CLERK & COMPTROLLER
PALM BEACH COUNTY
COURTS AND OFFICIAL RECORDS
EVIDENCE DEPARTMENT AUDIT

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Division of Inspector General

Audit Services Unit

September 19, 2016

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The Honorable Sharon R. Bock, Esq.
Clerk & Comptroller

We conducted an audit of the Evidence Department, which was included in the 2015-2016 audit plan.

The objectives were to identify the risks and vulnerabilities impacting the Evidence Department processes, evaluate the overall effectiveness and efficiency and related internal controls to mitigate the risks, verify compliance with pertinent laws and regulations as well as established policies, and compare processes with accepted standards and best practices.

Our audit was neither designed nor intended to be a detailed study of every process, procedure, transaction or system in each area. Accordingly, the observations and recommendations included in this report are not all-inclusive.

Our audit disclosed that the Evidence Department processes are generally effective and efficient and related internal controls mitigate risks over evidence handling and storage in a generally satisfactory manner. The audit identified various improvement opportunities.

We appreciate the cooperation of management and staff during the course of this audit.

Respectfully submitted,

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Inspector General
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Executive Summary

An audit of the Evidence Department was performed by the Clerk & Comptroller's Division of Inspector General. This regularly scheduled audit was included on the annual audit plan.

The Evidence Department core responsibilities are to receive, record, secure, store, and dispose of evidence presented in Palm Beach County criminal and civil courts. Evidence is introduced during court hearings and trials. When the court proceedings are concluded, the evidence is transferred to the custody of the Evidence Department. As of November 23, 2015, the Evidence Department had 271,949 individual evidence exhibits on hand.

Our objectives were to: perform a risk assessment to identify risks and vulnerabilities impacting the Evidence Department processes, evaluate the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the processes and related internal controls to mitigate the risks, verify compliance with pertinent laws and regulations as well as established policies, and compare processes with accepted standards and best practices.

The audit disclosed that the Evidence Department processes are generally effective and efficient and related internal controls mitigate risks in a generally satisfactory manner. Substantial improvements have been made in the evidence storage facilities and evidence handling practices since our limited-scope audit in 2012, though additional improvement opportunities exist to enhance controls and conform to best practices. Specifically, evidence inventories are not performed with adequate frequency. The last full inventory of evidence was started in 2006 and completed in 2010 though partial audits and spot audits have since been performed. Our testing of 105 evidence items identified one minor drug exhibit exception and seven instances in which items should have been more accurately classified. Additional efforts are required to purge evidence no longer required and properly dispose of evidence in accord with statutory requirements. Procedural changes are required to ensure cash evidence eligible for disposal is handled properly. Departmental timeliness goals for processing new evidence exhibits are not being met. Procedures require update to reflect the current systems and practices. The lack of staffing, staff turnover, financial resource constraints, vault renovations, and other projects have negatively impacted the Department.

The report contains five observations and ten recommendations.

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Introduction

Overall Conclusion

The audit disclosed that the Evidence Department (Department) processes are generally effective and efficient and related internal controls mitigate risks in a generally satisfactory manner. Substantial improvements have been made in the evidence storage facilities and evidence handling practices in recent years. The Department now has a dedicated supervisor co-located with three staff members in an enlarged office adjacent to the principal vaults in the Main Courthouse. Security and space utilization has been enhanced in the vault space. The last of the planned physical facility renovations is currently scheduled to be completed in 2017. The supervisor and one of the three support staff joined the Department in 2016.

The audit identified opportunities to enhance controls and conform to best practices. Evidence inventories are not performed with adequate frequency. The last full inventory of evidence was started in 2006 and completed in 2010. An audit of drug evidence was initiated in September 2014 and results were reported in April 2015. During the last two years, spot audits have been conducted weekly with the exceptions of short-term suspensions between September 2014 and February 2015 and in February 2016. Best practices require more frequent inventories and audits than the Department has been able to achieve over time.

Our audit included independent sampling of 105 evidence items, with an emphasis on higher risk exhibits (e.g., firearms, weapons, narcotics, and valuables). This sampling identified one minor drug exhibit exception (10 pills noted instead of 11 recorded in a sealed, clear bag) and seven instances in which items should have been more accurately classified. Additional review of inventory records disclosed that 676 evidence items (including firearms, weapons and valuables) were misclassified in TrakMan, often as general civil or criminal evidence. While the misclassified items represent less than 0.25% of the total evidence exhibits (271,949) as of November 23, 2015, these misclassified items represent 41% of the total exhibits in the three categories (1,659) in which they should have been reported; the majority of the incorrect classifications were applied prior to the current staff joining the Evidence Department.

Additional efforts are required to purge evidence no longer required and properly dispose of evidence in accord with statutes, regulations, and applicable rules. Procedural

changes are required to ensure cash evidence eligible for disposal is handled according to applicable Florida Statutes. Departmental timeliness goals for processing new evidence exhibits are not always being met. Extensive procedures covering all aspects of evidence handling are in place though updates are required to reflect the current systems, practices, and forms in place. The lack of staffing, staff turnover, financial resource constraints, vault renovations, and other projects have negatively impacted the Department.

Objectives, Scope and Methodology

The Clerk's Audit Services Unit of the Division of Inspector General conducted an audit of the core functions within the Evidence Department. This regularly scheduled audit was included on the annual audit plan.

The objectives were to: perform a risk assessment to identify risks and vulnerabilities impacting the Evidence Department processes, evaluate the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the processes and related internal controls to mitigate the risks, verify compliance with pertinent laws and regulations as well as established policies, and compare processes with accepted standards and best practices.

In order to meet these objectives, we conducted interviews and reviewed departmental policies and procedures. We identified the pertinent Florida Statutes, Rules of Judicial Administration, and other relevant requirements. We performed a risk assessment of the Evidence Department core functions by documenting workflows and activities, identifying key risks, and evaluating the adequacy of the internal control environment to mitigate the risks identified. Audit testing was designed for the risks representing higher vulnerabilities to the Department and Clerk's organization.

Our scope included all Evidence Department workflows and activities. Testing performed included the period from May 2014 through December 2015. We performed a variety of tests including compliance with requirements (e.g., Florida Statutes and departmental policies) and conformance with best practices. We reviewed compliance monitoring and evaluation practices, including but not limited to the Department's internal procedures. System access privileges assigned to staff were reviewed for the TrakMan system.

Our audit included independent sampling of the evidence inventory in the vaults, with an emphasis on higher risk evidence stored in vault B and valuables stored in the safe located in vault B. We selected 105 evidence items in total, verifying a portion of the sample items from TrakMan system reports to the actual items in the vaults, and verifying the remainder from the actual physical inventory in the vaults to the TrakMan system.

We evaluated the evidence procedures and compared them to best practices and professional standards established by the Florida Court Clerks and Comptrollers (FCCC) and the International Association for Property and Evidence, Inc. (IAPE).

The scope excluded the handling and safeguarding of evidence in the branch locations. Also, the scope excluded evidence handling by in-court clerks during trial proceedings.

We performed other procedures that were deemed necessary under the circumstances. This audit was conducted in conformance with the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*.

Background

The Clerk & Comptroller's Office is responsible for performing over 1,000 different functions for the 1.3 million residents of Palm Beach County. The Clerk's Evidence Department in the Main Courthouse is responsible for receiving, securing, recording, storing, and disposing of evidence presented in Palm Beach County criminal and civil courts.

Evidence is introduced and presented during court hearings and trials. The Clerk's Office in-court clerk (when in attendance) takes possession of the evidence as presented. The in-court clerk maintains possession and control over the less sensitive Type II evidence (e.g., documents, exhibits) throughout the duration of the trial, transporting it to the courtroom and securing it in a locked cage in the Clerk's Office or temporarily storing it in the departmental vault or locker at the end of each day. Type I evidence (e.g., drugs, narcotics, firearms, weapons, biohazards and valuables) is brought to the Evidence Department for storage in the secure vault at day's end during the trials. In cases where no in-court clerk is in attendance, the evidence remains in the custody of the judiciary until it is delivered to the Evidence Department.

When the trial or hearing concludes or a hearing on an evidence matter is over, the in-court clerk transfers custody of the evidence to the Evidence Department. The Evidence Department clerk takes custody of the evidence and enters relevant details into the TrakMan system, which then assigns bar codes to each piece of evidence. The Evidence clerk affixes the bar codes to the evidence for storage in secure vaults. The bar codes identify the case and location of the evidence, allowing for easy retrieval at a later time. The system also provides reports that assist in conducting audits and spot checks and identifying items that are eligible for disposal as authorized by Florida Statutes.

Evidence is stored primarily in three vault locations. For safety and security reasons, evidence types are stored separately. Entrance to the vaults is restricted to authorized personnel only, with entry recorded on printed vault access logs. Evidence is retrieved primarily for hearings or trial activities. Evidence is disposed of based on retention periods dictated by Florida Statutes, court rules and local administrative orders. Criminal evidence is disposed of only after approval by the State Attorney's Office and the subsequent issuance of a court order by the Chief Judge.

As an added control, all Evidence Department employees must undergo pre-employment criminal background checks and drug screening tests.

The following table provides a summary of the total volume of evidence exhibits on hand and key workload processing statistics as of November 23, 2015. Prior year data from 2009 through 2012 (the last period for which such statistics were gathered and maintained) are also provided for comparison purposes.

Evidence Items (Exhibits)	12/31/09	12/31/10	12/31/11	12/31/12	2013 – 2014 Data Not Available	11/23/15
Received	29,299	29,488	31,701	37,041		36,895
Checked out	16,162	16,970	21,400	22,336		11,617
Checked in	13,723	17,150	26,492	20,578		12,466
Disposed	13,472	18,629	13,857	8,472		1,620
Total Inventory	128,356	140,875	150,743	175,586		271,949

- *Some evidence is returned by the judge to parties in the courtroom and not returned to the Clerk for storage.*

As of November 23, 2015, evidence on hand was comprised of several specific types as shown in the following table. General evidence accounted for 98.7% of the total exhibits on hand.

Evidence Type	Capital	Criminal	Civil	Totals
Firearms	162	509	13	684
Weapons	50	248	2	300
Narcotics	37	1,040	8	1,085
Valuables	211	462	2	675
DNA	175	475	0	650
Pornography	28	11	0	39
General	23,737	76,230	168,549	268,516
Total	24,400	78,975	168,574	271,949

The Evidence Department is supported by one supervisor and three staff employees under the direction of Alicia Baker, Records Services Manager.

Audit Team:
Michael Bodle, Senior Internal Auditor

Observations & Recommendations

The audit identified certain policies, procedures and practices that could be improved. The audit was neither designed nor intended to be a detailed study of every relevant system, procedure or transaction. Accordingly, the observations and recommendations presented in this report may not be all-inclusive of areas where improvement may be needed.

1. Evidence inventories are not performed with adequate frequency.

Best practices published by the Florida Court Clerks & Comptrollers (FCCC) indicate that full inventories should be conducted "based on the county's inventory/audit schedule". Monthly or bi-monthly inventories and/or reviews are recommended.

Evidence handling standards published by the International Association for Property and Evidence, Inc. (IAPE) indicate that inventories should be conducted annually or whenever a change in key personnel is made. The standards further state that departments with an inventory so large as to prohibit a complete inventory at one time should conduct partial inventories on a scheduled basis to allow accomplishment of a complete inventory within each 12 month period. Finally, the IAPE states that inventories of guns, money, and drugs should be done more often.

The most recent full inventory of evidence in the custody of the Evidence Department took over four years to conduct and was completed in 2010.

An audit of the evidence previously stored in the Wells Fargo bank safe deposit box was conducted in October 2013, just prior to transferring the evidence to the Main Courthouse. In addition, an audit of drugs and drug-related evidence was conducted during the period from September 2014 through March 2015, and the results were reported in April 2015. Over 200 staff hours were required to complete the drug inventory and correct the related documentation errors and deficiencies. In addition, drugs were re-packaged in clear, sealable plastic bags, thereby reducing the time required in future audits and inventories.

While no full, formal inventory of evidence has been conducted in the last six years, recent renovations of all vaults in use required Department staff to identify, move, and account

for evidence in those vaults. If formally reported, these efforts may have equated to partial inventories performed by the Department.

Spot audits, consisting of a sample of five evidence items selected each week, have been conducted consistently from 2014 through May 2016 except for short-term suspensions between September 2014 and February 2015 and three weeks in February 2016. During these periods, key projects (e.g., drug audit and vault renovations requiring evidence relocation) as well as staffing shortages reduced the time available for conducting spot audits. As a result, 82% of the spot audits required by Department policy were conducted for the period including 2014 through July 25, 2016.

Evidence on hand is increasing over time at a significant rate. At the end of 2009, there were 128,356 items of evidence. As of November 23, 2015, at the time of our audit inventory cut off, there were 271,949 items of evidence, representing a 112% increase over this approximate six year period. Part of the increase is caused by the lower numbers of evidence items disposed of during that time. During 2015, 1,620 items were disposed of while 36,895 items were received.

Our audit included independent sampling of 105 evidence items, with an emphasis on higher risk exhibits (e.g., firearms, weapons, narcotics, and valuables). This sampling identified one minor drug exhibit exception (10 pills noted instead of 11 recorded when presented as sealed evidence at the time of the original trial in 2007) and seven instances in which items should have been more accurately classified.

Additional review of inventory records disclosed that 676 evidence items (including firearms, weapons and valuables) were misclassified in TrakMan, often as general civil or criminal evidence. While the misclassified items represent only 0.25% of the total evidence exhibits (271,949) as of November 23, 2015, these misclassified items represent 41% of the total exhibits in the three categories (1,659) in which they should have been reported. Over 93% of the incorrect classifications were applied prior to the current evidence staff and management joining the Department.

The lack of staffing, staff turnover, vault renovations, and other projects have impacted the Department's ability to conduct periodic inventories. Additionally, financial constraints within the Clerk's Office have required the cessation of overtime payment. As a result, any time that Evidence staff are required to stay after regular working hours to take custody of evidence for late ending trials must be treated as flex time. Flex time must be taken as time off during the work week in which it is earned, which further reduces time available for conducting inventories.

Recommendations:

A. Establish an inventory schedule to conduct as complete an inventory of evidence as possible. Concentrate on inventories of firearms, weapons, narcotics, money, and other valuables to ensure these items are inventoried on a routine, recurring basis.

B. Document and report on any mass moves of evidence which involve identifying, quantifying, and tracking those moves in such adequate detail as to serve the dual purpose of a partial inventory.

C. Correct the one evidence exhibit count error and the misclassifications noted in the audit sample testing.

Management Responses:

A. Executive Management has approved the transfer of a vacant position in County Criminal to Evidence to fund a fourth Evidence Custodian position. Once filled and fully trained, the position will allow assigned staff to focus on inventory and disposal functions on a regular basis. Please note that the target completion date includes an estimated time to complete the interview, hiring processes and the 90-day introductory period.

   Management has begun compiling a schedule that will provide a count to represent 10% of all six locations (e.g., vaults A, B, C/A1, 7th floor, small and large safes) to be inventoried monthly.
   Target Completion Date: 01/02/2017

B. Management is in the process of purchasing "Sealed Evidence Do Not Tamper" tape, which shall be used to seal evidence moving forward, and inventory labels, which will identify if an exhibit/package has been inventoried and not opened, or inventoried and opened along with the date of such. When inventorying packages and the seal is still intact, it is not necessary to open the package. This new practice will help to save time by not having to open each package, thereby resulting in an increase in the number of exhibits inventoried in the same amount time.
   Target Completion Date: 11/07/2016

   Weekly random spot audits of the evidence vaults were regularly performed as outlined in the Best Practices; however, these audits were not performed while the office and vaults were being renovated. As noted above, due to these renovations the Evidence

Department staff identified, moved, and accounted for evidence which, if formally reported, may equate to a partial inventory. The compilation of the formal reports is in progress.
Target Completion Date: 01/02/2017

C. Management has corrected the error by inserting an Evidence Historical Note (EC) into Trakman to reflect that the discrepancy was not found at the time of the initial transfer on July 27, 2007, nor was it found in the 2012 Drug Audit. State Exhibit #6 was received in a sealed clear Law Enforcement bag (and is still sealed in that bag) with 10 Blue pills, 1 ½ White pills, and 1 Blue & White pill.
Target Completion Date: Completed

Regarding the 676 misclassifications, management has begun working on correcting them in Trakman.
Target Completion Date: 10/15/2016

2. Eligible evidence is not being disposed of in a timely manner.

Evidence disposal efforts have been significantly reduced in the past few years. IAPE standards require on-going efforts to purge evidence that is eligible for disposal. Evidence is disposed of based on retention periods dictated by Florida Statutes, court rules and local administrative orders. Criminal evidence is disposed of only after approval by the State Attorney's Office and the subsequent issuance of a court order by the Chief Judge.

The latest effort on researching civil or criminal evidence eligible for disposal occurred in 2014. The most recent disposal of evidence occurred in December 2015, which involved 1,620 items of evidence that were approved by the court for disposal in 2014.

Based on Evidence Department data available and summarized in the following table, the total inventory of evidence items has increased 112% from 128,356 items in 2009 to 271,949 as of November 23, 2015. The number of evidence items disposed has significantly declined over this same period from 13,472 items in 2009 to 1,620 items in 2015.

Evidence Items (Exhibits)	12/31/09	12/31/10	12/31/11	12/31/12	2013 – 2014 Data Not Available	11/23/15
Disposed	13,472	18,629	13,857	8,472		1,620
Total Inventory	128,356	140,875	150,743	175,586		271,949

We noted the following examples of evidence being held that should have been previously disposed.

- One case (2002CF000667) had valuables evidence on hand though the case was closed in July 2002, with sentence and probation completed in May 2009.
- One case (2003CF001872) had drug and cash evidence on hand though the case was closed in April 2004 and probation ended in October 2008.
- One case (2005MM024049) had evidence on hand including a firearm and ammunition though an agreed order dated July 11, 2006 directed the release to the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office.

TrakMan system reporting functionalities require enhancement to simplify the disposal process for criminal evidence. The system does allow virtual disposals; however the system does not allow reports to be generated that identify criminal evidence satisfying disposal criteria for submission to the State Attorney's Office for approval. Also, the system does not allow creation of notice of intent (NOI) forms, which would improve disposal efficiencies. In addition, the State Attorney's Office has narrowed the eligibility guidelines used when reviewing evidence submitted for approval to dispose.

Recommendations:

A. Resume disposal of eligible evidence after completion of research, issuance of appropriate notice of intent, and documentation of requisite approvals.

B. Pursue implementation of TrakMan system modifications that will enable creation of reports that identify criminal evidence ready for disposal as well as generate NOI forms and virtual disposals to enhance efficiencies.

Management Responses:

A. Management recognizes the need to perform disposal functions weekly. To provide the required resources to address this recommendation, a fourth Evidence Custodian position has been approved, and the application and interview process has begun. The additional position will allow staff to be assigned to disposal duties on a weekly basis. Target Completion Date: 02/02/2017

B. Management has already begun working closely with the IT Department to create an automated retention report that will compile civil and criminal case and party information based on specific requested parameters provided in the Florida laws and best practices and as requested by the Palm Beach County State Attorney's Office to determine eligibility. The report will help to yield that information quicker. Presently, all research is performed manually, which results in an overwhelming number of hours spent on researching each case. Please note that the completion date indicates time for IT to create the report and for management to test for accuracy in quality assurance (QA) and production systems.
Target Completion Date: 02/02/2017

3. Procedural changes are required to ensure cash evidence eligible for disposal is handled properly.

Cash evidence deemed appropriate for disposal is currently treated by the Evidence Department under Section 28.413, F.S. as physical evidence with monetary value. As such, when disposal is authorized upon completion of research efforts, the cash is taken by Evidence Department staff to a Legal Records Department cashier and deposited into the Clerk's general fund.

Our audit determined that other statutory guidance exists that may require certain cash evidence eligible for disposal to be treated in an alternate manner. For example:

- Complications arise if the money held in evidence is treated as contraband under Sections 893.12. Such treatment would require transfer of the money to the Sheriff as contraband for forfeiture proceedings. Section 893.12, F.S. defines contraband to include controlled substances, listed chemicals, and money used to further violations of the drug abuse prevention and control act, stating it should be disposed of in accordance with the Florida Contraband Forfeiture Act. The Evidence Department procedures do not require large evidence cash amounts to be flagged as potentially subject to forfeiture procedures, which would require alternate handling should law enforcement sue for forfeiture.

We noted that in one case (2008CF015124) in which cash evidence was still on hand totaling $2,143, two dockets in the case (both a probation order signed by the judge and a court event form) include the requirement that the money be forfeited to the West

Palm Beach Police Department. These orders were not communicated to the Evidence Department, so it was not aware of the need to forfeit the funds.

The Clerk's Legal Counsel agreed that current practices should be expanded to include the potential for large currency amounts to be subject to forfeiture proceeding instituted by law enforcement.

Recommendations:

A. Incorporate in Evidence Department procedures a method to flag large currency amounts in evidence as potentially subject to forfeiture to law enforcement.

B. Coordinate with other court services departments to ensure their staff are aware of the need to communicate to the Evidence Department any court orders referencing evidence disposition.

Management Responses:

A. Management will update the existing procedure to include direction on what to do should large currency amounts be received into evidence that has the potential to be forfeited to law enforcement.
Target Completion Date: 12/30/2016

B. Management will communicate with other department managers/supervisors to request that a copy of all court-signed orders requesting evidence to be released and/or forfeited be forwarded promptly to the Evidence Department for handling.
Target Completion Date: 10/15/2016

4. Departmental timeliness goals for processing new evidence exhibits are not being met.

The Evidence Department has set three-day timeliness standards for processing new evidence exhibits, which are not being met consistently.

The Evidence Department tracks incoming evidence through three key steps: acceptance of evidence custody from in-court clerks and entry into TrakMan, verification of the TrakMan entries, and bar-coding of the exhibits prior to filing in their appropriate vault

locations. Initial discussions with Evidence management indicated that the departmental goal was to process new evidence exhibits through all three steps (entry, verification, and bar-coding) within three workdays of receipt. Our review of the process and subsequent discussion with management disclosed that the three workday standard applies to each of the three steps. Therefore, if the new evidence exhibit met the three workday timeliness goal in each of the three steps, it would be processed within nine workdays of receipt.

Timeliness of processing is measured by recording the following dates on the exhibit list working copies maintained in the Department.

- Date the evidence is accepted (A) from in-court clerk by the evidence clerk.
- Date the evidence exhibits are entered (E) into TrakMan.
- Date the TrakMan entries are verified (V) by a second evidence clerk.
- Date the evidence is bar-coded (B).

The Evidence Department places exhibit lists being processed into wire baskets labeled to represent the status of the evidence. Each week, the Department prepares an email documenting the number of cases and exhibits pending as of close of business Friday in each of the processing steps involved: pending entry, pending verification, and pending bar-coding. For each processing step, the goal is to have all items completed within three workdays. In addition to documenting the numbers of cases and related exhibits pending, the emails note whether any items still pending are not timely.

We reviewed the emails for the second, third, and fourth quarters of 2015. Three timeliness measures were reported for each of the 40 weeks in that time period, resulting in 120 total measurements. Department emails documented that the timeliness goals were not met in 73 of the 120 (61%) measurements. The emails did not document how many items were not timely processed, so it is possible that only one untimely exhibit resulted in an "untimely" measurement for a particular process step for that week.

Recommendation:

A. Review and confirm the validity of the departmental timeliness goals. When the goals are determined to be appropriate, management should work toward achieving the goals on a more consistent basis.

Management Response:

A. As per the Best Practices, evidence is to be entered "promptly" into the tracking system. Criminal Courts communicated that they have three (3) days to docket the information.

Consequently, the Evidence Department has to verify the exhibits to the exhibit list, and once entered into Trakman, the items can be properly tracked (chain of custody) and exhibits can then be checked out. Once the fourth Evidence Custodian position is filled, management expects to meet the timeliness percentage (goal) on a more consistent basis.
Target Completion Date: 10/15/2016

Management currently documents, in the weekly email that is provided to the Senior Management team, how many items were not timely processed.
Target Completion Date: Completed

5. Evidence policies and procedures require update and enhancement.

Various policies and procedures exist that govern Evidence Department processes. Certain procedures require update and clarification. Best practices in internal controls indicate that written procedures provide guidance to employees to ensure that processes are performed accurately and consistently in accordance with management's directives. In addition, written procedures help define responsibilities, pertinent laws and regulations, systems involved, and how they are updated and distributed.

Evidence Department policies and procedures are located in various sites within the Common (G:) drive and the Department (S:) drive for Operations. Management stated that the procedures in the G: drive are current and should be considered authoritative for the Evidence staff. Our review of the procedures filed within the S: drive for Operations indicated that the majority were last updated around 2013 or were in draft form. Our review of the procedures filed in the G: drive indicated that most were current, with the following improvement opportunities noted.

- Four procedures refer to Banner Courts, which was replaced by the Showcase system in January 2016.
- Two procedures refer to the "New Case Log", which was replaced in mid 2014 by the Task Matrix.
- One procedure refers to "bubble package", which is a method replaced in current practice by clear plastic sealed packaging to facilitate identification and inventory observation.
- One procedure governing bar-coding states that it must be performed in the presence of two clerks. We observed that two clerks were present when bar-coding

Type I evidence (e.g., firearms, weapons, narcotics), but only one clerk was present when bar-coding Type II evidence (e.g., posters, documents, exhibits). The procedure did not distinguish between the two types of evidence.

- The procedure titled "AUDIT - DETAILED" states its purpose is to verify that all items held in storage are evidence as submitted by the court as per the exhibit card and exhibit list. This procedure requires an inventory of items stored on vault shelves but it provides no guidance as to the mode or frequency of selection for this inventory.

Recommendations:

A. Review the Evidence Department policies and procedures to determine whether the multiple sites where procedures are currently filed need to be maintained.

B. Update policies and procedures, including the observations noted above, to ensure current references and best practices are reflected.

Management Responses:

A. Management has begun the updates.
Target Completion Date: 10/15/2016

B. On August 16 2016, the Clerk's Audit Department provided a list of nine (9) procedures that require editing. Management has begun the updates.
Target Completion Date: 10/15/2016