

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE	Transmittal # 15-09	Policy #8.42
Applicability: <input type="checkbox"/> All DJJ Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Administration <input type="checkbox"/> Community Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Secure Facilities	Related Standards & References: 3-JDF-3A-31, 4-JCF-2A-21 DJJ 8.5	
Chapter 8: SAFETY, SECURITY, AND CONTROL	Effective Date: 7/1/15	
Subject: CRIME SCENE PRESERVATION	Scheduled Review Date: 7/1/16	
Attachments:	Replaces: 2/1/12	
A - Chain of Custody Form	Investigations APPROVED:  <hr/> Avery D. Niles, Commissioner	

I. POLICY:

Department of Juvenile Justice secure facilities shall preserve the integrity of all suspected crime scenes. The scene shall be secured to prevent unauthorized access by any person, removal of evidence, or contamination of the crime scene in any manner.

II. DEFINITIONS:

Chain of Custody: The process of accounting for persons who discover, handle, examine, or store evidence. A record will be maintained that shows the name of each person who has handled the evidence or had possession of the evidence collected. It is a very important record used to prove that the evidence offered is the same evidence that was collected and that the evidence has not been tampered with following collection.

Crime Scene: The physical location where a crime is alleged to have occurred.

Evidence: Items that can be used to convince a judge or jury of an allegation of fact, including but not limited to actual objects, pictures, clothing, models and other devices which are intended to clarify the facts for the judge and jury.

III. PROCEDURES:

- A. Any scene where a crime is alleged to have occurred will be immediately secured.
 - 1. The DJJ Chief of Investigations or regional Field Supervisor will be immediately notified via phone by the Facility Director or his/her supervisor.

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2. The first person recognizing the scene as an alleged crime scene will immediately secure the scene and notify the senior official on duty. The primary responsibility will be to preserve life.
3. The senior official on duty will assign a staff member to be posted at the alleged crime scene to ensure that the integrity of the scene is preserved until the scene is taken over by the Office of Investigations or outside law enforcement investigative agency.
4. An Investigator from the Office of Investigations or Law Enforcement will be the only personnel authorized to remove evidence from the scene of the crime. Only after Administrative staff has been notified and the appropriate authorities have completed their collection and documentation i.e., photographing, sample taking, etc. will the scene be turned back over to the facility.
5. Only emergency response personnel needed to preserve life will be allowed to enter the crime scene.
6. Unauthorized presence in the area is not to be allowed until the crime scene has been cleared by the Office of Investigations Investigator or law enforcement personnel. No one should touch, move, or pick up objects, clothing, or disturb in any manner, any article, mark, or impression that may have been made by the perpetrator, unless it presents a danger or movement of the item is necessary to preserve it. Any changes to the crime scene will be documented by the staff assigned to secure the crime scene.

B. Documentation:

1. The first person recognizing the scene as an alleged crime scene will document the person(s) at the crime scene location.
2. The staff member posted to the crime scene will document all persons who enter the crime scene, including name, title, purpose of entry, entrance time, and departure time. (Only emergency response personnel needed to preserve life and Office of Investigations or outside law enforcement personnel will be allowed to enter the crime scene.)

C. No evidence will be altered or removed from the scene except as needed to preserve life.

D. Responsibility for protection, preservation, and continuity of the crime scene will cease only when the scene of the crime and/or the evidence is taken over by the Office of Investigations or an outside law enforcement investigative agency (i.e., Georgia Bureau of Investigation).

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E. All persons with knowledge of the incident will document their statement in accordance with DJJ 8.5 Special Incident and Child Abuse Reporting in Secure Facilities.

F. Chain of Custody Procedures:

1. The chain of custody begins when discovery of the evidence is made and continues until the time the evidence is presented to the court.

2. In the event of forensic examination, the examining individual will maintain custody and control of all obtained forensic evidence until it is relinquished to the Office of Investigation or law enforcement agency.

3. If the youth has to be transported off site for examination, a full change of clothes will be taken with the youth.

4. To ensure the chain of custody and the protection of the integrity of the evidence, staff will follow these safeguards:

a) Limit the number of individuals who handle the evidence from the time it is found to the time it is given to DJJ Investigators or law enforcement officers.

b) If the person in possession of the evidence changes for any reason, the staff shall record the following using the Chain of Custody Form (Attachment A):

- i. To whom the evidence was given;
- ii. The time and date it changed hands;
- iii. The reason for the evidence being given to another; and
- iv. When and by whom the evidence was returned.

c) DJJ staff must obtain the signature of the person accepting the evidence and/or returning the evidence on the Chain of Custody Form.

5. Evidence bags or personal property bags with the Chain of Custody form stapled to it will be used for the collection of evidence.

G. Any evidence maintained at the facility will be stored in a secure storage area. Only persons designated by the Director will have access to the evidence storage area. A logbook will be maintained in a secured area that identifies articles placed in and removed from the area and that log the name, date, and purpose of any person entering the storage area.

IV. LOCAL OPERATING PROCEDURES REQUIRED: No