



SAN ANTONIO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL MANUAL



Procedure 408 – Digital Photography

Office with Primary Responsibility:	IDC	Effective Date: Prior Revision Date:	December 1, 2024 July 31, 2010
Office(s) with Secondary Responsibilities:	SPL	Number of Pages:	3
Forms Referenced in Procedure:	SAPD Form #85-1 SAPD Form #168	Related Procedures:	None

.01 INTRODUCTION

- A. The purpose of this procedure is to have a Department policy in place that maintains the integrity and consistency of handling digital photographic images and equipment.
- B. The purpose of photography and imaging in law enforcement is to record visible details, evidence, and observable material. Photography is used to document observable facts visually. The San Antonio Police Department recognizes digital photography technology as a tool for documentation.

.02 POLICY FOR DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

- A. Members will use only Department-approved digital photographic equipment, storage media, and download stations.
- B. Members will not use approved digital photographic equipment, storage media, and download stations for personal purposes.
- C. Members will not manipulate photographs.
- D. All photographs taken with departmental equipment are the property of the San Antonio Police Department.
- E. The Photo Services Lab will coordinate using City photographic equipment for non-evidentiary departmental use.
- F. Members taking digital images of potential evidentiary value must follow Section .03, *Recording Digital Images*, and Section .04, *Downloading and Submission of Images*, in this procedure.

.03 RECORDING DIGITAL IMAGES

- A. Members' use of personal digital photographic equipment, including any personal digital device capable of capturing digital images, for evidentiary photographs is prohibited.
- B. The only exception to .03A would be when a member determines that circumstances are of such a critical nature that photographic images are immediately required and department-approved digital photographic equipment is not readily available; members may use their personal digital photographic equipment. When used:
 - 1. The digital photographs taken with personal equipment (under this exception) are the property of the San Antonio Police Department.
 - 2. Members will coordinate with the Photo Services Lab to remove evidentiary digital photographic images (under this exception) from personal digital equipment used for departmental use.
 - 3. Members will not take any additional digital photos (with their personal digital photographic equipment) until the evidentiary digital photographic images have been removed with the assistance of the Photo Services Lab.
 - 4. Members agree to provide full access to their personal photographic equipment used under this exception (as necessary) to allow the Photo Services Lab to be able to recover any evidentiary digital photographic images successfully.



SAN ANTONIO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL MANUAL



Procedure 408 – Digital Photography

5. Members will notify their supervisor immediately, but no later than the end of their tour of duty, when they utilize their personal equipment for taking digital photographs under these exceptions.
 6. Members will provide full details of the circumstances requiring personal equipment to take digital photographs in their report.
- C. Any evidentiary photographs taken by members with or without city equipment are subject to seizure by the San Antonio Police Department.
- D. Before using a digital camera for a case or event, the media card/camera will be formatted.
- E. Each case or event where digital photographs are taken will be placed on separate media cards. Using more than one card per case or event may be necessary.
- F. An image depicting the case number or name of the event, the date, the location, and the photographer will be recorded on the media card SAPD Form #168, *Photo Board*. In the event that the location of photography changes, an additional image should be recorded with the updated information.
- G. When the case or event is completed, the media card will be downloaded as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the member's tour of duty.
- H. No images will be deleted from the media card(s) prior to download.
- I. The images will only be viewed at the time of recording to ensure that the necessary images are being recorded correctly. When the images are viewed, they will be in the camera that records them. At no time will the media card be removed and viewed from a card reader.
- J. No time will the original evidentiary photograph or digital image be altered or enhanced. Any required enhancements to copies of the original evidentiary photographic or digital images will be done solely by the Photo Services Lab.
- K. Digital evidentiary photographs shall not be copied, printed, or used for personal or non-departmental use.

.04 DOWNLOADING AND SUBMISSION OF IMAGES

- A. Images will only be downloaded at approved Department download stations.
- B. The images will be uploaded to the Evidentiary Upload XT application.
- C. Each media will be labeled with the CFS number, case number, and appropriate offense.
- D. Once the download has been determined to be successful, the media card will be formatted and returned to service.
- E. Images will not be saved or stored in any other manner than what has been specifically addressed in this procedure.
- F. If the Evidentiary Upload XT application is unavailable due to equipment malfunction, the media card will be hand-delivered to the Photo Services Lab Technician during business hours. After business hours, the media card shall be packaged in an envelope with a prepared SAPD Form #85-1 and deposited in the locked drop box in the Lobby of the Photo Services Lab on the 4th floor of PSHQ. Do ***not*** bin mail evidentiary media under any circumstances.
- G. Members will prepare SAPD Form #85-1 for the media card submitted to the Photo Services Lab. The media card and SAPD Form #85-1 will be placed in an envelope.
- H. Place the media card with the SAPD Form #85-1 in the secured Photo Services Lab drop box located The Public Safety Headquarters (PSHQ) at 315 S. Santa Rosa.