

LFU01 – SOP Handling of Evidence for Friction Ridge Analysis

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1. Scope

- 1.1. This procedure is used to maintain the integrity of friction ridge detail of evidentiary items recovered from the crime scene.

2. Background

- 2.1. To establish the practices for documenting the examination of evidence to conform to the requirements of the Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS) Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) *Quality Assurance Manual*, the accreditation standards under ISO/IEC 17025:2005, and any supplemental standards.
- 2.2. The latent fingerprint evidence is recovered by the Crime Scene Sciences personnel as a permanent record and stored to preserve the evidence from the scene of a crime.

3. Safety

- 3.1. Wear personal protective equipment (e.g., lab coat, gloves, mask, eye protection) only when carrying out standard operating procedures that results in exposure to chemicals or potentially infectious materials.
- 3.2. Read Material Safety Data Sheets to determine the safety hazards for chemicals and reagents used in the standard operating procedures.

4. Materials Required

- 4.1. Collection documentation
- 4.2. Evidence brown paper bag
- 4.3. Evidence envelopes
- 4.4. Evidence tape
- 4.5. Evidence plastic bags

5. Standards and Controls

- 5.1. Not applicable

6. Calibration

- 6.1. Not applicable

7. Procedures

- 7.1. Latent fingerprint evidence is delivered to the unit by crime scene personnel along with any necessary documentation and submission requests.
- 7.2. The Secretary/ Supervisor will ensure all items of evidence listed on the request coincide with all items of evidence invoiced for the submitted evidence. The Supervisor/Secretary signs the transmittal sheet for all evidence received. The Secretary/ Supervisor will log all of the received items of evidence in the database. The Supervisor assigns casework to each specialist conducting the examination to ensure that the evidence has no break in chain of custody.
- 7.3. The Chain of Custody will document the location or possession of the evidence at all times.
- 7.4. When submitted evidence is pending review it will be stored securely within the Latent Fingerprint Unit within the locked evidence storage room.
- 7.5. Upon retrieving the evidence from the evidence storage room for analysis, the analyst will be responsible for documenting the condition of the submitted evidence packaging, noting the following:
 - 7.5.1. Size, color, and type of packaging
 - 7.5.2. Condition of the evidence seal

7.5.3. Notations, markings, or writing on the packaging

7.5.3.1. If the evidence packaging is not intact or damaged in any way, an *Evidence Discrepancy Form* must be filled out by the analyst, the Unit Manager or Supervisor notified, and the Activity Communication Log must be updated. A copy of the completed *Evidence Discrepancy Form* will be sent to the Evidence Operation Center and the original will remain with the case file.

7.6. Upon opening the evidence packaging, the analyst will be responsible for inventorying the submitted evidence against the documentation.

7.6.1. If the inventory of the evidence does not match the documentation, an *Evidence Discrepancy Form* must be filled out by the analyst, the Unit Manager or Supervisor notified, and the Activity Communication Log must be updated. A copy of this completed *Evidence Discrepancy Form* will be sent to the Evidence Operation Center and the original will remain with the case file.

7.7. Upon the completion of the analytical work, the evidence will be replaced in the evidence packaging, sealed, and stored within the evidence storage area of the Latent Fingerprint Unit.

8. Sampling

8.1. Not applicable

9. Calculations

9.1. Not applicable

10. Uncertainty of Measurement

10.1. When quantitative results are obtained, and the significance of the value may impact the report, the uncertainty of measurement must be determined. The method used to determine the estimation of uncertainty can be found in the *FSL Quality Assurance Manual – Estimation of Uncertainty of Measurement (Section 5.4.6)*.

11. Limitations

11.1. Not applicable

12. Documentation

12.1. The following worksheet(s) shall be generated and managed:

12.1.1. Evidence Submission / Request form

12.1.2. Evidence Discrepancy Report

12.1.3. LFU Examination Worksheets

12.1.4. LFU Report of Results

13. References

13.1. *Forensic Science Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual (Current Version)*

13.2. *FSL Departmental Operations Manuals (Current Versions)*

13.3. *FSL Laboratory Operations Manuals (Current Versions)*