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Sheriff

HARFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE OPERATIONS POLICY

Digital Images

Distribution:	All Personnel	Policy Number:	OPS 1206
Responsible Unit:	Court Services Division	Rescinds:	MAN 4100
Original Issued Date:	11/29/21	Revision #:	1
		Latest Revision Date:	10/17/24
Latest Required Review Completed:	10/17/24	Next Review Due:	10/17/27

1. Purpose

To provide members of the Harford County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) with procedures and guidelines for recording and storage of digital images.

2. Policy

The HCSO recognizes the importance of properly recording, storing, and preserving digital images for evidentiary purposes. Therefore, Agency members will strictly adhere to procedures and guidelines set forth in this policy to ensure that the integrity of digital images is not compromised.

3. References

Body Worn Cameras (BWC) OPS 0103, Sections (F), (H), (I), (J)(1), and (J)(2).

4. Procedures

A. Digital Images General

- Agency members will only use Agency issued equipment/devices to capture images (the Axon Capture application on the Deputy's HCSO issued cell phone, for example).
- If photographs, digital images, or videos are taken at a crime scene, this information will be included in the narrative section of an Incident Report in the Law Enforcement Records Management System (RMS).
- All photographs, digital images or videos taken at a crime scene will be handled as evidence.
- Exception: In exigent circumstances, when evidence may be lost or destroyed, members, at their discretion, may use personal equipment/devices to preserve evidence.
- Members should be mindful that personal equipment/devices and its contents (e.g., media or SIM card, etc.) could be admissible in court and subject to the rules of discovery.

B. Digital Images Procedures

- The photographer will submit all digital images to the Evidence.com software application specific to HCSO for archive and permanent storage.


2. For cameras using compact flash media cards, floppy disks or other storage media, the original images will be uploaded to the Evidence.com software application specific to HCSO before the original image is deleted or overwritten.
3. In those instances where images uploaded to the Evidence.com software application specific to HCSO are of sensitive or confidential nature, Deputies will take steps to restrict the viewing rights of those images in accordance with the following sections per OPS 0103 BWC policy, as applicable:
 - a. Section 4. Procedures: (F) Restrictions on BWC Use;
 - b. Section 4. Procedures: (H) Storage;
 - c. Section 4. Procedures: (I) Reviewing and Sharing Recordings.

C. Digital Images Guidelines

1. Digital images will be labeled, categorized, and retained on the Evidence.com software application specific to HCSO in accordance with the requirements as set forth in the following sections of OPS 0103 BWC policy, as applicable:
 - a. Section 4. Procedures: Classification and Retention (J)(1) and (J)(2).

5. **Summary of Changes**

- A. Added the following under Section 3. References:
 1. Request for Public Information (S0-071);
- B. Removed references to Digital Images Server, Digital Images Uploader Program, and Digital Forensics.
- C. Added references to the Evidence.com software application under Section 4. Procedures, (B) Digital Images Procedures; and (C) Digital Images Guidelines.
- D. Revised text in Section 4. Procedures, Digital Images Procedures (B)(3); and Digital Images Guidelines (C)(1) to conform to Body Worn Cameras (OPS 0103) policy, as appropriate.

Approved

JEFFREY R. GAHLER
SHERIFF
DATE 10/17/24