

Evidence Collection: Laws & Regulation

Evidence

material presented to a court of law which helps determine the truth of a legal matter

Documentary Evidence

evidence in document form

Testimonial Evidence

evidence from witness testimonies, expert opinions or statements made in court

Trace Evidence

very small pieces of evidence

Bodily Fluids

any fluid from within the body

Fibers

small units of textile materials

Chain of Custody

documentation of movement and location of physical evidence from the time it is obtained until it is presented in court

Search and Seizure

legal term which describes searching areas of criminal interest and seizing evidence

The Fourth Amendment

right of freedom from unreasonable invasion and limits the power of police to make arrests, search people and their property and seize objects and contraband

Probable Cause

reasonable grounds to believe a crime is being committed or has been committed

Warrant

document issued by a legal or government official authorizing the police to make an arrest, search premises or carry out some other action relating to the administration of justice

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Affidavit

describes the place which would be searched, what items will be searched and reason for the search

The Exclusionary Rule

prevents the court from using evidence obtained from unreasonable search and seizure which violates the Fourth Amendment

Obscene Matter

depicts or describes sexual conduct in an offensive way

Terry Stop

act in which law enforcement has the right to stop and frisk someone based upon reasonable suspicion

Observation

information an officer obtains through senses, such as sight, smell or hearing

Expertise

relies on clues which officers are specifically trained to notice

Information

facts which have been gathered through the exchange of others such as hearing a call on police radio, receiving details from an informant, statements from witnesses and victims which has been gathered regarding the case, police broadcast or announcements

Circumstantial Evidence

indirect information which implies a crime has occurred, relating to a series of facts rather than one direct fact