor to restore service.

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For information, please contact Marsha Palmer, Chief's Office, at 503-823-0264.

MICHAEL REESE  
Chief of Police

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