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## Procedure for Evidence Transfers, Storage, and Return

**1.0 Purpose** – To establish a procedure for the transfer, storage and return of evidence.

**2.0 Scope** – This procedure applies to employees of the Evidence Control Section (ECS) and employees performing duties related to Evidence Control.

### 3.0 Definitions

- **Case Record** – The body of work for one examination in a Case.
- **Driver** – Laboratory personnel used to transport lockboxes between locations of the Laboratory.
- **Evidence Retention** – Evidence storage area(s).
- **Forensic Advantage (FA)** – The Laboratory’s electronic information management system.
- **Lockbox** – Secured container utilized to transport evidence between the locations of the Laboratory.
- **Object Repository** – The module within FA into which documents, data and other files are uploaded. FA has Section, Case, and Case Record Repositories.
- **Transfer of Evidence** – movement of evidence between persons or storage locations.

### 4.0 Procedure

#### 4.1 Evidence Management

**4.1.1** Laboratory-wide evidence procedures are located in the Laboratory Procedure for Evidence Management.

#### 4.2 Forensic Advantage (FA)

**4.2.1** Laboratory-wide procedures regarding the use of the FA are located in the Laboratory Procedure for the Use of Forensic Advantage.

#### 4.3 General Evidence Transfer and Storage Policies

**4.3.1** When evidence is first received by the Laboratory, it shall be accepted into the receiving employee’s personal custody in FA on the same day it is received. The evidence shall then be transferred to storage or another employee.

**4.3.2** All transfers of evidence shall be documented in FA by both the transferring and receiving employee.

**4.3.3** Evidence shall be selected for transfer by scanning the evidence barcode or by manually selecting the items in FA. To facilitate the transfer of multiple items, items of evidence may be batched in FA.

**4.3.4** All evidence shall be transferred into a storage location at the end of the workday.

**4.3.5** The last employee to leave Evidence Control shall ensure the evidence vault is secured.

#### 4.4 Transfer to/within/from Storage

- 4.4.1 If evidence is to be stored in the evidence vault, the “Transfer Type” selected in FA shall be “Placed in Storage” and the area selected shall be the appropriate vault area.
- 4.4.2 The Evidence Technician shall electronically confirm the transfer in FA by use of a password or biometric scanner.
- 4.4.3 If evidence must be moved within the evidence vault, the “Transfer Type” selected shall be “Change Storage Location” and the area selected shall be the appropriate vault area.
- 4.4.4 The Evidence Technician shall electronically confirm the transfer in FA by use of a password or biometric scanner.

#### **4.5 Evidence Storage**

- 4.5.1 Evidence shall be stored in an evidence vault while in the custody of Evidence Control. Each storage location within the vault shall be uniquely identified.
- 4.5.2 Each vault shall have refrigerators and/or freezers present for the storage of perishable items.
- 4.5.3 An Evidence Technician shall transfer all evidence into a second refrigerator or freezer for one of the following reasons:
  - 4.5.3.1 If the temperature is found to be out of range for up to, but not exceeding, five or more days;
  - 4.5.3.2 If the refrigerator temperature exceeds room temperature (20-25°C); or
  - 4.5.3.3 If maintenance is being performed.
- 4.5.4 If evidence is a) stored above the acceptable range of refrigerators for more than five days or b) above room temperature, the Laboratory’s Procedure for Corrective Action and Non-Conformities shall be followed.
- 4.5.5 Once all Toxicology examinations are complete and the evidence is authorized for destruction per State statute and District Attorney confirmation, the evidence may be stored at room temperature.

#### **4.6 Transfer to/from Laboratory Employees**

- 4.6.1 For transfer of evidence to another Evidence Technician or a Forensic Scientist, the “Transfer Type” selected shall be “Hand to Hand Transfer.” The receiving employee’s name shall be selected within FA, and both the transferring and receiving employee shall electronically accept the transfer in FA by use of a password or biometric scanner.

#### **4.7 Transfer to/from Lockbox**

- 4.7.1 Evidence shall be placed in a lockbox for transfer to/from a Regional Laboratory in the State Crime Laboratory system unless transferred by employee who has custody of the evidence.

- 4.7.2 The “Transfer Type” selected in FA shall be “Place in Lockbox.” To create a new lockbox, select the date that the lockbox will be delivered and designate the appropriate Laboratory destination. Evidence may be transferred into an existing lockbox by selecting the destination Laboratory and lockbox number.
- 4.7.3 Once evidence is assigned to a particular lockbox, the lockbox is ready to be transferred. Select the Destination Lab and date within FA. Set the Transfer Status to “In Transit” and select the driver. The transfer will be completed at the receiving Regional Laboratory.
- 4.7.4 To receive lockbox transfers, the date and submitting Regional Laboratory shall be selected and the Transfer Status changed to “Complete.”
- 4.7.5 Once the lockbox transfer is complete, the Case Record (if applicable) shall be transferred in FA to the receiving Regional Laboratory to reflect the location at which the analysis will take place.

#### **4.8 Transfer Out**

- 4.8.1 The Laboratory shall hold all evidence for pickup upon the completion of analysis.
- 4.8.2 Hold for Pickup evidence shall be returned in its original packaging, whenever possible, along with a copy of the Laboratory Report.
- 4.8.3 To transfer evidence directly back to an officer, the “Transfer Type” selected in FA shall be “Returned to Agency.” The receiving agency and the name of the receiving officer shall be selected.
- 4.8.4 The Evidence Technician shall confirm the transaction in FA by entering his/her password or biometric scanner.
- 4.8.5 The receiving officer shall complete the transaction by signing the electronic signature pad to confirm the receipt of the evidence. An evidence receipt will automatically be printed and provided to the officer. A copy of the evidence receipt is also saved electronically in FA.

#### **5.0 References – N/A**

#### **6.0 Records**

- Request for Examination of Physical Evidence form

#### **7.0 Attachments – N/A**

<b>Revision History</b>		
Effective Date	Version Number	Reason
03/25/2024	7	4.3.4, 4.3.5, and 4.5 – added storage requirements 4.4.2 and 4.4.4 - removed barcode scanner requirement