

1313.0 POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR DIGITAL IMAGES

Added: 10-7-05

1313.1 PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of this policy is to set forth the proper collection, storage, reproduction and access to digital images.
- A. This policy shall apply to all departmental personnel.

1313.2 CAPTURING DIGITAL IMAGES

- A. Images shall be captured via digital cameras for documentation of crime scenes and any other non-criminal incidents where visual documentation is necessary. The images can be used to supplement testimony in court, aid in investigation and identify evidence.
- B. Forensic Specialists shall be the primary personnel responsible for capturing digital images.
- C. If a Forensic Specialist is not available, then other departmental personnel may be utilized as directed by a supervisor.

1313.3 DIGITAL IMAGING EQUIPMENT

- A. Whenever possible and practicable, it is preferable to use cameras purchased by the City of Buena Park. If another camera is used, the employee shall note that fact in an official report.
- B. Due to the unpredictable nature of law enforcement events, digital images from citizens/witnesses/suspects may be necessary for inclusion as evidence. The memory medium shall be collected and booked into Buena Park Police Department Property. The person collecting the memory medium shall complete a Forensic Unit Request. Upon receipt of the memory medium, the Forensic Specialist will download the image into Application Extender.
- C. The Forensic Specialist shall complete a report noting the images associated with this entry into Application Extender are NOT taken by departmental personnel. The memory medium may be released back to the victim at their request; however, the images left on the originating medium should be erased prior to its release.

1313.4 STORAGE OF DIGITAL IMAGES

- A. The current system for storage of digital images is called Application Extender, which is a product by OTG Software, under the parent company of LEGATO. All images shall be stored in Application Extender.
- B. In the event Application Extender is not available due to maintenance or periods of non-operational status, the following temporary storage shall apply:
 - 1. Forensic Specialists shall download images to their assigned, secure "H" drive and note such in a report describing the circumstances and supporting the chain of custody.
 - 2. Detectives, Investigative Aides and Sergeants shall download images into their assigned, secure "H" drives, and advise the Forensic Unit of the process. They too will complete a supplemental report documenting the action thus supporting the chain of evidence.
 - 1. Upon restoration of Application Extender, the images shall be transferred from their temporary storage location to Application Extender.
- C. Images shall be downloaded into Application Extender in their ORIGINAL, UNALTERED state. Images downloaded into Application Extender are now considered the ORIGINAL. Images on the memory card shall be deleted.
- D. All images shall be downloaded whether an image is out of focus or a frame is blank.
- E. When downloading images to Application Extender, the system prompts the user to enter information to provided fields and create a file for the images. Required information for file identification shall be:

CASE NUMBER:	REQUIRED
EVENT #:	not used
MISC./OCCASION:	optional space for notations
DATE:	REQUIRED (date that images were take)
ID#	REQUIRED (ID# of person who downloaded the images)

1313.5 DISTRIBUTION OF DIGITAL IMAGES

- A. Distribution of NON-CERTIFIED copies of digital images for court preparation, case investigation or internal investigations shall be done by the following personnel only:

Forensic Specialists
Detectives
Investigative Aides
Sergeants
Lieutenants
Those designated by the Information Technology Department

1. Recipients of non-certified copies shall be advised that these are non-certified, and the person who captured the image cannot testify as to the authenticity of non-certified copies.
 2. Images not labeled as certified shall be, by default, considered NON-CERTIFIED.
- B. Distribution of CERTIFIED COPIES of digital images shall be completed by Forensic Specialists ONLY.
1. Certified copies of digital images shall be printed or labeled with a certification attached.
 2. Certified copies may be introduced as evidence in a court of law.
- C. Distribution may be accomplished by any of the following means:
1. Production of hard copy prints
 2. Electronic Transfer (via e-mail)
 1. Computerized digital storage medium
- D. Authorization for distribution from citizens, defense attorneys, insurance companies, etc. Shall be accepted only via a subpoena *duces tecum*. Records Bureau personnel shall review these requests to confirm legitimate connection with the case. If needed, personnel may obtain a detective, officer or supervisor's approval for the release.
1. Distribution costs to be established by the City Council.
 2. No images shall be released to any news, television or outside press relations representative without prior authorization from the Chief of Police, or designee.
 3. At no time, will personnel make copies of photographs contained in Application Extender, for reasons other than those related to a pertinent investigation or action.

1313.6 USE OF DIGITAL IMAGES

- A. No alterations of original images will be allowed.
- B. Enhancement to images made from Application Extender files are to be completed by Forensic Specialist ONLY, and for the following reasons only:
 - 1. Contrast and Brightness
 - 2. Color balance
 - 3. Enlargement
 - 4. Sharpness Enhancement
 - 2. Adding tags and/or marks to highlight and/or identify an item within The image.
- C. Enhancements to a copy of an image shall be documented in a supplemental Report, completed by the Forensic Specialist.
- D. Enhanced copies shall be saved and downloaded into Application Extender. This automatically generates a new computerized file folder. The Forensic Specialist shall use the MISC/OCCASION field in the file name graphic, to note the file contains enhanced copies.
- E. An un-enhanced original shall be maintained, in addition to any enhanced image.

1313.7 SECURITY AND ACCESS TO DIGITAL IMAGES

- A. Application Extender is so configured as the original images cannot be altered. The only access to configuration set up is by the Systems Administrator.
- B. Access for distribution is as described and authorized in Section 1313.5 D.
- C. Access to archives images shall be accessed by the System Administrator.
- D. Access for viewing by civilians or citizens, will not be allowed, unless authorized reasons exist.