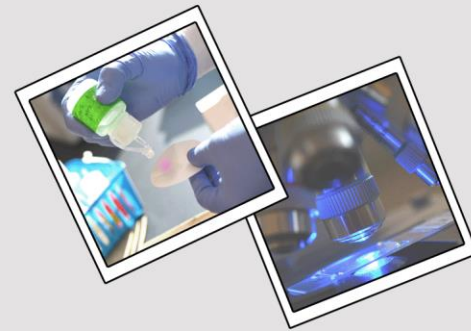


North Carolina State Crime Laboratory

Forensic Update



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January 17, 2025

Dear Criminal Justice Stakeholders,

Happy New Year and best wishes for a safe and productive 2025! In this edition of the North Carolina State Crime Lab Forensic Update, you will find information regarding Toxicology reporting, arrestee DNA expungement process assistance, CODIS hit follow-up, and NCSCCL training opportunities. Additionally, you will also find current laboratory analysis lead times for case testing and information on rush request testing.

Should you have any questions, concerns, or feedback, please contact me via email at athompson@ncdoj.gov, by office line at 919-582-8761 or by cell at 919-532-6976.

Sincerely,

Amanda W. Thompson

Amanda W. Thompson
Director
North Carolina State Crime Laboratory



Toxicology Reporting Update for Certain Substances

The primary function of the Toxicology discipline at the North Carolina State Crime Laboratory (NCSCCL) is to analyze blood specimens from suspected driving under the influence cases. During analysis, the toxicologist determines the presence or absence of impairing substances and records the results on the Laboratory's Affidavit and Revocation Report.

With the increased prevalence of compounds such as Fentanyl, the NCSCCL has validated new methodologies that allow for increased sensitivity and quantitation of certain opioids. Additional methods were also validated that allow for the identification and quantitation of Cocaine and related compounds.

Effective **January 1, 2025**, the Toxicology discipline will begin reporting quantitative values for selected compounds included in these new methods. Any additional questions regarding these new testing methods should be directed to the Forensic Scientist Manager of the Raleigh Toxicology section, Wayne Lewallen at wlewallen@ncdoj.gov.

The following substances will now be reported with a concentration value:

6-Acetylmorphine, Codeine, Fentanyl, Hydrocodone, Hydromorphone, Meperidine, Methadone, Morphine, Oxycodone, Oxymorphone, Tramadol Cocaine, Cocaethylene, Benzoylcegonine

An example of the report wording for substance being quantitated will read as the following:

*Item x: Analysis confirmed the presence of the following substances:
Fentanyl – 5.4 +/- 2.0 ng/mL at a coverage probability of 95.45%*

Arrestee DNA Expungement Assistance for District Attorneys

The NCSCCL is looking to assist District Attorney's offices with the arrestee DNA expungement process. On February 1, 2025, the DNA Database section will begin providing a file to District Attorney's offices with a list of potential arrestee DNA expungements by county for their respective prosecutorial district. Designees from each District Attorney's office will be able to log on to the secure SharePoint site for their district and see a list of potential arrestee DNA expungements. This list is a direct comparison of case disposition data in CJLEADS to arrestee DNA samples on file at the NCSCCL. District Attorney's offices will be able to utilize this list to aid in expungement decisions. District Attorney's offices should still verify that samples are eligible for DNA expungement.

This SharePoint site is the same web location currently being used to house the casework stop work lists and DWI blood destruction lists. For questions related to the DNA expungement file or the DNA expungement process, please contact Forensic Scientist Manager Zach Kallenbach at zkallenbach@ncdoj.gov. For assistance in providing access to the SharePoint site, please contact Forensic Scientist Manager Tim Baize at tbaize@ncdoj.gov.

CODIS Hit Follow-up Report

To assist in the follow up of CODIS hits, the NCSCCL will provide each District Attorney's office a file by county of all outstanding CODIS hits for their respective prosecutorial jurisdiction. The file will be located on the same secure SharePoint site used for "stop work" cases and "blood destruction" lists. The first set of data should be available February 1, 2025. Data will include a list all CODIS hits in which the NCSCCL has

not received a suspect standard in the case or have not been notified that the case is no longer being pursued. District Attorney's office employees will be able to note on the file if a standard will be sent to the NCSCL, if the case is still active, and provide any pertinent notes for the NCSCL. If the NCSCL is notified that no standard will be submitted, this case will be removed from the agency's list for future updates. For questions about CODIS hits or the report, please contact the CODIS State Administrator, Amanda Overman at aoverman@ncdoj.gov. For assistance in providing access to the SharePoint site, please contact Forensic Scientist Manager Tim Baize at tbaize@ncdoj.gov.

Laboratory Analysis Lead Times for Testing and Rush Request Testing

To provide transparency regarding testing lead time*, the NCSCL would like to highlight commonly requested lead times for testing. Overall, the lab-wide average for testing for all analysis is 189 days (6 months). This is down from an average lead time of 281 days just 2 years ago. The NCSCL continues to look forward to reducing analysis time in all disciplines in 2025.

The following disciplines have a lead time of less than 90 days: Seized Drug analysis (Drug Chemistry), DWI-Blood Alcohol testing, Fire Debris analysis, and Gunshot Residue Testing.

The NCSCL continues to offer rush services to expedite testing in the event of immediate public safety events, court date deadlines, and federal grand jury timelines. If at any point in time, your office or agency needs expedited testing please request through the online Forensic Advantage portal or call the NCSCL directly for assistance.

**Lead time is defined as the time it takes from evidence submission to when a laboratory report is issued.*

Training Opportunities

The NCSCL continues to provide ongoing stakeholder updates and training sessions. If your agency is interested in training on topics regarding specific forensic disciplines, cold case evaluation, or evidence submission, please contact Manager Karen Morrow at kmorrow@ncdoj.gov to discuss your agency needs. NCSCL staff may travel to your location to provide these services.

CONTACT THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE CRIME LABORATORY

The North Carolina State Crime Laboratory is committed to providing guidance and assistance to our customers. All NCSCL documents are located on the web: <https://ncdoj.gov/crime-lab/iso-procedures/>. If you have questions concerning an analysis or potential submission, please use the following contact information:

*Raleigh Laboratory: 919-582-8700
Laboratory Director's Executive Office: 919-582-8711
Triad Regional Laboratory: 336-315-4900
Western Regional Laboratory: 828-654-0525
Legal Counsel: Jason Caccamo jcaccamo@ncdoj.gov*