

**Procedure Number: 107.2**

**Found Property**



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**Effective Date: 08/01/2011**

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**Approved by: Adam Davis, Chief of Police**

**PROCEDURE:**

**I. IN GENERAL:**

- A. The University Police Department relies on the assistance from everyone on campus that accepts lost and found property. To better serve the campus community, when accepting lost items the procedure delineated in this policy shall be followed.
- B. Given our limited space, the Department will not accept.
  - 1. Perishable items (food).
  - 2. Soiled or odorous clothing (shoes, jackets, or other items of apparel), or
  - 3. Miscellaneous loose papers and notebooks.
- C. Items of the above nature will be discarded.
- D. Each Campus building will maintain a place to collect lost and found property.
- E. Each Campus building will report all items in a timely manner.
- F. The University Police will collect and transport property of value to the University Police Department.
- G. A staff member of the University Police will collect property with little or no value and transport it to the University Police Department.

**II. Identifying Property:**

- A. In an effort to identify all found property, call the University Police line 657-1703 to report any items found so that they can be logged temporarily until collection and transport to the University Police Department.
- B. All property will be logged into police custody by University Police personnel who fill out a Lost and Found Property Report (Refer to Policy 107.2.1), either by hand or in the ARMS program.
- C. The item will be tagged with the;
  - 1. Case number,
  - 2. Date when received,
  - 3. Description of the item, and
  - 4. Date when the property will be purged.

- III. Money will be counted and listed according to denomination and coin. The total will be listed on the tag. Money will be placed into a secure plastic bag which is located in the found property locker inside the storage room.

**Procedure Number: 107.2**

**Found Property**

IV. Receiving Property:

- A. An ARMS report must be generated for all Lost and Found Property reports:
- B. Two clip boards are maintained at the front counter:

V. Found Property Board:

- A. The Found Property Board is where the ARMS report, or the hand written Found Property Forms are kept, pending property return and signature of the rightful owner picking up the property.
- B. Once disposition has been made (property picked up, donated, or disposed of) the form or report will be filed.

VI. Lost Property Board:

- A. The Lost Property Board is a list of lost items where someone has come to the department and reported their property lost.
- B. The Lost Board will list the;
  - 1. Date reported,
  - 2. Date lost,
  - 3. Item description,
  - 4. Location lost,
  - 5. Owner's name and contact number, and
  - 6. Disposition.

VII. Special Conditions (under these circumstances, a City of Billings Police Complaint and Offense report must be completed):

- A. Gasoline cans (or other hazardous materials with the exception of explosives); are to be stored in the designated storage facility at the Billings Police property facility (following their evidence procedures).
- B. Explosives and incendiary devices; must be referred to the Billings Police Bomb Squad for storage in their bunker.
- C. Bicycles; will be transported to the Billings Police Department property facility (following their evidence procedures) within 1 working day of being recovered.
- D. Firearms:
  - 1. Are to be tagged into the City of Billings Police Evidence room as found property following their evidence procedures.
  - 2. Cannot be returned to the finder or auctioned. Ownership should be traced through the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (BATF).
  - 3. If ownership cannot be determined the gun will be donated to the Montana State Crime Lab.
  - 4. A City of Billings Police Complaint and Offense report must be completed.

VIII. Evidence from another crime (if it is determined that the found property is actually evidence from a crime):

**Procedure Number: 107.2**  
**Found Property**

- A. The property must be properly tagged into evidence with the report number of the other crime (from the originating agency) and a notation made on the tag that it is evidence and no longer found property.
- B. The white evidence tag must be placed with the supplement for, or the case file of, the other crime report.
- C. An officer will complete an ARMS Report, however will not prepare a Billings Police Incident Report on the Found Property report, just a supplement under the original report stating the circumstances under which the property was found.

IX. Release of Property:

- A. When ownership is determined, the property will be returned to the owner. The owner is required to:
  - 1. Show picture identification, and
  - 2. Sign for the property.
- B. Disposal of Unclaimed Property:
  - 1. Valuables will be maintained by the University Police Department for at least **90 days**. After 90 days the unclaimed property of value will be;
    - a. Sold in the annual MSU Billings Garage Sale, with proceeds donated to the;
      - (1) MSU Billings Foundation House,
      - (2) Montana Rescue Mission,
      - (3) Salvation Army, or
      - (4) Similar charitable organization.
  - 2. Money will be kept for **90 days**. After 90 days it will be donated to the MSU Billings Foundation House.
  - 3. Unclaimed property of no value will be discarded or destroyed after **30 days**.
- C. Finders Claiming Property:
  - 1. The person finding property may claim found property that is not claimed by the lawful owner after 90 days.
  - 2. If the person who found the property would like to have the property (if it is unclaimed), it should be noted in the report.
  - 3. Employees shall not convert to their own use, or have any claim on property.

**REFERENCE:**

**Billings Police Department**  
**Found Property Policy #9-4 (January 21, 2008)**