

LOM02 – Procedures for Case Documentation and Report Writing

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1. Background

- 1.1. To establish the procedures for the format and content of Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS) Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) casework documentation and *Reports of Examination / Discontinuation of Analysis / Database Hit Notifications / Amended Reports of Examination* while conforming to the requirements of the *FSL Quality Assurance Manual (QAM)*, the accreditation standards under ISO/IEC 17025 (current revision), and applicable supplemental standards set by the FSL's accrediting body.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. For the purposes of this document, the following terms shall have the designated meanings:

Analyst/Examiner: Interchangeable terms for the scientist who conducts examinations

Case file: the electronic and/or hard copy file containing all case documentation and records

DFS: Department of Forensic Sciences

DOM: Departmental Operations Manual

LOM: Laboratory Operations Manual

FSL: Forensic Science Laboratory

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure

QAM: Quality Assurance Manual

Re-examination: reports generated from reworked cases which were previously examined and reported

Supplemental: reports that are issued after the first report that is issued. Normally generated when additional items are submitted to the laboratory after a report is distributed or when a request is submitted to compare cases.

Amended: reports that requires a correction after the initial report has been distributed.

3. Scope

- 3.1. These procedures apply to FSL employees who prepare casework documentation, laboratory case files and *Reports of Examination / Discontinuation of Analysis / Database Hit Notifications / Amended Reports of Examination*.

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1. An **Analyst/Examiner** will:

- 4.1.1. Ensure original, official and supporting documents are retained, in a case file or electronic case record in LIMS.
 - 4.1.1.1. Ensure the intent of all relevant communications with individuals from agencies outside of DFS is included in the *Activity Communication Log* or in correspondence (such as emails) that are retained in the case file or in the LIMS Case Activities.
 - 4.1.1.2. Ensure all internal DFS communications affecting case approach and evidence processing decisions are included in the *Activity Communication Log*, LIMS Case Activities, or LIMS Imaging Module.
- 4.1.2. Place all supporting documents in the appropriate individually numbered case file or electronic case record in LIMS.
- 4.1.3. Prepare a *Report of Examination* based on the examinations performed or a *Discontinuation of Analysis*, as appropriate, or a *Database Hit Notification*, *Report of Examination*, *Supplemental Report* or *Amended Report of Examination*, when applicable.

- 4.1.4. Ensure the *Report of Examination / Discontinuation of Analysis / Database Hit Notification / Supplemental Report of Examination / Amended Report of Examination* is properly formatted and contains the appropriate information.
- 4.1.5. Ensure all requested examinations are properly addressed and documented in a *Report of Examination / Supplemental Report of Examination / Discontinuation of Analysis*.
- 4.1.6. Ensure the completed case file and/or electronic record is in the proper format and contains the *Report of Examination / Discontinuation of Analysis / Database Hit Notification / Amended Report of Examination* and all supporting case documentation (i.e., case notes, chain of custody, etc.).
 - 4.1.6.1. Case documentation that is a part of the LIMS electronic record (i.e., chain of custody, photos, electronic documentation and communications) do not need to be a part of the hard copy case file.
 - 4.1.6.2. The casework examiner will ensure an electronic copy of all casework documentation is retained, if required.
- 4.2. The **Unit Manager** or designee, will:
 - 4.2.1. Ensure any case that has requested examinations on submitted evidence will have a corresponding Report and completed case file.
 - 4.2.1.1. If a Report has been issued stating that no evidence / results suitable for comparison is/are available and a subsequent request(s) for comparison(s) is/are received, the Unit Manager or designee will ensure that no Report / *Discontinuation of Analysis* will be issued. Communication of the original examination findings precluding the ability to conduct comparisons will be documented and added to the administrative side of the case file or LIMS Case Activities.
 - 4.2.1.2. If a *Report of Examination* has been issued stating an identification or association, and a subsequent request(s) for comparison(s) is/are received, at the discretion of the Unit Manager or designee, no Report will be issued. Communication of the original examination findings negating the need to conduct additional comparisons will be documented and added to Activity Communication Log or in the LIMS Case Activities.

5. Procedures

5.1. Management and Content of Laboratory Files

- 5.1.1. Each case will have an individually numbered file folder or electronic equivalent, to include the request number, where applicable. Laboratory files will be organized in a manner to:
 - 5.1.1.1. Ensure efficient, timely flow of evidence, casework, and reports.
 - 5.1.1.2. Facilitate status inquiries and reviews of the work in progress by ensuring files on open cases are accounted for and readily accessible.
 - 5.1.1.3. Provide management information on the status of current cases.
- 5.1.2. Completed laboratory files are expected to contain the information which may be needed to write the Report/Notification and for review, testimony, or response to a discovery request on that particular case. All administrative and technical documentation is to be fastened securely in the file, if hard copy. Electronic files are not subject to the hard copy file folder requirements (e.g., attached to right/left side of file folder, technical and administrative page numbering, etc.) outlined in this document but may include the same case file materials.
- 5.1.3. The laboratory file will contain the information received and generated in-house regarding the case. This administrative information will be grouped on the left side of the case file and will generally include the following:
 - 5.1.3.1. Formal written notification (Discontinuation of Analysis / CODIS Notification), if applicable.
 - 5.1.3.2. Background information (submission paperwork, police reports, laboratory reports, etc.), if applicable.
 - 5.1.3.3. Schedule of Analysis, if applicable.
 - 5.1.3.4. FSL or unit-specific Administrative Review Form.
 - 5.1.3.5. Administrative 'Page 1' and 'Final' page numbering forms, if applicable.
- 5.1.4. The laboratory file will contain the information generated in the course of the analytical work on the case. This technical data will be grouped on the right side of the case file and will generally

include the following:

- 5.1.4.1. Formal written Report (*Report of Examination / Amended Report of Examination / NIBIN Hit Notification / AFIS/IAFIS Hit Notification*).
- 5.1.4.2. Analyst's notes / worksheets / instrument-generated paperwork (i.e., DNA electropherograms, graphs, charts).
- 5.1.4.3. Diagrams.
- 5.1.4.4. Photos/photocopies/scans.
- 5.1.4.5. Data.
- 5.1.4.6. Statistical calculations.
- 5.1.4.7. Database search/hit results, except for FBU (i.e. CODIS generated hits).
- 5.1.4.8. Unit-specific technical review form.
- 5.1.4.9. Technical 'Page 1' and 'Final' page numbering forms, if applicable.

Note: *If a unit processes cases by batching, the laboratory worksheets and data may be filed separately from the case file. The case file will reference where this information can be obtained.*

- 5.1.5. The administrative side of the hard copy case file will require the laboratory number and the casework examiner's handwritten initials (or signature) or the electronic equivalent on all of the associated paperwork contained within the case file at the time the case file is released by the examiner for review.
 - 5.1.5.1. The bottom-most page will consist of the *Administrative Case Documentation Page 1* ('Page 1A') form.
 - 5.1.5.2. The top-most page will consist of the *Administrative Case Documentation Final Page* form.
 - 5.1.5.3. The other pages between the bottom-most and top-most pages will be numbered sequentially along with the letter A (to signify the page is administrative in nature), starting from the bottom-most page (which is pre-numbered as Page 1A) and working up in the paperwork.

- 5.1.5.3.1. Every page with markings on it (whether pre-printed information or generated markings) must be numbered. Examiners must take care to number both sides of sheets of paper in the case file that contain markings.
- 5.1.5.4. The total number of pages of administrative paperwork will be reflected by the entered number in the “Total # of pages:_____A” line on near the top of the *Administrative Case Documentation Final Page* form.
- 5.1.5.5. Dissemination of the report will be captured in LIMS.
- 5.1.5.6. Once the report has been through the review process / released, as new administrative paperwork is added to the file (e.g., when a discovery request or a subpoena is received), the following process will be followed:
 - 5.1.5.6.1. The top-most page will be removed from the clip.
 - 5.1.5.6.2. The laboratory number and the handwritten initials or the electronic equivalent of the individual adding the administrative pages to the file will be added to all new pages.
 - 5.1.5.6.3. The required information in the table on the *Administrative Case Documentation Final Page* form will be completed.
 - 5.1.5.6.4. The initials listed in the table will be the initials of the person adding the paperwork to the file.
 - 5.1.5.6.5. The new pages will be hole-punched, numbered sequentially along with the letter A, starting from the new page added on top of the existing (already numbered) page and working up in the newly added paperwork, and then added to the clip.
 - 5.1.5.6.6. The revised count of the total # of pages will be the number listed on the “Total # of pages:_____A” line on the *Administrative Case Documentation Final Page* form at the time the review was completed / the report was released plus the total number of new pages (e.g., if the original total number of pages was 8A and 5 new pages are being added, the revised count of the total # of pages will be 13A). This number will be the next sequential number following the last new page added to the file.

- 5.1.5.6.7. The updated *Administrative Case Documentation Final Page* form will be added on top of the last newly added page and clipped in place.
- 5.1.5.6.8. As the need arises to add additional administrative paperwork to the case file, the above procedure will be followed, with the revised count of total number of pages being specified in the next available row of the table on the *Administrative Case Documentation Final Page* form.
- 5.1.5.6.9. Additional documentation shall be added in the LIMS Imaging module and documented in the LIMS Communication log to ensure its easily identified for discovery purposes.
- 5.1.6. At the time the case file is released by the examiner for review, the technical side of the hard copy case file will require the laboratory number, the casework examiner's handwritten initials (or signature) or the electronic equivalent, and the date the notes were taken or the date other paperwork/materials were generated on all paperwork/materials in the case file.
 - 5.1.6.1. The bottom-most page will consist of the *Technical Case Documentation Page 1* ('Page 1') form.
 - 5.1.6.2. The top-most page will consist of the *Technical Case Documentation Final Page* form.
 - 5.1.6.3. The other pages between the bottom-most and top-most pages will be numbered sequentially, starting from the bottom-most page (which is pre-numbered as Page 1) and working up in the paperwork.
 - 5.1.6.4. Every page with markings on it (whether pre-printed information or generated markings) must be numbered. Examiners must take care to number both sides of sheets of paper in the case file that contain markings.
 - 5.1.6.5. The total number of pages of technical paperwork will be reflected by the entered number in the "Total # of Pages:___" line near the top of the *Technical Case Documentation Final Page* form.

- 5.1.6.6. Once the report has been through the review process / released, on the rare occasion that new technical paperwork needs to be added to the file (e.g., when an amended report needs to be issued), the following process will be followed:
- 5.1.6.6.1. The top-most page will be removed from the clip.
 - 5.1.6.6.2. The laboratory number, the handwritten initials or electronic equivalent of the individual adding the technical pages to the file, and the date will be added to all new pages.
 - 5.1.6.6.3. The required information in the table on the *Technical Case Documentation Final Page* form will be completed.
 - 5.1.6.6.4. The initials listed in the table will be the initials of the casework examiner or another qualified casework examiner in the unit who is adding the paperwork to the file.
 - 5.1.6.6.5. The new pages will be hole-punched, numbered sequentially, starting from the new page added on top of the existing (already numbered) page and working up in the newly added paperwork, and then added to the clip.
 - 5.1.6.6.6. The revised count of the total # of pages will be the number listed on the "Total number of pages: __" line on the *Technical Case Documentation Final Page* form at the time the review was completed / the original report was released plus the total number of new pages (e.g., if the original total number of pages was 100 and 5 new pages are being added, the revised count of the total # of pages will be 105. This number will be the next sequential number following the last new page added to the file.
 - 5.1.6.6.7. The updated *Technical Case Documentation Final Page* form will be added on top of the last newly added page and clipped in place.

5.1.6.6.8. Should the need arise to add more technical paperwork to the case file, the above procedure will be followed, with the revised count of total number of pages being specified in the next available row of the table on the Technical Case Documentation Final page form.

5.1.6.6.9. Additional documentation shall be added in the LIMS Imaging module and documented in the LIMS Communication log to ensure its easily identified for discovery purposes.

5.2. Note Taking

5.2.1. The functions of note taking are to:

5.2.1.1. Support the conclusions in the laboratory report.

5.2.1.2. Permit internal review of the work product.

5.2.1.3. Allow re-evaluation of the data by outside scientific observers.

5.2.1.4. Provide a foundation for the introduction of the work product into court.

5.2.2. Notes must be sufficiently detailed to support the conclusions in the report and to allow duplication of the work at another time. Notes are to be made contemporaneous to the work and must accurately reflect what was actually done.

5.2.3. For casework:

5.2.3.1. Analytical notes should be recorded on appropriate case note forms, worksheets, or checklists, when available.

5.2.3.2. Each page will be numbered, dated with the date the notes or other paperwork/materials were generated, marked with the laboratory case number, and initialed (or signed) or the electronic equivalent by the analyst.

5.2.3.3. Handwritten notes should be made in ink. Exceptions will be made when environmental conditions, such as extreme cold or rain, prevent the use of inks. Pencil (including color) may be used for diagrams or tracings.

5.2.3.4. Computer generated notes are acceptable and will also be retained within the Unit's designated storage system.

- 5.2.3.5. Corrections will be made by lining through with a single line so the original text is still visible and initialing and dating the correction.
- 5.2.3.6. Write-overs will be corrected in the same manner as corrected text (i.e., lined through with a single line so the original over-written text is still visible and initialing and dating the correction).
- 5.2.3.7. Interlineations / additions of text between existing printed or written lines must be initialed and dated.
- 5.2.3.8. Corrections to electronic technical data (e.g., typed case notes or typed information on a .JPEG image) made after the report has been released will require the original copy be archived with the archive date added to the file name. A notation of what was corrected must be added to the *Activity Communication Log* or *LIMS Case Activities* of the affected case(s) and if discovery was already provided, the corrected information needs to also be provided.
- 5.2.4. Notes on the initial examination of evidence items should describe the:
 - 5.2.4.1. Container / packaging.
 - 5.2.4.2. The seal on the container / packaging (e.g., red evidence tape, dated and initialed (date + initial) across tape).
 - 5.2.4.3. The item itself (e.g., one (1) latent lift card, one (1) cartridge, or one (1) pair of pants), including details such as existing markings and/or color, as appropriate.
 - 5.2.4.4. Item's condition, as appropriate.
 - 5.2.4.5. Presence of stains, areas of apparent interest, or other unusual features, as appropriate.
- 5.2.5. The item as a whole, or areas in question, should be completely described, diagrammed, photographed, scanned, and/or photocopied following the Unit-specific evidence examination SOP(s). In general:
 - 5.2.5.1. Identifying marks observed on or added to the items should be documented.

- 5.2.5.2. The diagram, photograph, scan or photocopy, when generated during analysis, should include the locations from which sample(s) were originally collected, if appropriate/if a sample(s) was/were taken.
- 5.2.5.3. Ideally, photographs will be printed onto FSL examination worksheets; however, they may also be printed on 8 ½" x 11" paper.
- 5.2.5.4. Where applicable, a data CD (labeled, at a minimum, with the laboratory number, examiner's initials and the date the CD was prepared/reviewed) containing digital copies of all photographs taken/received in connection with the case and other digital/electronic data files (when applicable) will be present in a sealed envelope that is labeled with the contents, laboratory number, examiner's initials, date, and page number in the completed case file.
 - 5.2.5.4.1. Alternatively, digital images and files may be retained in the unit's designated electronic storage system.
- 5.2.6. When asked by the casework examiner to conduct a verification, qualified individuals are to make an independent, objective assessment of the evidence/data. See *LOM03 – Procedures for Reviewing a Report of Examination*.
- 5.2.7. Any deviations from, additions to, or exclusions from the examination methods utilized, as stated in the SOPs will follow the procedures as stated in the *FSL Quality Assurance Manual*.
- 5.2.8. When examination documentation is prepared by an individual(s) other than the person who interprets the findings, prepares the report and/or testifies concerning the documentation, the initials of that individual(s) shall be on each page of examination documentation representing his/her work.
 - 5.2.8.1. The reporting analyst shall also initial each page of this documentation.

5.3. Report Writing

- 5.3.1. The function of the laboratory report is to communicate the analytical results, conclusions, and interpretations of the analyst, conveying the essence of what would be said if asked for expert

opinion in court. The conclusions in the report should be concise and worded in such a way as to be understood by an investigator, attorney, or other non-expert lay person, such as a juror. If needed, the conclusions should clearly state appropriate qualifications or limitations on the evidence interpretation. The report will be generated by the analyst conducting the examination, or if necessary, by another qualified analyst who participated in, observed, supervised, or technically reviewed the examinations and case file. If it is necessary for another analyst to issue the report, they will review the case file and document this review by initialing all pages of the case file.

5.3.2. The interpretation of results in casework is necessarily a matter of professional judgment and expertise. Not every situation can or should be covered by a pre-set rule; nor is it expected that competent analysts will always be in full agreement in a particular case. However, it is important each unit in the laboratory develop and adhere to basic criteria for interpretation of analytical results. These criteria will be based on validation studies, literature references, and casework experience and will be developed with maximum input from analysts; it is to be expected that unit interpretation guidelines will continue to evolve as the collective experience of the laboratory advances with increased exposure to various analytical procedures and their results.

5.3.3. The purpose of unit interpretation guidelines is to establish a general framework, outlining minimum standards, to ensure:

5.3.3.1. Conclusions in casework reports are scientifically supported by the analytical data, including that from appropriate standards and controls and uncertainty of measurement, when applicable.

5.3.3.2. Interpretations are made as objectively as possible, consistently from analyst to analyst and within previously agreed limits.

5.4. Letterhead Requirements for *Reports of Examination, Amended Reports of Examination, Database Hit Notifications and Discontinuation of Analysis*.

5.4.1. Each *Report of Examination / Amended Report of Examination / Discontinuation of Analysis* for examination sub-categories under the current scope of accreditation (e.g., latent print analysis and

examination of deceased/known prints; firearms examination and identification; serial number restoration; biological screening; and DNA casework), *AFIS and/or IAFIS Hit Notification*, *NIBIN Hit Notification*; and *CODIS Notification* will be prepared using the DFS letterhead with the ANAB Mark on the bottom of the last page.

- 5.4.2. Each *Report of Examination / Amended Report of Examination / Discontinuation of Analysis* for examination sub-categories NOT under the current scope of accreditation will be on DFS letterhead only. Under these circumstances the ANAB Mark shall not be used.
- 5.5. Each *Report of Examination / Discontinuation of Analysis / Database Hit Notification* will contain the same general framework, where necessary, consisting of the following:
 - 5.5.1. Title (i.e., *Report of Examination / Discontinuation of Analysis / Database Hit Notification*).
 - 5.5.1.1. A unique identification (e.g., the laboratory number) must be on each page of all reports issued for a particular case to ensure each page is recognized as part of the corresponding test report.
 - 5.5.2. Subtitle (e.g., *Latent Fingerprint Unit, Firearms Examination Unit, or Forensic Biology Unit*).
 - 5.5.3. Name and address of the laboratory.
 - 5.5.4. The standard case information block that contains fields for: investigating agency numbers and other identifiers, the laboratory number, type of offense, and report date.
 - 5.5.5. Start and end dates of analysis.
 - 5.5.5.1. The analysis start and end dates used for each unit will be clearly defined within unit specific SOPs.
 - 5.5.6. Page X of Y on all pages of the report/notification.
 - 5.5.7. The laboratory number (at a minimum) and report/notification date on all pages of the report/notification, requiring addition of this information on all pages following the first page of the report/notification (this information is contained within the standard information block on the first page of all reports/notifications).
 - 5.5.8. Item(s) Submitted.

5.5.8.1. This section will include a complete listing of all evidence submitted for examination or on the Schedule of Analysis, when used, whether examined by the analyst or not examined, including, at a minimum, item numbers and general descriptions for all items examined.

5.5.8.1.1. When items not examined are listed in this section, no general description is required.

5.5.9. Requested Analysis (optional).

5.5.9.1. This section contains a listing of the items to be tested and what examinations have been requested for each item. This will be specified by the submitting agency.

5.5.10. Examinations and Conclusions (these sections can be listed separately if desired). Refer to Unit specific report templates for detailed information.

5.5.10.1. This section contains examination methods, results, opinions, interpretations and/or conclusions, along with the corresponding units of measurement, where appropriate and necessary, of forensic examinations conducted.

5.5.10.2. The examination methods and/or tests performed on the items will be indicated in the report/notification, as needed. Additional information regarding the sampling of items may be included when it aids in the interpretation of examination results (e.g., date of sampling).

5.5.10.3. Any deviations from, additions to, or exclusions from the examination methods utilized will be indicated in the report/notification, as needed.

5.5.10.4. When associations are made, their significance will be communicated within the report/notification (e.g., DNA statistics).

5.5.10.5. If no definitive conclusions can be reached, this will be documented in the report and the reasons given, as appropriate.

5.5.10.6. Where applicable, a statement of the estimated uncertainty of measurement is added to the report when it is relevant to the validity or application of the test results, when a customer's instruction so requires, or when the uncertainty affects

compliance to a specification limit.

5.5.10.7. Clear identification when results are from external providers will be indicated in the report/notification.

5.5.10.8. The wording used to convey the results of examinations should, where applicable, conform to the FSL and/or Unit policies and procedures, as per the *FSL Quality Assurance Manual* or Unit-specific Quality Assurance Manual.

5.5.11. Any items that were not examined will be so indicated in the report/notification.

5.5.12. Disposition of Evidence.

5.5.12.1. This section addresses the final location of each piece of evidence submitted and items collected or created and preserved for future testing (e.g., test fired ammunition, latent print lifts, photos, DNA extracts) in the case. It will include the final disposition of evidence at the time of report issuance as reflected in the chain of custody.

5.5.13. Name and job title of person issuing/authorizing the report/notification.

5.5.14. Signature of person issuing/authorizing the report/notification.

5.5.14.1. The signature, name and job title of the person issuing/authorizing the report/notification serves as the demarcation of the end of the report.

5.5.15. The Report of Examination / Discontinuation of Analysis / Database Hit Notification will be reviewed following the *LOM03 – Procedures for Reviewing a Report of Examination* prior to issue.

5.6. Supplemental Reports

5.6.1. When additional evidence is received for analysis after the original report has been released, a supplemental laboratory report will be issued and will be marked as follows:

5.6.1.1. The word “Supplemental” will be added to the title of the report so that it reads *Supplemental Report of Examination*.

5.6.2. Refer to Sections 5.3-5.5. above for the remainder of the report requirements.

5.7. Amended Reports

5.7.1. Once a *Report of Examination / Discontinuation of Analysis / Database Hit Notification* has been issued, the laboratory will not issue a completely new report/notification when material amendments to the report/notification are necessary. Material amendments will be made only in the form of an *Amended Report of Examination / Amended Discontinuation of Analysis / Amended Database Hit Notification*. The procedure for issuing an amended report/notification is as follows:

5.7.1.1. The word “Amended” is added to the title of the report/notification.

5.7.1.2. Following the report/notification title and subtitle there will be a brief statement as to the reason the amended report/notification is being issued and a reference to the original *Report of Examination / Discontinuation of Analysis / Database Hit Notification* which it is replacing, including the date of the original report/notification which the amended report/notification will replace.

5.7.1.3. The date on all pages of the amended report/notification must reflect the date of the amended report/notification.

5.7.1.4. The *Amended Report of Examination / Amended Discontinuation of Analysis / Amended Database Hit Notification* will be reviewed following the *LOM03 – Procedures for Reviewing a Report of Examination* prior to issue.

5.8. Case File Storage and Security

5.8.1. FSL case files are records that are not open for public inspection.

5.8.2. Other than members of the DC DFS with administrative responsibility, only the following persons shall be permitted to view the contents of the case file:

5.8.2.1. Prosecuting / defense attorneys and their staff as relevant and applicable to the prosecution / defense of the case

5.8.2.2. Office of the Corporation Counsel when defending the District of Columbia Government in civil litigation

5.8.2.3. Police officers of an authentic police department having investigative authority for that particular

case

- 5.8.3. Copies of case notes and reports may be obtained by persons authorized to view the case files, including analysts for court testimony.
- 5.8.4. No copies of materials from laboratory cases or case files are to be removed from the DFS except for authorized official laboratory business.
 - 5.8.4.1. Copies of materials from laboratory cases or case files are to be returned to the DFS as soon as practicable following completion of the authorized official laboratory business.
- 5.8.5. Private parties requesting copies of case materials shall be directed to make their Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request through DFS General Counsel.
- 5.8.6. For requests for discovery materials, refer to DOM11 – Practices for Providing Discovery Materials.
 - 5.8.6.1. Whenever copies of case materials (e.g., reports, notes, photographs, CD's, etc.) are released to authorized personnel, documentation of the release of these materials will be added to the case file.
- 5.8.7. The physical case files are stored in the designated secured file cabinets or file rooms.
- 5.9. Release of Case Information and Discovery Materials
 - 5.9.1. All information in the laboratory is to be treated as confidential.
 - 5.9.2. Any and all case information or results are only to be discussed with the contributor and/or individuals authorized by the contributor after the required technical and administrative reviews are complete.
 - 5.9.2.1. At times, it is necessary to provide results before a report has been issued following a full technical case file review and an administrative case file review. When this situation arises, it must be clear from the documentation in the case file that the verification (and/or technical review) of the results occurred prior to the release of the results orally according to Unit-specific SOPs. This documentation is typically captured in the case notes, as well as the *Activity Communications Log* or LIMS Case Activities. This documentation shall be retained in

the case file.

- 5.9.3. *Reports of Examination, NIBIN Hit Notifications, AFIS/IAFIS Hit Notifications, and Amended Reports of Examination* (as well amended NIBIN and AFIS/IAFIS hit notifications) will be released to the contributor and/or other individuals authorized by the contributor only after the required technical and administrative reviews are complete.
- 5.9.4. *Discontinuation of Analysis and CODIS Notifications* will be released to the contributor and/or other individuals authorized by the contributor only after the required administrative review is complete.
- 5.9.5. Case materials, such as examination documents, will be released to appropriate parties only via the procedures set forth in *DOM11 – Practices for Responding to Requests for Discovery Materials*.

6. Documentation

- 6.1. When generated as a result of these procedures, the following may be retained in the FSL case file, if applicable, and depending on unit-specific procedures:
 - 6.1.1. Activity Communication Log
 - 6.1.2. Correspondence
 - 6.1.3. Background information (submitting agency reports, laboratory reports, etc.)
 - 6.1.4. Schedule of Analysis
 - 6.1.5. Technical Review and FSL or unit-specific Administrative Review Forms
 - 6.1.6. Administrative and Technical page numbering forms – only required for hard copy case jackets
 - 6.1.7. Analyst's notes / worksheets / instrument generated paperwork
 - 6.1.8. Diagrams
 - 6.1.9. Photos/photocopies/scans
 - 6.1.10. Data/photo CDs

- 6.1.11. Statistical calculations
- 6.1.12. Database search / hit results
- 6.1.13. Formal written Report/Notification (Report of Examination / Discontinuation of Analysis / Database Hit Notifications / Amended Report of Examination / Supplemental Report of Examination)
- 6.1.14. Major Deviation Request

7. References

- 7.1. ISO/IEC 17025 – General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories, International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland, (current revision).
- 7.2. ANAB Supplemental Requirements for Forensic Testing, ANSI National Accreditation Board, Milwaukee, WI (current revision).
- 7.3. Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories, Federal Bureau of Investigation, (current revision).
- 7.4. DOM11 – Practices for Providing Discovery Materials, (current revision).
- 7.5. Forensic Science Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual, (current revision).
- 7.6. LOM03 – Procedures for Reviewing a Report of Examination, (current revision).
- 7.7. LOM01 – Procedures for the Examination of Evidence, (current revision).