



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISPOSAL PROGRAM

DIRECTIVE NO:

FC 1103

EFFECTIVE DATE:

August 15, 2024

REPLACES:

FC 1103, dated April 27, 2020

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:

CALEA Standards: 6th Edition, 84.1.1, 84.1.2, 84.1.3, and 84.1.6

PROPONENT UNIT:

*Forensic Science and Evidence
Management Division (FSEMD) Evidence
Unit*

AUTHORITY:

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If a regulation, departmental directive, rule, or procedure's provision conflicts with a contract provision, the contract prevails, except where the contract provision conflicts with State law or the Police Collective Bargaining Law (FOP Contract, Article 61).

I. POLICY

The Montgomery County Department of Police is committed to significantly reducing the abuse of prescription drugs in County homes that are either no longer needed or outdated. The Department recognizes the need to remove these drugs from the home and provide a safe and legal way to turn these items over to law enforcement for destruction. Unused **drugs** in homes create a public health and safety concern because they are highly susceptible to accidental ingestion, theft, misuse, and abuse. The Prescription Drug Disposal Program is one of total amnesty; anyone can come to a designated drop-off location to dispose of expired and current prescription medication **and other eligible items**. The **Forensic Science and Evidence Management Division (FSEMD)** will manage the program. The Department's Public Information Office (**PIO**) will educate the public about the program.

II. PURPOSE

This directive establishes a process for the Montgomery County Department of Police (MCPD) to provide and manage a program for citizens to dispose of unused, unwanted, and expired medications properly and safely.

III. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this directive, the following terms have the meanings indicated.

- A. Drop Box: A *secure* department-approved, readily identifiable stainless-steel enclosure that is key-controlled and contains a plastic trash bag inside a cardboard box.
- B. Drug: *A substance intended for the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease. Examples may include prescription medication, over-the-counter medication, vitamins, and herbal supplements.*
- C. Eligible Items: Items that may be accepted into drop boxes are non-narcotic and narcotic prescriptions, *prescription* ointments and creams, prescription patches, vitamins, over-the-counter herbal and animal medications, and any medication samples.
- D. Employee: *Both sworn and non-sworn members of the MCPD.*
- E. Evidence Property Custodian (EPC): *An employee designated by the District/Division Commander to maintain the designated evidence storage location.*
- F. Ineligible Items: Items not accepted into drop boxes include hydrogen peroxide, inhalers, syringes/needles, thermometers, biohazard items, aerosol cans, IV bags, lotions *or liquids*, and bloody or infectious waste.

IV. PROCEDURES

The following procedures will ensure the proper disposal of unused, unwanted, and expired medications deposited into the drop boxes.

- A. Drop boxes will be installed at each District Station, and a District Station-mounted video recording device will monitor them.
- B. The *drop* boxes shall *always* remain locked except when opened for collection and disposal purposes.
- C. The keys for the *drop* boxes will be kept in a secure location within the District Stations, accessible only by authorized personnel with an appropriately programmed access card. Two non-duplicating keys will be required to open the locked *drop* box - one on-site in a secured area (District Station evidence room) and the other in the Evidence Unit secured area.
- D. *Designated Evidence Property Custodians (EPCs) at each District Station shall be responsible for managing the drop box at their site location.*
- E. *The EPC shall check drop boxes at least once a week to ensure no submitted prescription drugs are caught in the opening.*

F. EPCs will notify the Evidence Unit and lock the top opening of the drop box if the bin becomes full.

G. Drop boxes shall be emptied at least once a month or sooner if needed unless the District Commander grants an exception. Two police department employees will empty the **drop** boxes. **Two Evidence Unit personnel** or another person designated by the Evidence Property Manager (see FC 0721) and the **Evidence Property Custodian (EPC)** or designee will remove the cardboard box together. Two employees will transport the items to the Evidence Unit for destruction **at a witnessed disposal**.

H. When collecting the contents of a drop box, employees shall:

1. Wearing disposable gloves, unlock and open the drop box.
2. Remove the cardboard box from the drop box, being alert for sharp items and leaking/spilled substances.
3. Without removing the plastic bag that lines the cardboard box, ***tie the inner plastic bag***, seal the cardboard box ***with tamper-proof evidence tape***, and both employees will date and initial the evidence seal according to FC 0721 (they will not inventory or open any items). The cardboard box will be replaced with a new one lined with a plastic bag.
4. Properly secure the drop box ***by applying tamper-proof evidence tape to the bottom of the box. The employees will write their initials and date across the evidence tape and onto the box, then*** return the key to its secure location.
5. With the Evidence Unit ***personnel*** present, the ***EPC*** (or designee) will obtain an Incident Case Report (CR) number and enter it into the evidence/property tracking system. The Evidence Unit Courier will accept the item in the system. A bar code will be assigned and attached to the cardboard box. The ***EPC*** will scan the bar code on the box to the Evidence Unit ***personnel*** in the appropriate "transport" status.
6. ***Two Evidence Unit personnel or person(s) designated by the Evidence Property Manager*** will pick up the cardboard box on the same day as scheduled evidence pick-ups. Upon arrival at the Evidence Unit, ***Evidence Unit personnel who did not transport the cardboard box*** will ensure that ***it is properly secured with tamper-proof evidence tape with date and initials, weighed, and*** stored with other high-risk items.

Note: Evidence Unit personnel will track the number of boxes so that reports can be generated for statistical purposes.

I. If ineligible items are encountered, they shall be handled in the following manner:

1. Any items readily apparent in the medication drop box that are believed to be evidence of criminal activity (other than controlled-dangerous substance (CDS) violations, see #4) shall be documented by an on-duty officer using a separate incident report (CR) number

and processed consistent with established department procedures governing evidence, packaging, chain-of-custody, reporting, barcoding, etc.

2. Sharps/syringes:

The existence of sharps/syringes shall be documented in the report using the same incident report (CR) number. Remove the items and place **them** in a sharp's container for disposal in accordance with FC 0721.

3. Leaking Items:

Personnel should, while wearing gloves, place the leaking box in a plastic bag and secure it tightly.

4. Illegal substances:

Remove any obvious CDS (Marijuana, Heroin, Cocaine, etc.), and have an on-duty officer respond and document using a separate incident report (CR) number. The officer will package **the items** separately for disposal in accordance with Function Code 0721.

V. REPORTING

The Evidence Unit will maintain a monthly statistical report containing the number of boxes received from each district station and the approximate weight of each box for tracking purposes.