

## **Administrative Purge AKA Administrative Kill**

By far the most frequently asked question I get after teaching a class is, “How does our agency conduct an Administrative Kill like you taught about in class?”. In law enforcement, very few people want to invent the wheel. We always want to find someone else who has invented the wheel so we can copy it. If your agency is a CAELA agency or subscribes to Lexipol for your polices, you know exactly what I am talking about.

When your evidence room is so broken or dysfunctional and there is no hope in sight to dig out of the hole your agency had dug for you, an Administrative Purge or Administrative Kill may be the only solution. So, what is an Administrative Kill? In simplest terms, an Administrative Kill is a decision by the head of your agency to get rid of specific property without going through all of the normal checks and balances so the amount of property in your evidence room can be reduced to the point it can be effectively managed by the hours agency personnel are allocated to work. This process is not without some risks I will discuss below and it should always be done in consultation with the prosecutor and/or court system.

During an Administrative Kill your agency would pick specific property, NOT DNA, to get rid of. For instance, if you chose to do an administrative kill on misdemeanor drug evidence and related items, you would start by looking at all misdemeanor drug evidence that is beyond the statute of limitations. Any item of misdemeanor drug evidence that is beyond the statute of limitations would be documented and destroyed without researching the case. There is some risk in that you could potentially destroy some evidence from an old case in which there was a warrant for the suspects’ arrest, so the statute of limitations has been tolled. One way to mitigate that risk is to ask your local court system for a list of any active cases from a specific time period. If your agency is getting rid of misdemeanor drug evidence from 2010 to 2019 and there are no active cases or warrants in the system for drug cases during that time period you can be reasonably assured you are not getting rid of anything that is still needed.

So why is it so hard to find a “Policy” on Administrative Kills? Because it is typically a one time or short-term event. However, depending on the size of your department and the number of man hours allocated to the property and evidence function it may be done on a more frequent basis.

Long-time IAPE member Susan J. Beard, with the Commerce City Police Department, has been very successful in using an Administrative Purge to reduce her inventory. Several years ago, she conducted an Administrative Purge and reduced her inventory by twenty-three thousand items or 47%. The key to success it to set parameters that provide an acceptable risk for the agency. To date there have been no adverse actions related to the purge. Susan was able to incorporate an Administrative Purge into her policy so the process can be used again, if necessary. A copy of the policy from the Commerce City Police Department, an operations plan, and an approval memo have been uploaded to the IAPE website for your review and download **[Insert Link](#)**

*Here*). Fantastic job Susan and thank you for sharing! We always want to hear about success stories.

If you have been to an IAPE class in the last couple of years and received a flash drive, there is a copy of Administrative Kill memo template for your use. Also on the flash drive is a copy of “Property and Evidence, By the Book 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition” written by our Executive Director Joe Latta. This is the most extensive book on property and evidence rooms ever written. Administrative Kill is covered on page 266.

Remember, if your agency doesn’t dedicate enough time and manpower to the Property and Evidence function, you can pay for it now or you can pay for it later, but you are going to pay for it! If you have any questions about an Administrative Kill, feel free to reach out to me at [rmeadows@iape.org](mailto:rmeadows@iape.org).

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