

<b>Section: INVESTIGATIONS</b>
<b>Title: EVIDENCE AND FOUND PROPERTY HANDLING</b>

indicating that the property is being released due to its perishable nature.

**EVIDENCE STORAGE**

All evidence shall be placed in the evidence lockers/evidence storage area promptly to maintain a strict chain of custody. The evidence officer shall take charge of evidence at the earliest possible time. All evidence shall be placed and maintained in the evidence storage area pending the appropriate authorized disposition.

**EVIDENCE DISPOSITION**

The disposal or release of seized and found property will be done according to all regulatory laws, state statutes, prescribed holding periods, directives, or orders from the court. Seized items will be held for 30 days after the conviction of the defendant or until a court order is obtained.

**METHODS OF DISPOSITION**

The manner of evidence disposal shall be approved by the detective supervisor. Narcotic drugs and related drug paraphernalia shall be properly disposed of in the presence of two (2) or more officers. Written documentation will be placed in the case file as to the date, time, officers involved and any other pertinent information concerning the destruction of this type of evidence.

Individuals receiving property held by the Coles County Sheriff's Office shall be required to provide satisfactory identification and will sign the property receipt or other authorized release form. Persons claiming ownership must produce satisfactory proof of ownership for the property they wish to claim. If criminal prosecution is pending, permission from the Coles County State's Attorney's Office must be obtained before the release of the property.

**METHODS OF DISPOSAL**

All evidence seized during the execution of a search warrant shall be disposed of by court order.

All firearms seized as evidence shall be disposed of by court order. Firearms shall be disposed of pursuant to Coles County Sheriff's Office policy, court order, and state statute. The Coles County Sheriff's Office may retain possession of the firearm for departmental use. The Coles County Sheriff's Office may destroy the firearm or transfer it to the Illinois State Police Bureau of Forensic Sciences for destruction. The Coles County Sheriff's Office may also transfer the firearm to a reputable gun dealer.