

FREQUENTLY SEIZED DEVICES

Laptop and Desktop Computer Systems

step **1** Document the device and all collection procedures and information.

Photograph
OR Video OR
Sketch

Notes

Chain of
custody

step **2** Determine if the device is on or off.

Look for
lights

Listen for
sounds

Feel for
vibrations
or heat

step **3** If the device is off, **do NOT turn it on.**

Disassemble
(see Step 5)

Transport (see
Step 6)

step **4** If the device is on, proceed with **CAUTION.**

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1. Do not type, click the mouse, or explore files or directories without advanced training or expert consultation.
2. Ask about passwords and/or encryption of the system.
3. Observe the screen, and look for any running programs that indicate access to Internet-based accounts, open files, encryption, or the presence of files or data of potential evidentiary value
4. If you see anything on the screen that concerns you or needs to be preserved, consult with an expert (if you don't know who to contact, call the number on the inside cover of this manual).
5. Photograph the screen.
6. Once you are prepared to power down the system, pull the plug from the back of the computer system.
7. Remove the battery from a laptop system.

step **5** Disassemble and package the system

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You may need to collect other forensic evidence including fingerprints, biological samples, DNA, etc. from computer systems, digital devices, and electronic media. Work with crime scene service technicians or trained forensic personnel to preserve such evidence without disturbing the integrity of the digital media.

Photograph
the system
from all
perspectives

Clearly mark evidence and
document chain of custody,
location, and other important
details about the seized item(s)

Check media ports
and CD/DVD trays
for the presence of
removable media

Package the system, and peripheral
devices, for transport using laptop bags (if
applicable), boxes, or evidence bags

Disconnect
and secure
cables

step **6** Transport.

Deliver evidence to a secure law
enforcement facility or digital evidence
laboratory as soon as possible

Protect from
temperature extremes
and moisture

Do not place
evidence in the
cruiser's trunk

Protect from
electro-static
discharge

Package evidence so it will
not be physically damaged
or deformed