Procedure for the Use of Forensic Advantage (FA)

1.0 Purpose – To establish procedures for the use of the Forensic Advantage (FA) electronic information management system.

2.0 Scope – This procedure applies to all State Crime Laboratory (Laboratory) employees that use FA for casework analysis.

3.0 Definitions

- **Case** – The event represented by at least one submission containing at least one item of evidence to be analyzed.
- **Case Record –** The body of work completed for one examination in a case.
- **Communication Log** – The module within FA in which Laboratory personnel shall record the details of Case or Case Record communications.
- **Evidence** – An item submitted to the Laboratory for analysis. An item of evidence is equivalent to a test item as described in ISO 17025.
- **Forensic Advantage (FA)** – The Laboratory's current electronic information management system.
- **FA Web –** The external web portal to which discovery packets are published for user access.
- **Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS)** – The information management system used prior to the implementation of FA.
- **Object Repository –** The module within FA into which all documents, data, and other files are uploaded (divided into Section, Case, and Case Record Object Repositories).
- **Resource** – All materials used during the completion of a case record (e.g., instruments, equipment, chemicals, reagents, kits and other standards.)
- **Submission** – The item(s) of evidence for a specific case received at a single time for requested examination.
- **Messaging** – System within FA that allows FA Web users to communicate with FA users and also allows FA users to communicate with each other about a case record.

4.0 Procedure

4.1 General

4.1.1 The Laboratory shall document all case-related work (evidence receipt and transfers, analysis, communication logs, laboratory resource management and subpoena archival) in a secure, electronic information management system known as Forensic Advantage (FA). All work shall be recorded in FA; any paper documentation shall be scanned and imported into FA.

4.1.2 All Laboratory employees shall receive training in the use of FA and documentation of the training shall be included in each employee's training file.

4.1.3 Each Section shall maintain a list of authorized FA users.

4.2 User Permissions

4.2.1 FA employs user roles to provide users with permissions to conduct various activities within the application. Laboratory employees shall be given a level of user access within FA commensurate with day-to-day duties and responsibilities. User access is granted by giving each employee one or more user roles. This allows updates, changes, or corrections to be made within the system while limiting access to make major changes.

4.2.2 FA User Roles - State Crime Laboratory

- FA System Administrator
- FA Administrator
- Supervisor
- Examiner
- Examiner Assistant
- Priority Examiner
- Clerical
- Resource Administrator
- Resource User
- Firearms Administrator
- Firearms User
- RFID Manager
- RFID User

4.2.3 FA User Permissions

4.2.3.1 The FA Manager shall serve as the primary FA System Administrator for the Laboratory. In addition, the FA Manager shall authorize all employee FA user permissions and maintain a record of user permissions.

4.2.3.2 The following users shall be given full working access within FA, including the ability to resolve issues that fall beyond the user permission of employees within each Laboratory Section. These users shall be responsible for implementing all major changes and updates to FA (including new software versions) and coordinating work on FA with vendor(s). In addition, these users shall train FA Section Administrators in the use of, changes in, or updates to FA.

- FA Manager
- FA System Administrators

4.2.3.3 The following users shall be given access within FA to update Laboratory Section-specific information such as employee identity and worksheets. In addition, these users shall train Section employees in the use of, changes in, or updates to FA. Each Section shall have one or more employees designated as FA Administrator (Section FA Administrator).

- FA Manager
- FA System Administrators
- FA Administrators

4.2.3.4 The following users shall be given access within FA to document all work related to completion of a case including, but not limited to, the following: transferring and managing evidence; assigning, transferring and terminating Case Records; creating and editing worksheets; adding and approving files within the Object Repository; and generating Laboratory Reports or Stop Work orders. In addition, these users shall (as authorized) enter priority and rush requests; perform technical and administrative reviews; monitor subpoena information; and record court appearances. Case-working employees shall also use FA to complete annual proficiency tests.

- FA Manager
- FA System Administrators
- FA Administrators
- Supervisors
- Examiners

4.2.3.5 The following users shall be given access within FA to document all work related to completion of a case including, but not limited to, the following: transferring and managing evidence; creating and editing worksheets; adding files within the Object Repository; and generating Laboratory Reports or Stop Work orders. In addition, these users shall perform technical and administrative reviews (as authorized); monitor subpoena information; and record court appearances; search cases and print reports. Case-working employees shall also use FA to complete annual proficiency tests.

- FA Manager
- FA System Administrators
- Section FA Administrators
- Supervisors
- Examiners
- Examiner Assistants

4.2.3.6 The following users shall be given access within FA to perform any clerical duties including, but not limited to, the following: creating new cases and associated Case Records; entering submission information and evidence descriptions; completing clerical, and\or administrative reviews; adding files to the Object Repository; printing reports; and entering or updating subpoena information and court appearances.

- FA Manager
- FA System Administrators
- Section FA Administrators
- Supervisors
- Examiners
- Clerical

4.2.3.7 The following roles are used in conjunction with other roles to provide additional permissions.

- Priority Examiner – allows Clerical and Examiner Assistant users the ability to edit case records and approve files in the object repository.
- Resource Administrator – allows users to add new or edit existing resources.
- Resource User – allows users to add resources to their worksheets or create an instance of a specific resource.
- Firearms Administrator – allows users to view, edit, add guns to and delete guns from the Firearms Module in FA

- Firearms User – allows users to view, edit and add guns to the Firearms Module in FA
- RFID User – allows the users to run the Forensic Advantage RFID applications.
- RFID Manager – allows user to run and manage the system settings in the Forensic Advantage RFID applications.

4.2.3.8 The FA Manager and FA System Administrators have the ability to add additional user roles as needed. Only the FA Manager and FA System Administrators can assign roles to users. The FA Manager and Supervisor will determine which roles need to be assigned to users. A complete list of all permissions associated with FA User Roles can be found in the record FA Authorized Tasks for User Roles.

4.2.3.9 The current FA users and user roles shall be reviewed in August by the Forensic Advantage Manager.

4.3 Evidence and Chain of Custody

4.3.1 Submission information and evidence descriptions for all cases shall be entered into FA by one of two methods: FA Log-In or Agency Log-In (Prelog). Evidence Control Section procedures contain specific information regarding entering case information.

4.3.1.1 Agency Log-In (Prelog) is required for all agencies and shall take place prior to a case submission to the Laboratory. The submitting officer or agency shall be responsible for entering all submission information.

4.3.1.1.1 When an officer approves a prelog to be sent to the SCL, it appears on the Prelog Requests view of the FA Evidence Module. When an officer submits the evidence associated with the prelog, the prelog data is imported and the form is removed from the Prelog Requests view.

4.3.1.1.2 If a prelog is approved to be sent to the SCL and the evidence is not submitted, the form remains on the Prelog Requests view indefinitely. Evidence Control Section FA administrators or FA System Administrators may delete prelogs that were approved more than six months prior and have not been submitted to the SCL.

4.3.1.2 In extenuating circumstances, SCL personnel may enter the submission in Forensic Advantage, as detailed in the Evidence Control section Procedure for Data Entry.

4.3.2 Technical Field Assistance (TFA)

4.3.2.1 If Technical Field Assistance is performed by a Laboratory employee, the TFA form shall serve as the evidence submission form.

4.3.2.1.1 The Laboratory Forensic Scientist shall be listed as the submitting officer. Information shall be added to include the following: Agency file number, Forensic Scientist, Forensic Scientist Manager, Agency Officers, Agency Supervisors and Agency Records listed under the Submission tab.

4.3.2.2 A TFA Item will be created with a separate case record to document the crime scene. It must be "received" by Forensic Analyst and "transferred out" to end the chain of custody.

4.3.2.3 The Field Case Report package shall consist of the TFA form, TFA Report, Field Case Notes cover sheet, and all notes pertaining to the Technical Field Assistance.

4.3.2.4 Each document shall be scanned and imported into FA by an employee in the Evidence Control Unit or the responding Forensic Scientist.

4.3.2.5 Any additional agencies that submit evidence in the same case shall be considered a second submission to the case and use the same Laboratory case number.

4.3.3 When a portion or component of a submitted item of evidence must be separately analyzed, transferred, or uniquely described for clarity, it shall become a sub-item of the original evidence.

4.3.3.1 The sub-itemed evidence shall be designated in FA using the "New Evidence Separated/Created in Lab" command.

4.3.3.2 Sub-items shall be identified using a numeric sequence separated by a hyphen (e.g., Item #1-1). If a sub-item is further sub-itemed, the new sub-item shall be identified in the same method (e.g., Item #1-1-1).

4.3.4 Containers may be utilized for transport/storage of sub-items and work product. Containers shall be identified using the first letter of the container followed by a numerical value (e.g., Container C1, Extracts E1).

4.3.5 All in-house evidence transfers shall be recorded in FA.

4.3.6 When printing the chain of custody, "Chain of Custody Report w/Sign" format option shall be selected. This format shall print all current chain of custody information, including data from LIMS cases that have been migrated into FA and imported as Transfer Comments.

4.3.7 If an issue is found in the chain of custody, only a Section FA Administrator, FA System Administrator, or FA Manager can override the system. Documentation in FA shall include what was changed, the reason for the change, the date the change was made, and the person responsible for completing the override.

4.3.7.1 In August, The FA Manager or designee shall review all chain of custody overrides for the previous 12 month period. Any trends that are noted shall be addressed. The results of the review will be communicated to the Quality Manager upon completion.

4.4 Case Records

4.4.1 Case Records shall be used to designate the type(s) of analysis required on each item of evidence. Case Records are usually created at the time of submission; however, they may be created at a later date.

4.4.2 If an employee discovers analysis on a case is no longer necessary or the case has been adjudicated, it shall be his/her responsibility to notify other employees with active Case Records of the update.

The Procedure for Stop Work Orders contains additional information regarding notification when work on a case is no longer necessary.

4.4.3 Examiners shall not return evidence to the submitting agency if any other active Case Records exist for that item.

4.4.4 If an employee discovers that additional analysis is necessary on a case and a Case Record does not exist in FA for that analysis, the employee shall create a Case Record for that examination and retain the evidence for further analysis. This would include requests noted on the submission form, requests made through contact with the submitting agency, and determinations that additional analysis is required by an analyst who previously had custody of the evidence.

4.4.5 Termination of Case Records

4.4.5.1 All Examiners and Section FA Administrators may terminate a Case Record; however, only an FA System Administrator, Section FA Administrator or FA Manager is permitted to delete an entire case permanently.

4.4.5.2 An explanation as to why a Case or Case Record was terminated or deleted shall be added to the comment section of the Case Record or within the Admin Utilities at the time of termination or deletion.

4.4.5.3 The employee who terminates a Case Record, for reasons other than a stop work order or removing an ECU place holder case record, shall examine the Case Record for recorded information (e.g., Communication Log, Object Repository, Worksheet, etc.). The employee terminating the Case Record shall transfer all information from the Case Record to the Case Object Repository.

4.5 Worksheets

4.5.1 All work conducted on an item of evidence shall be documented or referenced in the worksheet. Each worksheet shall include all items of evidence required for that particular type of analysis.

4.5.2 Section FA Administrators shall be responsible for designing and updating Section worksheets. Section FA Administrators shall work with the FA System Administrators, the FA Manager, and vendor to implement the worksheet design or updates.

4.5.3 All worksheets shall be developed according to the Section’s needs.

4.5.4 Each Section shall create discipline-specific worksheets to include all observations, measurements, analytical testing, and/or results of instrumental analysis.

4.5.5 Once a worksheet is complete, the examiner shall ensure that all areas of data entry are expanded so that the data shall be visible when printed.

4.6 Resource Manager

4.6.1 Resource Manager shall be used to document and track resources used by an examiner while working on a case record.

4.6.2 Details (such as equipment serial numbers or chemical lot numbers) shall be used to specify the use of a particular resource.

4.6.3 Workstations may be created to group commonly-used resources. Examiners shall add resources to the worksheet individually or as a Workstation.

4.6.4 Resources attached to a worksheet will be automatically placed into the Discovery Packet by the FA system.

4.6.5 Quality controls checks, calibrations, performance verifications, and maintenance records shall be documented in the resource.

4.7 Object Repository

4.7.1 All documentation related to a case shall be added to the Object Repository. There are different object repositories that shall be used: Section Objects, Resource Objects, Case Objects, Case Record Objects, and Evidence Objects. Information may be shared between repositories.

4.7.1.1 Information pertinent to multiple cases shall be added to the Section Object Repository or Resource Object Repository.

4.7.1.2 Information pertinent to multiple Sections shall be added to the Case Object Repository.

4.7.1.3 Information pertinent only to an individual's Case Record shall be added to the Case Record Object Repository.

4.7.1.4 Information pertinent only to an individual item of evidence may be added to the Evidence Object Repository.

4.7.2 Documents or data imported into an Object Repository shall be imported directly from an employee's computer or uploaded into FA via the instrumentation network.

4.7.2.1 Files imported directly require no specific naming convention.

4.7.2.2 Files uploaded over the instrument network require a naming convention to ensure the correct Case Record and Repository is accessed.

4.7.2.2.1 File Name Parameters

- All files shall be named as follows: ObjectRepository_LabCaseNumber_CaseRecordNumber_FileName (where only the File Name shall be visible once imported into the Object Repository).
- Object Repository codes shall be 1 for Case Record, 2 for Case, or 3 for Section.
- No spaces or hyphens shall be included in the Lab Case Number.
- The only special character that shall be included in the file name is _.
- Example: 1_R201100001_2_GCMSItem1, where the file shall be truncated to GCMSItem1 once imported.

4.7.3 All files must be approved by the employee before they can be linked into a worksheet. Once approved, only an FA Administrator or FA Manager shall remove a file inadvertently placed in the Object Repository.

4.7.4 Each employee who works on a case record shall import a current curriculum vitae (CV) into the Case Record Object Repository.

4.7.4.1 The CV shall be in .pdf format.

4.7.4.2 The file name of the CV shall reflect the name of the analyst

4.7.4.3 A CV is not required to be added to the Case Record Object Repository in cases in which the examination has been terminated.

4.8 Importing Archived Files into FA

4.8.1 If a case file pulled from Archives has not been entered into FA, it shall be scanned and imported into FA.

4.8.2 If the case was created between November 1999 and December 2007 (LIMS), the case shall remain under the LIMS laboratory case number. These cases shall be imported into FA and the case number reformatted to fit the FA case number format. (e.g., R1999123 imported into FA as R199900123.) The report file shall be scanned into the Case Record Object Repository of the analyst.

4.8.3 For legacy cases created before November 1999 (cases not migrated into FA), a case shall be created in FA to store the case Report File(s). A Clerical case record will be created and all legacy exam types that were used in the case shall be added to the case record to allow legacy cases to be searched by exam type.

4.8.4 If the case was created between 1987 and November 1999, the case shall remain under the laboratory case number; however, this number shall be reformatted to fit the FA case number format (e.g., R870001318 or R87-1318 shall be entered into FA as R1987001318). The report file shall be scanned into the Clerical Case Record Object Repository.

4.8.5 If the case was created prior to 1987, the case shall be assigned a new laboratory case number which shall be the next sequential FA case number at the time the case is entered. The new case number shall be cross-referenced with the legacy case number in FA. The report file shall be scanned into the Clerical Case Record Object Repository.

4.8.6 Archive files (paper case file folders) shall be scanned and imported into FA as a Report File.

4.8.6.1 A Report File shall represent the body of work completed for one examination in a case and shall consist of the Laboratory Report, the Request for Physical Examination Form(s), case notes, and any administrative documents related to that particular examination.

4.8.6.2 All data in the archive file folder, including notations on the file folder, shall be scanned into the Report File.

4.8.6.3 Each Report File present in the Archived Case File shall be scanned and imported as a separate file in FA.

4.8.7 If a Forensic Scientist created multiple Report Files for the same case, each shall be imported as a separate file.

4.8.8 Report Files shall be given the file name of the original Laboratory case number, followed by the name of the Forensic Scientist.

4.8.7.1 Example: the Archived Report File for case RCL851234 worked by John Smith shall be named RCL851234 John Smith.

4.9 Reports

4.9.1 Once analysis on a case record is complete, the examiner shall generate an associated Laboratory Report. This shall be designated as a Draft until the review process is complete and the report released.

4.9.2 Once a Laboratory Report is generated and a database change is necessary (e.g., incorrect agency information), the report shall be rescinded, the database updated, and the report regenerated. When a report is rescinded, a comment regarding the reason shall be added to the report comments in FA. If a change must be made to the formatting, the Laboratory Report may be checked out, corrected, and checked in again.

4.9.3 Reports must be issued to authorized individuals as described in the Procedure for Reporting Results.

4.9.4 Employees shall add a carbon copy at the Report Generation screen or by going to the Submissions Tab of the Case Details.

4.9.4.1 If the case includes an SBI File Number, SBI Records shall be added to the carbon copy distribution list.

4.9.5 When a case record is released for the first time, employees shall add the Publication Comment "Initial Publication."

4.9.6 If an issue is found once a case record has been released, an Amended Report shall be issued. The reason for creating an Amended Report, as well as all changes made to the report, shall be clearly documented using complete sentences. The Procedure for Reporting Results contains additional information regarding Amended Reports.

4.9.7 If new information is added to a Case Record or current information is updated (e.g., new entry in the communication log), the case record shall be republished to ensure that the most up-to-date information is made available to all individuals receiving the report. There is an exception for subpoenas, court documents and responses to court documents. Any laboratory employee may republish a case record.

4.9.8 When a case record is republished, the employee shall state clearly in the Publication Comment the reason that the case record is being republished.

4.10 Reviews

4.10.1 All casework shall undergo both a technical and administrative review prior to release. The Procedure for Reviewing Laboratory Reports contains additional information regarding reviews.

4.10.2 When a case record is scheduled for technical and/or administrative review, the worksheet and corresponding Laboratory Reports shall be locked. If edits are required, the review shall be returned to the examiner by the reviewer, who shall rescind the draft Laboratory Report to access the worksheet. If a change must be made to the formatting, the Laboratory Report may be checked out, corrected, and checked in again. Once the edits are complete, the Laboratory Report shall be regenerated and submitted for review. All comments between an examiner and reviewer shall be documented in FA.

4.10.3 Other types of reviews (including verification, confirmation or clerical) may be required by Section procedures.

4.11 Messages

4.11.1 The messaging system within FA can be utilized by FA Web users to send case record related messages to the Laboratory or for employees within the Laboratory to send information from one employee to another about a case record.

4.11.2 FA Web users can send four types of messages to the Laboratory: stop work notification, rush request, evidence disposition notice, and analyst not needed for court.

4.11.3 Stop work notifications, rush requests, and evidence disposition notices are sent from the website to the Analyst assigned to the case record and to the Analyst's supervisor. Messages sent on case records not assigned to an Analyst are sent to the Supervisor of the Section. Analyst not needed for court messages are sent to the court coordinator.

4.11.4 All messages are case record specific. When messages are received from FA Web or other Laboratory personnel they become a part of the case record and are automatically published in the discovery packet by the FA system.

4.12 Communication Log

4.12.1 Once a case is created, all communication shall be documented within the Electronic Case File in FA as directed in the Procedure for Record and Data Management. The documentation shall include date, time and contact information.

4.12.2 If an employee has any communication regarding another examiner's case record, he/she shall be responsible for documenting the communication in the Case Record, including the employee's name and the time, method and content of the communication.

4.12.3 For phone calls or any other personal conversations, the content of the conversation shall be documented in the Case Record communication log. For emails, faxes, or any other written communication, a copy of the document shall be uploaded into the Object Repository. For any documentation that cannot be uploaded (e.g., text messages), the communication shall be typed into the Communication Log.

4.13 Comments added to Case Details and/or Cases Record Details

4.13.1 Any comments made by Laboratory personnel in the Case Details or Case Record Details comment block shall have the author's first and last name as well as the date the comment was entered.

4.14 Republishing Discovery Packets with FA Web

4.14.1 Discovery Packets shall be published to FA Web users when a Case Record is complete. If new casework information is added to the Case Record or the most current version of a Case Record is requested, the packet shall be republished.

4.14.2 Discovery Packets shall be republished from the Publish and Packet Manager page or by using the Publish Case Record Information option**.**

4.14.3 When republishing a case record after the initial publication, the following boxes shall be unchecked on the Publish window: Worksheets, Lab Reports, Submission Images, Worksheet Resources, Worksheets (Prior Versions), Lab Reports (Prior Versions), Canceled Lab Reports, and Canceled Lab Reports (Prior Versions). When republishing a case record for an Amended Report, the Worksheet Resources box shall be unchecked on the Publish window.

4.14.4 If cases originally completed in LIMS or completed prior to the use of LIMS are republished, on the Publish page the Lab Reports, Lab Reports (Prior Versions), Worksheets, and Worksheets (Prior Versions) boxes shall be unchecked.

4.14.4.1 Prior to republishing a LIMS or pre-LIMS case, the paper file folder for the examination shall be scanned into the Case or Case Record Object Repository.

4.15 Priorities and Rush Cases

4.15.1 If approved, a rush or priority status shall be applied to a particular Section or to all analysts working the case. Documentation of the rush request shall be entered into the Case Object or Case Record Object Repository.

4.15.2 The numerical code for priority shall be changed in the Case Record Details page (1shall be used for Rush Status, 2 for Stop Works, 3 for Police-Involved Shootings, 4 for Preservation Orders, 6 for Destruction Orders, 200 for On Hold as a result of it appearing on the possible stop work list, and 13 for case records that formerly had a priority of 200 but were found to not be a Stop Work).

4.15.3 Supervisors and Laboratory management shall monitor the status of priority and rush cases through sorting the Section's pending analysis queue by Priority.

4.16 Courtroom Testimony

4.16.1 Subpoenas for lab employee testimony from DA's Offices or US Attorney's Offices shall be submitted to the Laboratory through the FA website. Defense subpoenas shall be entered into the Testimony module of FA by the Laboratory Court Coordinator or designee. All subpoena information (whether pending, completed or closed by system) may be viewed by the employee. For tracking purposes, no subpoena information shall be deleted from FA.

4.16.2 If an employee is called to court or has a pretrial conference, it is his/her responsibility to track all information regarding the appearance. Upon returning to the Laboratory, the employee shall add a New Court Appearance and update the subpoena disposition and all corresponding court information such as travel time, wait time, testimony time, and mileage travelled within the Subpoena Details page in FA. The following subpoena dispositions shall be used:

4.16.2.1 Appeared and Testified or Appeared and Testified (Substitute Witness): When an analyst appears in court and testifies.

4.16.2.2 Appeared but Continued or Suppressed *or* Appeared but Continued or Suppressed (Substitute Witness): Any time an analyst leaves the laboratory and does not testify due to the case being continued or evidence/testimony suppressed.

4.16.2.3 Appeared but Plead, No Testimony or Appeared but Plead, No Testimony (Substitute Witness): Any time an analyst leaves the laboratory and does not testify because the defendant pled prior to testimony being given.

4.16.2.4 Appeared but Stipulated, No Testimony or Appeared but Stipulated, No Testimony (Substitute Witness): Any time an analyst leaves the laboratory and does not testify because both parties agreed to stipulate to the report.

4.16.2.5 Appeared but did not Testify, required to return or Appeared but did not Testify, required to return (Substitute Witness): When an analyst was not called to the stand the day of the issued subpoena and must return a second or more days to testify. A new entry shall be created and entered for subsequent trips to a courthouse.

4.16.2.6 No Appearance: Released by DA or Subpoenaing Party/did not testify/was never called to testify, or defendant pleading prior to the analyst being called to testify, case continued and new subpoena issued. This is to be used when the Analyst never left the Laboratory to testify.

4.16.2.7 Pre-Trial Conference: Any meeting with the D.A., D.A.'s investigator, or Defense Attorney prior to trial. In addition, the content of the communication shall be recorded in the communication log according to 4.12 Communication Log.

4.16.3 If a Laboratory employee is authorized to provide substitute testimony, the testifying employee shall be responsible for reviewing the case file prior to testifying. This case file review shall be documented according to the Procedure for Reviewing Laboratory Reports.

4.16.4 If the DA's Office sends the Court Coordinator a message saying that an employee is not needed (for whatever reason) for a subpoena, the Court Coordinator must close the subpoena by selecting one of the "No Appearance" subpoena dispositions so that the subpoena will clear from the employee's court calendar and move any other counties up in the subpoena order. If this happens and the employee has spent time prepping for this court appearance that will no longer happen, the employee shall go to the Testimony Module to enter the time spent preparing. To do so, select My Court Appearances. Then choose the appearance that the Court Coordinator entered to close the subpoena and add the relevant information on the time spent preparing in the Testimony Hours field.

4.17 Proficiency and Competency Testing

4.17.1 All proficiency and competency tests shall be worked within FA. Proficiency test information (such as testing agency and evidence descriptions) shall be entered as a submission to the Proficiency Laboratory in FA. Submitting agencies for proficiency tests shall be listed as the Test Company or Production Test Agency and shall not be an actual law enforcement agency.

4.17.2 Proficiency tests and competency tests shall be marked as confidential. The following employees must be listed in the confidential access list.

- Assistant Director of Technical Operations
- Forensic Advantage Manager
- Forensic Advantage Assistant Manager
- Quality Manager

4.17.3 A Proficiency Laboratory case number shall be automatically generated as PYYYY#, where:

- P indicates a proficiency test.
- YYYY is the calendar year.
- # indicates the 5-digit number assigned within FA.

4.17.4 Proficiency tests shall be treated like casework and shall follow Section technical procedures. All relevant documentation shall be stored in FA. The Laboratory Procedure for Ensuring the Quality of Test Results contains further information regarding the completion and reporting of proficiency tests.

4.18 FA Data Backup

4.18.1 The FA database backups will be handled by the Department of Justice Information Technology Division (DOJ ITD). The backups to be done and their frequency are as follows.

4.18.1.1 Transaction Log backups will be performed every hour from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm daily.

4.18.1.2 Differential backups will be conducted each night.

4.18.1.3 Full backups will be conducted each weekend.

4.18.2 At the beginning of each Quarter, DOJ IT will provide the FA Manager with a report showing all backups completed during the previous quarter. This information will be retained by the FA Manager.

4.19 FA Updates

4.19.1 Prior to the implementation of a new version of FA, it must be tested for functionality including the proper functioning of interfaces within the laboratory information management system.

4.19.2 The FA Manager shall maintain a record of all FA validations.

4.20 FA System Failures

System failures are entered into the SharePoint queue. The FA Manager monitors the queue, assess the issues, addresses those within his ability, and creates work tickets with the vendor for those he cannot address.

5.0 Records

- Documentation of FA training
- List of authorized FA user permissions
- FA Authorized Tasks for User Roles
- FA Validations
- FA Quarterly Backup Reports
- Annual FA User Audit
- FA System Failure list

6.0 Attachments – Appendix 1 **-** Archived Laboratory File Nomenclature

Revision History		
Effective Date	Version Number	Reason
03/25/2024	16	4.3.1.1.2 added FA System Administrators 4.3.2.1.1, 4.3.2.2, and 4.3.2.5 – added requirements 4.6.5 – added requirement 4.4.5.1 added wording to allow Section FA Administrators to delete entire cases 4.4.5.2 added wording for the Admin Utilities 4.7.4.3 included wording of DRF from 4/28/2023 Reorganized 4.8.5 to 4.8.3 and moved original 4.8.3 and 4.8.4 to 4.8.4 and 4.8.5 respectively 4.8.4 & 4.8.5 changed Case Object Repository to Clerical Case Record Object Repository

Appendix 1 - Archived Laboratory File Nomenclature

1.0 November 1999 – December 31, 2007

1.1 The system used during this period was called LIMS (Laboratory Information Management System). The case number format included a 4-year digit case number and a 5 digit specific case number (R1999xxxxx) as well as the Laboratory letter designation (R-Raleigh, W-Western) for the location it was submitted. The information in the database was transferred into FA, but notes and phone logs did not transfer. The chain of custody converted into FA, however, the signatures did not convert into the FA system.

1.2 All files in the LIMS system were paper files which were maintained in the following manner: a main manila folder for the first section (main) case record and each additional section's file was in a color coded file folder (specific to their discipline). The colors of the case file folders correspond to these sections:

Blue folder – Latent Evidence Section
Red folder – Forensic Biology Section
Green folder – Trace Evidence Section
Purple folder – Questioned Documents Section
Digital Evidence Section
Evidence Control Section
Photo Lab
Yellow folder – Toxicology and Drug Chemistry Section (usually in the manila folder though)
Questioned Documents Section (sometimes)
Orange Folder – Firearms Section
All these folders were placed inside the main manila folder.

2.0 1987- November 1999

2.1 All notes, reports and chain of custody were documented on paper and stored in state archives. The lab number was designated as lab letter (R, W), 2 digit year followed by the 7 digit case number.

3.0 1979 To 1987

3.1 Evidence was submitted to either RCL (Crime Lab, which included Serology, Trace Evidence, and Drugs Chemistry), RLE (Latent Evidence), RQD (Documents) or RFT (Firearms). Each had their own sequential number and a single case could have a case number in each of the lettered sequencing. When requesting files to be pulled from archives, all sets (up to 4) of files need to be pulled. Crystal Reports shall be queried to find all existing case numbers.

4.0 1955 through 1978

4.1 All cases were assigned a T number and a sequential number that did not stop at years end.

4.2 Case files were numbered with the following designations:

- T1 - Latent
- T2 - Footwear/Tire tracks
- T3 - Documents

- T4 - Firearms
- T5 – Tool marks
- T6 - Polygraph
- T7 – Drug
- T8 – Mobile Lab
- T9 - Trace/Serology (Until the Sections Split)
- T10 - Serology
- T11 – Trace