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GARFIELD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
POLICY / PROCEDURE
PATROL

SUBJECT: MOBILE FINGERPRINT SCANNER DEVICES

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 01, 2024

POLICY:
Garfield County Sheriff's Deputies shall use Portable Fingerprint Scanners to assist in the rapid identification of persons in the field.

PURPOSE:
Garfield County Sheriff's Deputies are involved in many types of situations during which identifying a person in the field via fingerprints is preferable to transporting the subject to the jail. The decision to use a portable fingerprint scanner is at the discretion of the Deputy or Supervisor on scene. The primary purpose of this policy is to establish and communicate guidelines for making decisions regarding the use of a portable fingerprint scanner.

DEFINITIIONS:
- **Portable Fingerprint Scanner (PFS)** is a handheld scanner that communicates with the Colorado Bureau of Investigation's Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS). The scanner checks two (2) fingerprints obtained from a person and can provide positive identification if the fingerprints exist in AFIS.
- **Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS)** is a biometric identification (ID) methodology that uses digital imaging technology to obtain, store, and analyze fingerprint data.
- **Repository of Individuals of Special Concern (RISC)** is a subset of the FBI's Criminal Master File with the ability to quickly assess subject threat level response within seconds.

METHODS:
Portable Fingerprint Scanners provide deputies with a specialized tool to assist in the positive identification of individuals. Identifications searched through the AFIS system are limited to subjects in the respective RISC databases. Scanners access AFIS and run the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and the Colorado Crime Information Center (CCIC) databases for identification purposes only.

- Deputies will still need to run the person of interest through NCIC/CCIC and Department of Revenue (DOR) to determine the person's warrant, restraining order, or driving privilege status.
- Deputies must receive the State-mandated training by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation or appropriate trainers.
- Deputies will maintain the scanner in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Scanners shall not be used for random or intelligence gathering efforts and their use will be documented in the appropriate investigative, arrest, or criminal summons report.

A PFS device is authorized for use to obtain field fingerprints in the following circumstances:

- When a subject voluntarily consents. Should consent be withdrawn the use of a PFS is not authorized and its use must stop immediately.
- If the subject is a juvenile, the parent or legal guardian is required to give consent before the PFS may be used.
- When conducting a death investigation with a member of the Coroner's Office present and no other reasonable means exists for identifying the deceased.
- When in contact with an At-Risk subject who is unable to provide positive identification and no other reasonable means exists for identifying the person.
- When probable cause to arrest exists and it is reasonable to believe the prints will assist in the investigation.
- When reasonable suspicion exists that a detained subject is providing false or fictitious identification.
- When responding to a medical emergency in which the subject is unable to provide positive identification and no other reasonable means exists for identifying the person.
- When specifically authorized by a valid search warrant.
- When verifying a subject's identification as part of sex offender registration.

Any "hit" or positive identification through one of the RISC databases must be documented in accordance with the State-mandated training. This reporting is a requirement for access to the RISC databases.

Physical force should not be utilized to obtain field fingerprints.