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IAPE Monthly Newsletter & Updates

January 2024



Ask Joe...Each month, IAPE's primary instructor and Executive Director, Joe Latta, answers one of your questions pertaining to your everyday property and evidence room questions. To submit a question for Joe, [Contact Us](#)

Dear Joe,

I recently attended your class and Las Vegas I want to thank you for all the great information while scaring the heck out of me. I may have noted to you on one of the breaks that I had just changed departments and was hired to fix a dysfunctional property room here in the county. Just before leaving for the class, I had a veteran officer come up to the property counter and said that he needed some ammunition for training. When asking the officer about the practice of getting the ammunition from the property room, I questioned how it had been done in the past. It was explained that when officers need to do their annual training it wasn't unusual to just get the ammunition from the property room from cases that had been adjudicated. At the time, I didn't have any of the caliber that the officer was requesting and asked him to check back later. After coming to your class, I need to know if signing evidence out to the officers from the property is an accepted practice. Can you enlighten me with best practice dealing with ammunition.

Thanks,
Amy

Dear Amy,

The short answer taking ammo without some type of approval process is not an acceptable practice! Like guns, money and drugs, ammunition is another one that raises its ugly head and gets us into trouble if not handled properly and with transparency. Merely walking up to the counter and asking for some ammo may be a headline in the making.

The cost of a 9mm round is nearly \$0.50 each or about \$25 for a box of 50. One may ask the question, "Is there any room for this practice to be abused?" Could an employee take the ammo and not shoot it and sell it? Another issue that I am aware of is where the property officer gave ammo (adjudicated cases) to her "friend" at the department and denied others. This ended up with an internal investigation brought on by an officer who wasn't getting "his" ammunition from the department.

The legality of transferring adjudicated case evidence, including bullets is generally legal in most states. However, we need to add transparency to the process. The case is over, a written policy allows us to divert to department use.

The preferred method would be for any ammunition needed by the department for official reasons would be diverted sometimes referred to as converted to agency use and transferred to the departments rangemaster and appropriately disseminated from the range master. It is realized that some departments do not have a range and the officers must do it on their own where strict procedures must be in place.

In the scenario where the officer is given the ammo from the property room because there is no range master, the following should be considered:

Written policy allowing the process.

- Justification memo form the user requesting the ammunition for training.
- An approval process from a manager.
- Any diversion/conversion form signed by the manager and user.
- Updating original property record showing who the ammunition was diverted too.
-

IAPE Professional Standards

11.1 DIVERSION TO AGENCY USE

- 11.1.1 The diversion of firearms for official use by the agency will be defined in policy, local ordinance, or state law.
- 11.1.2 Any diversion of a firearm for agency use will be documented in the property record and in a "Firearms Diversion" file.

15.8 DIVERSION

- 15.8.1 Policy should define the statutory authority, city code, or county ordinance that allows property or evidence to be diverted.
- 15.8.2. Policy will define the diversion process.
- 15.8.3. Policy will define if firearms can be diverted for agency use.

Standard 11.11. Diversion to Agency Use

Reasoning: The diversion of firearms for agency use is generally an acceptable practice. The diversion process should include a justification memo from the requesting party, approval from a manager, and approval from the Chief Executive Officer or agency designee. To add an additional level of transparency to the process, consider having an official from outside the agency such as a purchasing administrator or a judge approve the request.

Documentation of the diversion process should be maintained by the Property Room and the division head. The diverted firearm should be included on the agency's equipment inventory for audit purposes and transparency.

Thank you,
Joe Latta
Executive Director
International Association for Property and Evidence

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April

Town of Cary, North Carolina
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 Kansas City, Missouri
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 Lancaster, Ohio **Almost Sold Out**

May

Commerce City, Colorado
 Allegheny County, Pennsylvania
 White County, Illinois

June

Hurst, Texas
 Council Bluffs, Iowa

July

Minneapolis, Minnesota
 South San Francisco, California

August

Salt Lake City, Utah
 Indianapolis, Indiana
 Humble, Texas
 Charlottesville, Virginia

September

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October

Caldonia, Wisconsin
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Headlines:

Murfreesboro police officer accused of storing department ammunition at his home

January 21, 2024

Murfreesboro Daily News Journal

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. (WTVF) – A Murfreesboro police officer who works as a firearms instructor for the department has been decommissioned after an internal investigation found he had been storing thousands of rounds of department ammunition at his home.

Officer Chris Norville is also accused of failing to sign out ammunition he took from the police department's armory, keeping a department rifle at his home for approximately one year and using a case of the department's ammunition for a personal school he attended.

A superior officer recommended Norville be terminated following an internal affairs investigation but the police chief will now hold a hearing in October to determine what disciplinary action will be taken.

Video from inside the Murfreesboro Police Department Armory, obtained by *NewsChannel 5 Investigates*, is at the center of an investigation by the department's Office of Professional Responsibility.

It shows Norville removing boxes of ammunition, 8,000 rounds total, for a department-sponsored, three-day class he taught in July.

About a week later Norville returned one box of ammunition with 1,000 unused rounds, which was only a third of what investigators estimated should have been returned. He used sign-in sheets to log the thousand rounds of ammo back into the armory as required, but after he was left alone in the room Norville removed a box containing 500 rounds of rifle ammunition without signing it out.

Read the Full Story

California Cop Admits Stealing Thousands of Bullets Over 30 Years, Escapes Theft Charges (2019)

Gaffney police officer stole ammunition and sold it to gun range, warrants say (2021)

Read the Full Story

Commentary:

As a reminder, when issues such as this arises in the workplace, ask yourself just two questions, would you want to read about the practice giving ammo to offices it in the local newspaper or on social media?

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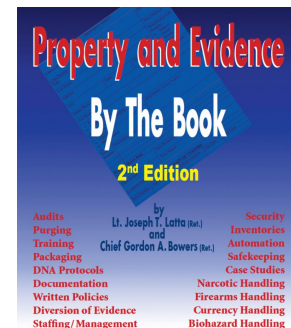
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