

Office-Owned and Personal Property

700.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The policy addresses the care of office-owned property and the role of the Office when personal property, the property of another or office-owned property is damaged or lost.

700.2 POLICY

Members of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office shall properly care for office property assigned or entrusted to them. Office-owned property that becomes damaged shall be promptly replaced. Members' personal property that becomes damaged during the performance of assigned duties will be reimbursed in accordance with this policy.

700.3 OFFICE PROPERTY

Definitions

A. Agency Equipment/Office Owned Equipment: Includes all equipment or parts thereof owned and/or issued by the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, except equipment which is commonly considered to be expendable.

B. Loss: Includes the accidental loss and/or theft of agency equipment or parts thereof.

C. Damage: Includes any physical damage to agency equipment or parts thereof. It does not include the need for replacement or repair of such equipment or parts thereof as a result of normal wear or malfunction.

D. Capital Equipment: Includes any single asset which has an acquisition cost of \$1,000.00 or more, whether purchased outright, acquired through lease, or donation.

All property and equipment issued by the Office shall be documented in the appropriate property sheet or equipment log. Receipt of issued items shall be acknowledged by the receiving member's signature. Upon separation from the Office, all issued property and equipment shall be returned. Documentation of the return shall be acknowledged by the signature of a supervisor.

For procedures related to Office Property, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [Returning Agency Property and Equipment](#), [Required Reports](#) and [Police Services Procedures](#)

700.3.1 CARE OF PROPERTY

Members shall be responsible for the safekeeping, serviceable condition, proper care, use and replacement of office property that has been assigned or entrusted to them.

Intentional or negligent abuse or misuse of office property may lead to discipline including, but not limited to, the cost of repair or replacement.

- (a) Members shall promptly report, through their chain of command, any loss, damage to, or unserviceable condition of any office-issued property or equipment.

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1. The member will submit a Blue Team detail to their supervisor briefly describing what happened. Follow-up questions will be handled by the supervisor.
2. A review by command staff should determine whether additional action is appropriate.
 - (b) The use of damaged or unserviceable property should be discontinued as soon as practicable, and the item replaced with a comparable item as soon as available and following notice to a supervisor.
 - (c) Except when otherwise directed by competent authority or otherwise reasonable by circumstances, office property shall only be used by those to whom it was assigned. Use should be limited to official purposes and in the capacity for which it was designed.
 - (d) Office property shall not be thrown away, sold, traded, donated, destroyed or otherwise disposed of without proper authority.
 - (e) A supervisor's approval is required before any attempt to repair damaged or unserviceable property is made by a member. Approved requests will be forwarded to the Police Services Coordinator for replacement.
 - (f) The Duty Officer is responsible for completing the Property/Equipment Breakdown form anytime there is major damage to equipment or property. The Duty Officer shall then forward the form to the Police Services Coordinator for appropriate distribution.

For procedures related to Care of Property, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [Replacement Uniforms/Equipment](#)

700.4 PERSONAL PROPERTY

Carrying and/or using personal property or equipment on-duty requires prior written approval by the Sheriff or Assistant Sheriff. The member should submit a request that includes a description of the property, and the reason and length of time it will be used. Personal property of the type routinely carried by persons who are not performing law enforcement duties, and that is not a weapon, is excluded from this requirement.

The Office will not replace or repair costly items (e.g., jewelry, expensive watches, exotic equipment) that are not reasonably required as part of work.

700.4.1 FILING CLAIMS FOR PERSONAL PROPERTY

Claims for reimbursement for damage to, or loss of, personal property must be made on the proper LGIT form. This form is submitted to the member's immediate supervisor. The supervisor may require a separate written report.

The supervisor receiving such a report shall investigate and direct a Blue Team report to the appropriate Division Commander, which shall include the result of the investigation and whether reasonable care was taken to prevent the loss, damage or unserviceable condition.

Upon review by command staff and a finding that no misconduct or negligence was involved, repair or replacement may be recommended by the Sheriff, who will then forward the claim to the County department responsible for issuing payments.

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700.5 DAMAGE TO PROPERTY OF ANOTHER

Members who intentionally or unintentionally damage or cause to be damaged the real or personal property of another while performing any law enforcement function shall promptly report the damage through their chain of command.

- (a) The member will submit a Blue Team Equipment Damage/Loss Report through their chain of command.
- (b) The member will obtain photographs of the damage as well as capturing the damage on their body-worn camera.
- (c) The member's supervisor will complete the Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) General Liability Loss Report and ensure the LGIT Third Party Property Damage/Body Injury Statement General Liability Report is completed.

The supervisor receiving such a report shall conduct an investigation and direct the Blue Team Report to the appropriate Division Commander, which shall include the result of the investigation and whether reasonable care was taken to prevent the loss, damage or unserviceable condition.

A review of the incident by the Division Commander to determine whether misconduct or negligence was involved should be completed.

700.5.1 DAMAGE BY PERSONNEL OF ANOTHER AGENCY

Personnel from another agency may intentionally or unintentionally cause damage or cause to be damaged the real or personal property of the County of St. Mary's or of another person while performing their duties within the jurisdiction of this office. It shall be the responsibility of this office member present or the member responsible for the property to report the damage as follows:

- (a) A verbal report shall be made to the member's immediate supervisor as soon as circumstances permit and capture the damage on body-worn camera.
- (b) The member's supervisor shall contact the supervisor from the involved agency and ensure they are reporting the damage. The supervisor should document who they spoke with from the involved agency and what the damage was in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) card for the incident.
- (c) In the event the damage prevents a building/residence from being properly secured, the agency responsible for the property damage will remain on the scene until the property owner can respond.