DAVIS POLICE DEPARTMENT
FIELD RELEASE OF RECOVERED STOLEN PROPERTY
Policy and Procedure 4.03-B

DEPARTMENT MANUAL

I. POLICY

One of the primary responsibilities of the Police Department is the proper and lawful storage, control, and return of recovered stolen property. The procedure for returning stolen property to the rightful owner must be consistent with approved practices and relevant laws.

II. FIELD RELEASE PROCEDURES

A. Except as noted below, recovered stolen property may be released to the owner or their authorized representative with supervisor approval and only if no arrest has been or likely will be made. Prior to the release, a photograph shall be taken which depicts the owner/agent in possession of the property. Property should not be released under the following circumstances:

1. When ownership of the property is in dispute.
2. The specific property item cannot be readily identified at a later time (A permanent and unique marking on the property may be an appropriate solution, provided the item is not defaced).

B. An Evidence Release and Agreement Form shall be completed by the releasing member and submitted as part of the case investigation.

C. When an arrest has been, or likely will be made, recovered stolen property shall not be released without prior approval from the District Attorney’s Office, unless the item is perishable in which case it should be released pursuant to II, A and B above.

D. If the member or supervisor is uncertain on the appropriateness of a field release, the property shall be placed in evidence. The Investigations Division will consult with the District Attorney’s Office on possible release before trial.

E. If approval is given by the District Attorney’s Office to release the property to its owner prior to case adjudication, the member will take digital photos of the property, complete the Evidence Release and Agreement Form, and comply with any other instructions given by the District Attorney.

Darren Pytel
Police Chief
9/93
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Revised 04/09- If arrest is made property cannot be released without DA approval
05/19