



SUBMISSION OF DIGITAL EVIDENCE TO CATS SQUAD LABORATORY

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I. POLICY

This directive outlines procedures for the submission of digital evidence to the Computer Analysis and Technical Support (CATS) *Squad* Laboratory for forensic examination.

The Computer Analysis and Technical Support *Squad* Forensics Laboratory currently accepts submission of cases from the Anne Arundel County Police Department and any other County agency conducting criminal investigations within the County, such as the Fire Marshal's Office or State's Attorney's Office. All requests for service must be submitted according to this Index Code.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon recovery of digital evidence, it is the responsibility of the investigating officer or detective to request a forensic examination of the item(s) recovered. This request will be made to the Computer Analysis and Technical Support *Squad* Laboratory that provides specially trained examiners to conduct forensic examinations and evidence recovery.

III. PROCEDURES

A. The investigating detective or officer will complete and submit a Request for Laboratory Examination (PD# 1832A) to the CATS *Squad* lab. As a routine, all collected evidence will be submitted to the Property Management Section after collection. Evidence is picked up and brought to the CATS *Squad* by the forensic examiner. Evidence will be directly accepted to the CATS *Squad* for analysis by appointment only. Contact the CATS *Squad* to schedule an appointment.

B. All requests for service must include the following:

1. Request for Laboratory Examination (PD# 1832A) for each search site. Each item should be listed with a description that includes model and serial numbers. Forms are available at each district station and from the CATS *Squad*.
2. Copy of police report. If applicable, a copy of the police report should be attached to the Request for Laboratory Examination form.
3. If this is a direct submission, one copy of a Chain of Custody Form (PD# 1832B) for each device (computer, cell phone, PDA, digital camera, etc) and one Chain of Custody Form (PD #1832B) for all removable media recovered from the same search site. Originals will be kept with the evidence.

4. Legal authority - a Search Warrant copy is required and must include appropriate language that specifically allows the examination of the digital evidence submitted. Other forms of legal authority, such as a Usage Agreement signed by the suspect or documented company policies, will be accepted as appropriate. Note: At the discretion of the CATS *Squad* supervisor or his/her designee, written consent may be accepted for the examination of digital evidence belonging to victims, but will not be accepted for examination of digital evidence belonging to suspects.

5. A detailed summary (see Appendix C of this Index Code) written by the case investigator, describing the type of information the investigator is hoping to discover from the analysis, and any information obtained by the investigation. This may include, but is not limited to, names, personal data, nicknames, contacts, e-mail addresses, screen names, target websites, passwords, telephone numbers, social security numbers, credit card numbers used, accomplices, etc. The information should be provided for both the suspect and any victims. In addition, a list of unique keywords relevant to the investigation should also be included.

C. Investigators should seize any computer components, peripherals or other digital evidence necessary to support the criminal case in court. **However, the CATS *Squad* Laboratory will only accept the computer, removable media, and/or other devices that are expected to contain digital evidence or are necessary for the lab to conduct the analysis.** The lab will not accept other components, including but not limited to, keyboards, mice, monitors, printers, scanners, web cams, etc, which do not normally contain digital evidence. Additional items that should be seized and delivered to the lab include specialized cables and external power supplies for laptop computers, PDA's, and digital cameras and external storage devices for removable media which has been seized such as Zip drives, Jaz drives and tape drives.

D. Each piece of digital evidence (CPU, digital camera, PDA, etc), submitted for analysis, will be labeled and described on the Request for Laboratory Examination Form (PD# 1832A) along with any specialized cables and/or power supplies for that device. All removable media seized from the same site may be listed on the same Request for Laboratory Examination form.

E. All documentation described above should be submitted to the Computer Analysis and Technical Support *Squad* Laboratory, 41 Community Place, Crownsville, Maryland 21032. When all required documentation has been received, the case will be reviewed. A CATS *Squad* Lab Case Number and Priority will be assigned and the investigating detective or officer will be notified in writing. The laboratory will request that the evidence be delivered a few days before your case is assigned for examination.

F. After the CATS *Squad* accepts a case for analysis, the CATS *Squad* Lab supervisor or his/her designee will assign a CATS Case Number and a Priority. Cases are assigned for analysis according to their assigned priority and the date accepted by the lab. Priorities are assigned according to Section IV of this Index Code.

IV. PRIORITY LIST

A. Priority One - Immediate Priority

Immediate threat to life and/or property or cases as determined by the CID Commander or his/her designee. (i.e., homicides, child endangerment/molestation cases with suspect at large, crimes of violence with suspect at large.)

B. Priority Two - High Priority

Potential threat to life and/or property (i.e., critical missing child - computer involved, child endangerment/molestation cases, solicitation of child for sex).

C. Priority Three - Moderate Priority

Low potential threat to life and/or property (i.e., possession of child pornography).

D. Priority Four - Low Priority

No potential threat to life and/or property (i.e., theft cases, losses greater than \$20,000, exam needed to further a current investigation).

E. Priority Five -Lowest Priority

No potential threat to life or pending court dates (i.e., property crime cases with no pending deadlines, criminal intelligence).

- V. **PROPONENT UNIT:** Computer Analysis & Technical Support *Squad*.
- VI. **CANCELLATION:** This directive cancels Index Code 1832, dated 02-26-07.