

# **INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR PROPERTY & EVIDENCE**

## **Property Room Standards**

### **11. CURRENCY HANDLING AND OTHER VALUABLES**

#### **Currency – Policy**

Currency and valuables, such as negotiable securities, foreign currency, jewelry and precious stones should also be provided additional levels of security and documentation regarding their handling and ultimate disposition.

Currency should be deposited into a financial institution as soon as practical, rather than storing it in the property room. For agencies using immediate deposit, it becomes the responsibility of the officer booking the property to notify the property room if there is a specific need for the physical money itself to be retained as evidence.

#### **Currency - Documentation**

All currency seizures should be documented on its own separate property report from other items of general evidence due to its special handling and disposition needs. ALL currency transactions should use a “rule of two”, that is the signature of the person making the count and the signature of the person who verifies the amount should both appear on the property record. Currency envelopes listing a count by denomination should be used to help ensure accuracy, and sealed using the appropriate evidence sealing tape. Currency should be submitted into a temporary locker or safe with a drop slot as soon as practical.

The Property Room should keep a log, either manual or automated, of all currency entering and leaving the Property Room and the current balance. Once the currency is logged-in, the Property Room should place the item in a location with enhanced security labeled “Active Currency Cases.” If the envelope is sealed and initialed there is no need to open the envelope for verification.

#### **Drug Asset Forfeiture Exception**

Large quantities of uncounted currency are occasionally seized and are waiting very short term to be deposited into a financial institution. These seizures should be sealed in a tamperproof currency bag with two signatures, one of which should be a supervisor’s. The sealed bag should have a currency envelope attached listing the currency as uncounted. The sealed currency bag should be placed in the currency room with enhanced security as soon as practical. Arrangements should be made for the currency to be counted with two witnesses in a financial institution as soon as practical, and the currency envelope is then completed once the count is made and verified by the two

witnesses. A cashier's check should then be drawn for the seizure amount and presented to the prosecutor who will file the Asset Forfeiture action. The currency bag with signatures and the evidence envelope with signatures and count by denomination may then be entered as items of general evidence.

### **Currency Vault**

The currency vault should be a location where enhanced security separates it from other locations where items of general evidence are kept. The location may be a room created by security screen, a secure closet, a safe, or even a file cabinet. There should be a secondary lock in addition to that needed to enter the evidence room. A card key system with a PIN that records who entered and when is recommended. Ideally, the currency vault should have both an entry alarm and a motion detector,

The vault should have separate locations for active cases, cases pending transfer to finance, and cases pending disposal. There should also be documentation in the form of a tickler or suspense file that notes when items are out to the crime lab, out for investigation, and out to court. This suspense file will prompt the Property Officer to look for the item when it has not returned in a timely manner.

### **Currency - Transfer and Release Procedures**

All releases of currency should be specifically authorized in writing, and requests for currency in court should require the officer to show a subpoena. Currency should be returned at the end of the day unless it has been entered into court evidence and a signed receipt with a court stamp is returned. When currency is released to the public, it should be done in front of a second witness or under a surveillance camera to document the count and release of the cash. The transfer of currency to Finance should be itemized by amount and verified with a secondary signature.