



**CHEVY CHASE
VILLAGE
POLICE
DEPARTMENT**

**GENERAL ORDER: 5-26.3; LATENT FINGERPRINT AND
ELIMINATION PRINTS**

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Police Chief: John Fitzgerald

I. POLICY

The Department realizes that it is impractical to process every crime scene for latent prints. Whenever practical, officers will ensure that a crime scene or evidence from it is processed for latent prints, especially in the event of a Part I Offense or Part II Offense that may have significant community impact or is of community concern.

Thefts from autos (TFAs) are our most prevalent crime, therefore officers shall attempt to lift latent fingerprints from smooth surfaces of the exterior and interior of victims' vehicles unless weather conditions make lifting prints impossible. Officers are expected to attempt to lift latent suspect prints in TFA cases even if the victim has already used the vehicle, touched vehicle surfaces, or handled items inside the vehicle.

II. LATENT FINGERPRINT PROCEDURES

Only personnel trained in the recovery of latent fingerprint evidence will attempt to process surfaces for latent prints.

1. Before an officer attempts to lift latent fingerprints, the surface(s) from which the latent prints will be lifted should be photographed, especially if the prints are visible.
2. All surfaces and/or articles within the crime scene or from a crime scene could potentially contain latent print evidence; therefore, the officer at the crime scene will take precautions to ensure that the scene is not unnecessarily disturbed and that articles are not handled until a determination is made regarding processing.
3. If a crime scene or article is not printed, the officer responsible for the report will note that fact, and the reason(s) why the scene or article was not processed.
4. When attempting to lift latent prints, the fingerprint dust should be lightly applied to the surface(s) and will be removed from the surface using wide tape.
5. The tape should then be transferred to an appropriate-sized white card and any excess tape trimmed off.

6. The card will be labeled with all pertinent information, including:

- Location from where the particular latent print was recovered,
- Date and time of recovery, and
- Name of recovering officer.

7. An officer touching any area or article at or near the crime scene will immediately notify the processing officer of the items and where they were touched.

8. If an item of potential evidentiary value is recovered away from the crime scene, but cannot be processed at the location where it was recovered, officers will make every effort to photograph it before they seize it, and avoid touching areas that might contain latent prints.

9. Officers should consider loosely wrapping the item(s) they seize in paper or placing it in a suitable container that best preserves any latent prints that might be recovered at a later time.

III. PROCEDURE FOR ELIMINATION PRINTS

Elimination prints are prints obtained from a person for the purpose of eliminating him/her as a suspect. If an officer determines the need for elimination prints, he/she will follow these procedures:

- A. Obtain an "Elimination Print" card from the MCP Forensic Services Section and make arrangements with the person whose prints are needed to come to the station to be fingerprinted.
- B. The submitting officer will then place the card into a Latent Evidence envelope and follow the procedures listed in Section II of this General Order.

This directive voids the previous version dated 8/8/2019.