PROCEDURE – Lost Property

Number: G 1101 Date Published: 28 September 2018

1.0 Summary of Changes

This procedure has been updated on its 2 yearly review removing the function of routinely recording lost property apart from specific circumstances:

2.0 What this Procedure is about

Following a review of the Lost Property function, the Chief Officers Council gave a directive to all police forces to remove this area of responsibility with affect from 1st October 2018.

Compliance with this procedure and any governing policy is mandatory.

3.0 Detail the Procedure

Following the Chief Officers Council decision Essex Police from 1st October 2018 will no longer take reports of lost property and therefore will no longer issue a crime reference number for insurance purposes, unless:

- The find poses a risk to people, property or organisations;
- The finder cannot retain the property due to the nature of the article found.

For all lost property, if there is any indication the property may have been stolen rather than lost, normal crime recording procedures should be followed.

If a customer has lost property such as cash, identification, cards, handbags, bikes etc. advice should be given to them re-tracing their steps and to contact the places they’ve visited to see if they have it.

The premises listed below should have their own lost and found procedures:

- Licensed premises (pubs, nightclubs);
- Private premises (house, hotel, hostel);
- Taxi companies and businesses (shops, supermarkets);
- Public transport (trains, buses, trams) and educational premises (schools, universities, colleges).

The below advice should be provided to the public in the event of a lost:

- Certificated Firearm
  - If a certified firearm is lost this must be informed to the police within 7 days. The Firearms Licensing Department should be advised.
- Driving Licence, Passport or Other ID Card
  - Advise they report the loss directly to the issuing authority;
  - Advise they report a lost passport, visit the gov.uk website;
  - Advise they replace a driving licence, visit the gov.uk website.
PROCEDURE – Lost Property

Number: G 1101    Date Published: 28 September 2018

• Bank or Store Card
  o Advise the customer to contact their bank or credit card company and report the loss to them immediately, they’ll will cancel it and issue a replacement card.

• Mobile phone
  o Advise the customer to contact their service provider as soon as possible to block the phone;
  o If they have mobile tracking software installed, advise that they activate it. If it identifies a location attend and search for the device;
  o If there is a belief that the phone was stolen advise to call 101 to report the theft and the location of the device to police.

• Handbag, Wallet or Purse
  o Advise the customer to contact the issuers of any documents or cards such as bank or store card provider.

• Keys
  o Advise the customer to have the locks changed to make sure the property remains secure.

• Blue Badge
  o Advise the customer that the loss should be reported to the local district council who issued the Blue Badge.

• Dog
  o Advise the customer to report their lost dog(s) to the local council dog warden.
    ▪ Lost Dog
      • The Doglost website (a free lost and found dog service) can be approached for more advice and support.
    ▪ Stray Dogs - The police no longer have responsibility for stray dogs
      • To speak to someone about a stray, lost or found dog the customer should be advised to contact their local council dog warden. Local councils also deal with reports of dog fouling.
    ▪ Micro-Chipping Dogs
      • As of April 2016, all dogs should be fitted with a microchip by the time it’s 8 weeks old. Read more advice on how to microchip your dog.

4.0 Equality Impact Assessment

This procedure has been assessed with regard to an Equality Impact Assessment. As a result of this assessment it has been graded as having a low potential impact as the proposals in this procedure would have no potential or actual differential impact on grounds of age, sex, disability, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and pregnancy and maternity.
5.0 Risk Assessment

A risk assessment must be undertaken by those responsible for property stores and operational officers handling property handed over to the police. Generic risk assessments have been produced and are available on the intranet. Additional guidance is available from Occupational Health Department, Health and Safety Team or Firearms Licensing Department.

• Property clerks;
• Front Desk Duties.

6.0 Consultation

The following have been consulted during the formulation of this document:

• Unison
• Police Federation
• Essex Diversity and Inclusion Manager
• Health & Safety
• Strategic Change Team
• PSD Superintendent
• Superintendents Association
• ABSM Property & Admin.
• Continuous Improvement Team
• Customer contact Advisors
• Media

7.0 Monitoring and Review

This procedure will be reviewed every 2 years by the Business Services Manager to ensure it remains accurate, compliant with legislation and fit for purpose.

8.0 Governing Force policy.
Related Force policies or related procedures

• G 1100 Policy – Property Handling
• G 1102 Procedure – Found Property
• G 1103 Procedure – Seized and Detained Property
• G 1104 Procedure – Disposal of Property
• G 1106 Procedure – Damage to Private Property – Police Actions
• G 1107 Procedure – Seizure, Storage and Disposal of Firearms and Ammunition

9.0 Other source documents, e.g. legislation, Authorised Professional Practice (APP), Force forms, partnership agreements (if applicable)

None