

Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory

Crime Scene Procedure Manual for Forensic Technicians

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

It is recognized that Federal and State statutes, case law and departmental policies will govern how a crime scene is processed.

It is also recognized that all crime scenes are unique. Because of this, it is not our intention to detail a specific list of procedures to be used at every crime scene. Instead the goal is to provide a framework of available procedures which may be utilized for the processing of a crime scene.

The objective of the Crime Scene Procedure Manual for Forensic Technicians is to provide ourselves and the users of our services the assurance that our work product meets the recognized standards of our laboratory and of the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors.

It is important that the Physical Evidence collected at the crime scene has integrity and is not compromised. Each technician's procedures at the crime scene should ensure that evidence is protected and recovered. Such evidence may later be examined and processed at the Anchorage laboratory or at one of the remote laboratory locations.

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that all crime scenes are documented properly, that items of evidence are handled properly, that physical evidence is detected and collected with appropriate methods, and that the Forensic Technicians are fully and regularly trained.

Abbreviations used by the Crime Scene Response Team are found in the Latent Print Procedure Manual.

SECTION 2: CALL OUT AND TRAVEL PROCEDURES

2.1 ON CALL STATUS

Remote technicians are not required to be on-call, and will respond when called during normal working hours to crime scenes if they are able to.

The Crime Scene Response Van may be driven home by the Technician. It will be his/her duty to maintain it in a clean condition, filled with gas and to report any maintenance problems that may occur.

2.2 TRAVEL TO SCENE

Most scene response occurs within driving distance of the Technician's assigned work location, however if the technician is required to fly and/or incur travel expenses such as hotel, The Technician should keep a detailed record of their travel expenses (i.e. lodging receipts, itineraries, boarding passes) and will be required to submit a State of Alaska Travel Authorization upon return.

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SECTION 3: CRIME SCENE ARRIVAL

It is the sole responsibility of the requesting agency to evaluate and secure the scene before the arrival of the Forensic Technician. The requesting agency is also solely responsible for maintaining the integrity and security of the scene, and to provide for the safety of laboratory personnel throughout the entire investigation.

An incident briefing is most often conducted with the requesting agency. At this time, the case/reporting officer and lead investigator are commonly established. The facts of the case, any photos and/or video taken by the requesting agency may be reviewed. The search warrant is the responsibility of the investigating agency and/or scene officer.

On arriving at the incident location, a secure and safe pathway into and away from the scene should be selected.

If possible, establish a safe zone away from the scene where equipment and evidence may be placed while the scene is being processed.

SECTION 4: CRIME SCENE SAFETY

The Crime Laboratory Health and Safety Manual is intended to be the central resource for the safe handling of evidence, and the materials and equipment associated with physical evidence collection. The following are brief reminders about the specific safety concerns associated with crime scene work.

Forensic Technicians will follow all safety rules and procedures outlined in the Laboratory Health and Safety Manual and this manual.

Forensic Technicians will know the location of the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) folder for all the chemicals prepared and used for processing crime scenes.

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4.1 SAFETY CHECKLIST

- ✓ The entering of a crime scene should be done with proper safety and protective equipment.
- ✓ It is important to protect both the technician from exposure and the evidence from contamination.
- ✓ No one should eat, drink or smoke inside the crime scene.
- ✓ All body fluids should be considered infectious and treated as biological hazards.
- ✓ Be aware of sharp objects and how to handle and package these items to prevent injury.
- ✓ Be aware of the chemical hazards associated with clandestine laboratories and do not enter these scenes without specialized training to do so.
- ✓ Proper eye protection should be worn when using the alternate light source and during the application of chemicals.
- ✓ Stay AWARE of what is going on around you and stay ALERT.
- ✓ Be familiar with the MSDS's for the chemicals which are being used for enhancement and protect yourself accordingly.
- ✓ Provide MSDS's to the investigating officer for those chemicals used at a crime scene.
- ✓ No flammable materials/chemicals are allowed on commercial flights.
- ✓ Use caution when handling firearms; always consider a weapon as LOADED, do not pick up the weapon with an object in the trigger guard or barrel, and always point away from people. Unless specialized training is received, the officer in charge of the scene should be responsible for handling any firearms and rendering them safe for documentation and collection at a crime scene.
- ✓ Safety training in Blood Borne Pathogens, First Aid and Chemical Safety should be kept up to date as detailed by the Laboratory Health and Safety Manual.
- ✓ Stay current with information about immunizations as recommended by the Laboratory Health and Safety Manual.

SECTION 5: CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHY

1. Take establishing photographs to show the location using street signs, addresses or other geographical information.
2. Take overall photographs of the exterior of the crime scene.
3. Take overall photographs of the interior of the crime scene.
4. Place some form of identifying marker at items of evidence and/or points of interest, and take additional photographs that include these markers.
5. Take mid-range and close-up photos of items of interest. Close up photographs for examination should include a scale and be photographed with the camera lens parallel to the plane of the evidence of interest.

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6. If there is a body present, overall photos should be taken from all sides. Additional mid-range photos should be taken of a body. Take close-up photos of wounds or injuries with and without scales.
7. Once the body has been removed, photograph the area where the body had been located.
8. If possible, aerial photographs should be taken of outdoor scenes. Recent satellite photos may also be utilized for overall scene location photos.
9. If an item of evidence has been removed, do not attempt to place it back into the scene to be photographed. Photograph the item where it is now located and make a note of the move.

SECTION 6: CRIME SCENE DIAGRAMMING

It is up to the discretion of the technician if a sketch/diagram is to be created. A rough sketch may or may not include measurements.

6.1 TYPES OF SKETCHES

Perspective (3D): A perspective sketch contains a vanishing point and depicts objects of evidence, as they would appear to the eye with reference to relative distance and depth.

Projection (Bird's eye view): Usually one viewpoint and depicts objects on one plane. This is the most common type of sketching.

Exploded: Contains more than one viewpoint and can be used in modeling. It can show relationships of items in location, depth and height. The walls are folded down and on the same plane as the floor.

6.2 MAKING A ROUGH SKETCH

- The rough sketch is usually done in the field.
- A pencil may be used to draw the sketches.
- In order to prevent clutter, notes relating to item description, location, distances and other observations may be kept in an item/evidence log or list.
- Magnetic North or a Reference North should be used and labeled on the sketch.
- Related field notes will be scanned into LIMS by the Technician.

6.3 FINISHED DIAGRAM

- The finished diagram should accurately represent the information contained in the rough sketch.
- A diagram does not require the inclusion of measurements in every case.
- The finished diagram may be made manually or with a computer-aided program.

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- The finished diagram should contain the following information:
 - Requesting Agency
 - Agency Number
 - Laboratory Number
 - Person(s) preparing the sketch
 - Magnetic North and/or Reference North
 - DateIt may also contain the location and type of crime.
- A legend or key may be used to identify items of evidence and/or points of interest in the sketch and to correlate information in the drawing.

6.4 MEASUREMENTS FOR SKETCHING

Triangulation method: Uses two fixed permanent objects within the crime scene. The measurements are taken from each fixed point to each evidence item.

Coordinate method: Measuring the distance to an object from two perpendicular objects, such as walls.

Baseline method: Useful in outdoor scenes or large scenes. Accomplished by laying a measuring tape down so that it crosses the entire room or area to be measured. Measurements are taken along the baseline paralleling the evidence items and then another measurement is taken from the baseline to the evidence item. If at an outdoor scene, the baseline may have to be fixed with a stake or some permanent marker at both ends.

Laser measuring systems may be used to collect measurements. GPS may be used to record an approximate location.

SECTION 7: BASIC EVIDENCE COLLECTION

One of the most important duties at a crime scene is the collection of physical evidence. In order to collect evidence an understanding of what evidence is and the role it will play in the investigation is imperative. Physical evidence is any object that can establish that an event or series of events has occurred and that may provide a link between persons, places and/or items.

Collecting evidence should begin after proper documentation has been completed. It is recommended that the evidence most likely to be destroyed or degraded be collected first. Each item of evidence should be packaged to protect it from cross contamination and from being damaged during transport.

When possible, all evidence will be collected by OR (if collected by the Forensic Technician) in the presence of either the lead investigator or a requesting agency

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representative. If the crime lab technician must collect the evidence without the lead investigator or requesting agency present, then the technician will record the custody of the evidence in their crime scene notes. In most circumstance, all evidence will be left in the custody of the officer in charge of the scene.

7.1 PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION OF THE SCENE

1. Evaluate the crime scene.
2. Establish an entry and exit path into the scene that is different than the suspect(s) used.
3. Coordinate with the reporting officer and/or lead investigator on what needs to get done and how you are going to do it.
4. Have an orderly procedure for processing the scene, evaluating equipment needs and utilizing manpower.

7.2 RECORDING OF THE SCENE

Photography

1. Construct a photo sheet with Agency, Agency number, photographer, date and location.
2. Photograph overall, mid-range and close-up relevant areas and evidence items.

Video recording of the crime scene will be the responsibility of the requesting agency or the lead investigator.

Sketches are not required, but are useful.

SECTION 8: LATENT PRINT EVIDENCE

The processing of evidence for latent prints will be conducted in accordance with the goals determined by the Forensic Technician, Lead Investigator, and the Requesting Agency.

Latent print development techniques will follow generally accepted methods and be determined by conditions at the scene. Factors to be considered may include but are not limited to: environmental conditions, surface texture and composition, matrix, availability of processing materials, and the nature of the case.

An evaluation of scene processing in lieu of transporting or shipping to a laboratory should include considerations such as possible damage or loss of latent print evidence during packaging and transportation and the value of additional processing techniques available at a laboratory. The on-scene processing with fingerprint powders of items with non-porous surfaces, that may have latent print evidence which could easily and inadvertently be damaged during packaging and transport, is encouraged. It is recognized that the determination to process items for latent print evidence at the scene versus transporting items to a laboratory for processing involves many factors and considerations. It is left to

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the discretion of the Forensic Technician to determine and proceed with the most appropriate methods for the preservation and documentation of the evidence in each case.

8.1 LATENT PRINT PROCESSING TECHNIQUES

Non-porous Surfaces (glass, metal, plastic, painted surfaces, etc.)

Visual Examination (may include magnification, oblique lighting, and various types of light)

Superglue (must be used under appropriate safe and controlled conditions)

Powder

Wet Powder/Sticky Side Powder

Porous Surfaces (paper, cardboard, unfinished wood, etc.)

Visual Examination and Photography of Visible Ridge Detail

Whenever possible items should be collected and processed at a laboratory with capabilities for items with porous surfaces

Blood Prints

Visual Examination

Chemical Enhancement (Amido Black, Leuco Crystal Violet)

Plastic and Etched Prints

Visual Examination

Photography

Casting (Mikrosil)

An MSDS for any chemical used should be provided to the scene officer or lead investigator at the scene or soon thereafter. The provision of the MSDS should be recorded in the Technician's notes.

8.2 PHOTOGRAPHY OF LATENT PRINTS

Any developed latent or visible print should be photographed before being lifted or packaged if possible. A scale and latent identifiers should be placed in the photograph.

8.3 LIFTING OF LATENT PRINTS

Any developed latent or visible print which is on an appropriate surface for lifting should be lifted using tape and placed on an appropriately colored finger print card. The back of the card should be marked with the source, date, case number, initials of the Technician, and should include a sketch of the item or surface to indicate from where the lift was taken. Hinge lifters, gel-lifters, and other methods of lifting may be used as the Technician deems appropriate.

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SECTION 9: BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

9.1 BLOODSTAIN DOCUMENTATION

Photographs – should document each “pattern”, distribution of stains, orientation and size of stains (with appropriate ruler, plumb and/or level), void patterns and any reconstructed actions (i.e. point of origin).

Sketches – should reflect positioning and location of pattern.

Notes – used to corroborate the sketch and photos. Notes should include measurements and calculations (if conducted), and visual description of patterns.

9.2 BLOODSTAIN COLLECTION

If the stain is wet, allow it to air dry or swab the stain and allow the swab to air dry. Each swab package should be labeled with stain/item #, initials, and date. A control swab of water used for collection will be prepared. Avoid cross contamination.

Methods of collection

- Entire item
- Cut out the material
- Swab stain
- Scraping (last resort method)

Packaging

Biological evidence items should be packaged in paper.

Flakes of blood or scrapings are best packaged in paper bindles, placed in a small envelope and sealed.

Swabs are best packaged in their own container and then placed into another outer envelope.

9.3 PRESUMPTIVE TESTING FOR BLOOD

Collect the sample prior to applying enhancement chemicals. When blood is in very limited quantities it is not necessary to perform a presumptive test prior to collection.

Procedure for Hemastix Test:

- Record lot # and expiration date from bottle on notes
- Moisten a sterile swab with water
- Swab a portion of the stained area
- Touch swab to reagent end of hemastix test strip
- Color change should be rapid (60 seconds)
- A (+) reaction will be green to blue in color
- Discard the test swab

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Presumptive test results and positive and negative controls are recorded in the notes.

Leuco Crystal Violet and BlueStar/Luminol are also presumptive tests for blood.

9.4 CHEMICAL ENHANCEMENT

Consult the lead investigator before using any chemical. If approved, the Lab is released from any liability.

An MSDS for any chemical used should be provided to the scene officer or lead investigator at the scene or soon thereafter. Notes should record this discussion and provision of the MSDS(s)

Chemical enhancement methods are chosen based on availability, ability to transport and surface factors. The chemical enhancement methods used include, but are not limited to:

- Amido Black
- Leuco Crystal Violet
- Luminol/Blue Star

Results of chemical enhancements should be photographed at the scene and / or cut out for submittal to the laboratory. Care should be noted in the case of Leuco Crystal Violet, as it will keep reacting with exposure to sunlight. Also it is recognized that Luminol and Blue Star reactions are limited and are only able to be photographed at the time of application.

9.5 SEMEN STAINS

Locating semen stains

Semen stains are sometimes difficult to see under room light conditions. They may appear as a slightly yellow stain on light colored fabrics or a whitish stain on dark colored fabrics. Semen stains may also appear 'crusty.' Many stains may still be missed by visual examination. It is best to collect any item on which possible semen stains have been detected and submit it to the Lab.

An alternate light source (ALS) at a blue or purple wavelength may cause semen stains to fluoresce when viewed through a yellow or orange filter. The combination of goggle color and wavelength of light used to detect the stain should be recorded in the notes.

Long wave ultraviolet lamp – semen stains may appear on a dark background. UV eye protection is highly recommended.

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Methods of Collection

- Collect the entire item (victim/suspect clothing, bedding, etc.).
- Cut out the stain.
- Moisten a sterile swab with water; swab suspected stain and air-dry prior to packaging.
- Prepare a water control swab.

Packaging and storage

Biological evidence should be thoroughly dried and then packaged in paper.

9.6 CONTACT DNA/SALIVA COLLECTION

Methods of Collection

Swabbing

- Take two swabs of each suspected location of contact DNA or saliva. The first swab is wet and the second is dry. These should be packaged together as one stain. Swabs should be air-dried before packaging.
- Prepare a water control swab.

Collect the entire item

Documentation

Each separate area sampled should be given a unique number. For example, if there are two separate samples (cuttings or areas swabbed) taken from Item #41, they should be labeled as 41.1LCH and 41.2LCH (These two samples (packaged separately) should then be packaged as Item #41LCH (LCH being the technician's initials), placed together in an outer envelope which is labeled with a complete description of the contents and sealed with evidence tape.

Packaging

Biological evidence is best packaged in paper.

Swabs are best packaged first in their original container and then placed in an outer envelope.

Let DNA analysts know about any chemicals or processing that was performed on the sample area. This may be written directly on the swab packaging.

SECTION 10: TRACE EVIDENCE

10.1 METHODS OF COLLECTION

Tape Lifts

4" fingerprint tape and freezer paper is recommended.

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Hand Picking

Use tweezers or similar tool to collect evidence. This technique should be used when the evidence can become dislodged or lost in transit. Small trace items should be packaged in bindles, small gel lifts or other small enclosed container (such as a film canister) to prevent loss.

10.2 HAIR AND FIBER EVIDENCE

It is recommended to use the tape lift and hand pick methods for hair and fiber evidence

10.3 OTHER TRACE EVIDENCE

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- Soil
- Glass
- Foliage
- Metal fragments
- Paint
- Wood fragments

These items vary, and should be packaged to preserve evidence according to applicable concerns (biological, small particles, shapes of pieces, etc.)

SECTION 11: SHOE IMPRESSION EVIDENCE

A suspect may be associated to a crime scene by impressions left behind by the suspect's footwear. A comparison of the crime scene impressions/imprints can result in identification of a shoe. Impressions can be found in soil, snow, on counters, tile floors, doors, paper, etc. The evidentiary value of a comparison usually depends upon the quality of the impression and the manner in which it was recorded and collected.

11.1 PHOTOGRAPHY OF SHOE IMPRESSION EVIDENCE

As with all evidence, overall photographs should be taken showing the impressions/imprints in relation to other features of the scene. Photography is a valuable way of collecting impression evidence for later comparison.

It is critical that distortions are minimized by adhering to the following:

- The scale should be at the same level as the pattern for proper focus. Care should be taken not to cover any part of the impression.
- It is recommended to take multiple photos of each impression of interest with a detachable flash or flashlight at an oblique angle and from several positions.
- The photographs should contain identifiers in addition to a scale.

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- The camera should be directly over the impression with the film plane parallel to the impression.
- The entire impression should be captured in one frame, BUT fill the frame with the impression and scale. Note that overlapping photos may be taken for best digital resolution.
- Use a tripod and light source when needed.

11.2 CASTING SHOE IMPRESSION EVIDENCE

After photography, casting may be performed to document the impression in 3-D form. The decision to cast is affected by the soil or snow conditions. Impressions in fine soil and even snow are candidates for casting. Coarse, rocky soil and some snow conditions are sometimes not good candidates for casting.

Casting Materials

The recommended materials for casting are Dental Stone and Sulfur / Sulfur Cement

The cast should be marked with case information: case number, item number, date, initials, and if needed, orientation. Do not remove any soil adhering to the cast after recovery. Package cast in a cardboard box to protect against breakage and to allow for continued drying of dental stone.

11.3 LIFTING SHOE IMPRESSION EVIDENCE

Residue and/or impressions in dust are best collected by lifting, or by collecting the entire item.

Lifting Methods

Gelatin Lifters: black gel lifters are recommended for dust impressions

Electrostatic dust lifter and / or Pathfinder

Tape and/or adhesive lift: used for powdered impressions

11.4 ENHANCING SHOE IMPRESSIONS

All impressions should be photographed first before enhancement is attempted.

Shoe impressions in blood

Chemicals may be used to enhance imprints in blood. Examples are Leuco crystal violet (LCV), Amido Black and Luminol/Blue Star.

Note: see section 9.4 for enhancement chemical protocols

Wet residue or grease/oil impressions

Impressions of light grease or oily substances may be enhanced with the use of standard fingerprint powder.

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SECTION 12: TIRE AND TRACK IMPRESSION EVIDENCE

A comparison of the crime scene impressions may result in the identification of a tire or track. Impressions can be found in soil, snow and other surfaces and substrates. The evidentiary value of a comparison usually depends upon the quality of the impression/imprint and the manner in which it was recorded.

12.1 PHOTOGRAPY OF TIRE IMPRESSION EVIDENCE

The procedures described in Section 11.1 for the photography of shoe impression evidence should be applied, with the following additional considerations:

- A series of overlapping photos should be taken with a measuring tape in place for re-creation of the track(s)
- The photos should be taken with the camera lens parallel to the track.
- The scale should be next to the track, not covering the track, and if possible on the same plane as the bottom surface of the track.
- A minimum of 8 feet of tire track should be photographed if possible
- A high birds-eye photograph may assist in reconstructing movement.

12.2 CASTING OF TIRE IMPRESSION EVIDENCE

The procedures described in Section 11.2 for the casting of shoe impression evidence should be applied, however the casts will be much larger, therefore dental stone is the recommended material.

12.3 OTHER RESIDUE TIRE IMPRESSIONS

Tire impressions may result from a deposit/transfer of material such as dirt, mud or oil. These impressions should be photographed, and a lift may be attempted with dental stone.

If possible, submit the entire item that has the impression on it.

Tire impressions in blood should follow the enhancement techniques outlined in Section 11.4 for the enhancement of shoe impression evidence.

12.4 TRACK MEASUREMENTS

The **track width** of a vehicle is the distance between the center of the tire mounted on one side to the center of the tire on the opposite side. (the front and rear wheel widths may be different)

The **wheelbase** of a vehicle is the distance between the center of the front axle to the center of the rear axle.

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SECTION 13: TOOL MARK EVIDENCE

A Tool mark is any impression, scratch, gouge, cut or abrasion made when a tool is brought into contact with an object leaving a mark. In some cases, a tool mark identification can link a tool to a crime scene.

13.1 PHOTOGRAPHY OF TOOL MARK EVIDENCE

Overall and close-up photographs should be taken of the tool mark. Examination quality photographs should include a scale. Photographs should show case information: item number and orientation.

13.2 MEASUREMENTS OF TOOL MARK EVIDENCE

Measurements should be taken to document the tool mark in relationship to the ground and/or other fixed objects.

13.3 CASTING OF TOOL MARK EVIDENCE

If an item cannot be submitted for tool mark examination, a cast should be made using a flexible casting material such as Mikrosil. Casting should be packaged separately in a hard container. Tool marks and tools should be packaged to prevent any additional damage from occurring.

SECTION 14: FIREARM EVIDENCE

Treat all firearms as loaded.

Firearms should be kept in their same condition as found UNLESS safety issues require otherwise until they are in a controlled environment.

Firearms must be rendered safe before being handled by the Technician.

14.1 DOCUMENTATION AND COLLECTION OF FIREARMS

Inspect the weapon and only collect trace evidence that will be lost in transportation. Do not put anything down the barrel or into the trigger guard. Handle the weapon to avoid destruction of latent print evidence

Documentation

After collecting the weapon, document the make, caliber, serial number, whether it is loaded/unloaded.

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Note: a qualified official, such as the scene officer or investigator, should ensure the weapon is safe before handling, and should be responsible for the unloading process.

If the weapon is a revolver, document the position of the cylinder. If bullets are removed, document the order and position in the cylinder and package in separate envelopes or boxes with identifiers which correspond to their locations.

If the weapon has a removable magazine, any ammunition still in the magazine should be left in place and the magazine and ammunition packaged separately from the firearm.

Packaging

Secure the weapon unloaded and with the action open inside a box to prevent movement and with the muzzle direction indicated on the outside of the box. If the Technician does not feel qualified to determine the aforementioned conditions they should ask the scene officer to do so. Labeling and or tags on the package should not be on the muzzle end.

14.2 BULLETS AND FLIGHT PATH EVIDENCE

Locations of bullets and / or casings should be documented and photographed. In most cases it is best to handle each bullet or casing as a separate item for the purposes of documentation, collection and packaging.

Bullets and casings should be packaged with consideration to prevention of further damage and/or loss of trace evidence if applicable.

Flight paths may be documented using rods and/or string methods. The results may be documented by photography and/or by diagram.

SECTION 15: VEHICLES

The following guidelines vary from scene to scene and not all may apply.

15.1 PHOTOGRAPHY OF VEHICLES

Photos should include scene location and orientation and vehicle location and orientation. Close-up photos should be taken of any damage or other evidence of interest. Photograph any skid marks, impacts or tire tracks

15.2 DOCUMENTATION OF VEHICLES

The following should be recorded in the notes for each vehicle examined:

- VIN Number
- License plate number
- Tire Information: DOT number, make, model

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- Positions of dials, windows etc. if applicable
- Track width and wheel base if applicable

15.3 COLLECTION AND PROCESSING OF VEHICLE EVIDENCE

Vehicles may be processed for evidence using the aforementioned techniques for latent print, biological, trace, impression, tool mark and firearm evidence.

If possible, it is recommended that a vehicle be processed in a secure garage or other indoor location.

It is recommended that a vehicle be allowed to come to room temperature and to air dry before processing.

SECTION 16: DOCUMENTATION OF VICTIMS AND COLLECTION OF EVIDENCE ON BODIES

16.1 ASSISTING WITH EVIDENCE COLLECTION DURING AN AUTOPSY

Photography taken at an autopsy will be done by ABI, personnel from the Office of the State Medical Examiner or personnel from the requesting agency. A Forensic Technician will only assist in the photography of an autopsy when requested.

Personnel from the Office of the State Medical Examiner record known inked finger and palm impressions from victims. If requested, the Forensic Technician may assist in the recovery of friction ridge detail.

16.2 COLLECTING EVIDENCE FROM A BODY

Collecting of evidence from a body during an autopsy is conducted by Medical Examiner personnel. Forensic Technicians may assist when requested.

Collection of evidence from a body at a crime scene may be necessary to prevent loss during transport. No orifice should be probed, only evidence on the outer surface of the body or clothing should be collected. In particular, trace evidence or latent print evidence is best collected at the scene before the body is moved or transported. The decision to do so is at the discretion of the technician and should be communicated to the scene officer and to medical examiner personnel if any chemicals are to be applied to the body.

16.3 DOCUMENTING A BODY AT A CRIME SCENE

Location and position of a body should be documented by photography and/or diagram. Photographs and notes may be used to document appearance and other conditions of

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interest such as red areas, apparent wounds, etc. Overall photos should be taken from all sides. Additional mid-range photos should be taken of a body. Take close-up photos of wounds or injuries with and without scales.

SECTION 17: CRIME SCENE FIELD NOTES AND PHOTOGRAPHS

17.1 GUIDELINES FOR NOTES

It is preferred that all field notes be done in ink, but pencil may be used. The first page of Crime Scene notes will detail the Callout Information, Case Information, Activities Performed and Wrap up information (Appendix A).

Guidelines for making corrections and content of notes are also covered in the laboratory QA manual (i.e. corrections should be initialed and have one line as a strike through).

Each page of field notes will contain, but not limited to:

Lab or agency number
Date
Technician's identifier
Page ___ of ___

Notes are scanned and entered into LIMS.

Copies of field notes are provided at the request of the court.

17.2 GUIDELINES FOR DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS

The Standard Operating Procedure for Digital Images provides the guidelines for taking, documenting, processing and storing crime scene photographs.

SECTION 18: CRIME SCENE REPORTS

18.1 CONTENT OF REPORTS

Forensic Technicians will write a report outlining their participation in a crime scene investigation.

A report includes the following:

1. Date, agency name, agency case number and laboratory case number.
2. A discussion of the actions taken at the crime scene that pertain to the documentation, detection and collection of physical evidence at the scene. Chemicals used should be included.

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3. Date(s) the crime scene was processed.
4. Location of the crime scene.
5. A list of the photographs and name of the officer and/or investigator that was provided a copy of the photos on CD.
6. Diagrams, if constructed.
7. List of evidence and identifiers used to label evidence in the photographs and diagrams.
8. Information about who the evidence was left in the custody of.

The body of the report will have numbered pages. If any diagrams, lists, photos etc. are attached to the report and are not a part of the numbered pages, then they are listed at the end of the report as attachments (Appendix B).

Requirements for reports are also addressed in the laboratory Quality Assurance manual.

18.2 REVIEW OF REPORTS

Technical Review

All crime scene and remote laboratory reports issued by the Forensic Technicians will be subjected to a technical review. During a technical review, field notes, photographs and diagrams are reviewed and cross-checked as outlined on the appropriate review checklist (Appendix C-E). The purpose of the technical review is to ensure completeness and accuracy of the report issued.

The individual performing the technical review must agree that the report is accurate and methods sound before it is distributed. The individual conducting the technical review will be documented in LIMS. Technical review checklists will be scanned into LIMS.

Administrative Review

Another analyst or technician, who may be different from the technical reviewer, will conduct an administrative review of the crime scene report. During the review process, the report and laboratory request form will be cross-checked. The purpose of the administrative review is to check for numerical and grammatical accuracy.

18.3 DISPOSITION OF REPORTS

Requesting Agency

The requesting agency will receive a crime scene report which will include an original copy of the crime scene report(s) and attachments. Attachments may include, but are not limited to, lists of evidence, photo logs, diagrams, prints and/or list of the photos, and a copy of the CD of photos.

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Forensic Technician Case File

It will be the responsibility of the Forensic Technician to scan all original crime scene notes into LIMS prior to technical review. The technician should verify that all pages are included in the file. Once files have been imported into the LIMS case record and verified, the hard copies of the original crime scene notes will be temporarily stored in a secure locked file location. Original crime scene notes for remote technicians will periodically be sent to the discipline supervisor for storage in the discipline records.

SECTION 19: PROCESSING EVIDENCE AT A REMOTE LABORATORY SITE

It is recognized that the Forensic Technicians have limited equipment, facilities and materials for the processing of evidence. However, it is also recognized that there is great potential for the retrieval of fragile evidence such as latent prints, trace evidence, shoe impressions in dust, etc. if the evidence is processed without enduring the rigors of transportation to Anchorage. Remote Technicians will maintain manufacture instructions on equipment and materials used for processing evidence at their respective facilities.

Therefore, it is the goal of the placement of remote laboratory sites to provide an intermediate step between the processing of the evidence on scene and the transportation of evidence to the Anchorage Laboratory.

Under direction from the Crime Scene Response Supervisor, and at the discretion of the Technician, evidence may be processed at remote laboratory sites in lieu of or in addition to submission to the laboratory.

The processing techniques at a remote laboratory site will be treated in some ways as an extension of crime scene processing for the purposes of choices of processing, notes, and quality assurance of chemical processing and presumptive testing. Digital documentation of evidence will be retained in the physical section image records.

Chain of custody for evidence worked at remote site locations will be recorded on the request for laboratory services form. It may also be recorded on the tag, evidence form or equivalent monitored by the agency in control of the evidence.

SECTION 20: CHEMICAL PREPARATION, PROCEDURES AND STORAGE

20.1 FORMULAS FOR THE PREPARATION OF CHEMICALS

Formulas followed by the Forensic Technicians for the preparation of chemicals used for crime scene processing are found in the Physical Section Chemical Logbook and in Justice Trax. Copies of formulas used in remote laboratory sites may also be kept in a notebook at each location.

The date of preparation, formula used, technician's initials and verification that a control was tested will be noted in the logbook for remote locations. The date of preparation, expiration date, and technician's initials must be noted on the container.

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20.2 VERIFICATION OF CHEMICALS

Purchased reagents that depend upon a chemical reaction to develop latent prints such as Cyanoacrylate Ester (superglue), Ninhydrin, and Physical Developer, will be control tested at each use by running a test (control) print. The background substrate that the control print is placed upon will be considered the negative control. The Technician will document the condition of the control test in their notes. Any reaction(s) other than the expected reaction (positive) of the control print and non-reaction (negative) of the background will be recorded in the notes. If this result interferes with a Technician's ability to process a scene or evidence the Discipline Supervisor will be notified as soon as practicable to determine an appropriate course of action.

Reagents will be purchased from an approved vendor. Discipline supervisor is responsible for retaining the records of the approved vendors of critical reagents.

Each chemical prepared will have or be assigned a lot number and be subjected to a positive and negative control before application. Control test results will be recorded in the notes.

Each chemical prepared will be control tested prior to use on evidence. The results of the control test will be recorded in the field notes and/or in LIMS.

20.3 INVENTORY, HANDLING AND STORAGE OF CHEMICALS

Procedures for inventory, handling and storage of chemicals used by the Crime Scene Response Team are found in the Laboratory Safety Manual.

Care should be taken when transporting crime scene chemicals on commercial air liners (e.g. no flammable items may be transported). If a question arises, contact the appropriate security personnel at the airport and research the safety of materials before transporting them.

20.4 PROVIDING MSDS INFORMATION

Material Safety Data Sheets of chemicals used at a crime scene should be provided to the lead investigator at or soon after they are used at a crime scene. If the lead investigator is not present, a copy should be left at, or with an official at the scene. This action should be recorded in the notes.

SECTION 21: CRIME SCENE TRAINING

The purpose of crime scene training is to ensure the competency of new Forensic Field Technicians.

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Forensic Technicians are trained using the **Crime Scene Training Manual for Technicians**.

Each Forensic Technician keeps a training notebook to document initial training.

SECTION 22: PROFICIENCY TESTING

Each year each Forensic Technician will take a proficiency test, which will cover aspects of crime scene processing. The test may be oral, written and/or on-line from an approved vendor.

SECTION 23: DEFINITIONS

ABI – Alaska Bureau of Investigations is a branch of the Alaska State Troopers. They are most often responsible for the activation of the Crime Scene Response Team. Some crime scenes may not necessitate ABI personnel to respond. Some police agencies may supply their own officers to direct and support crime scene work.

Case or Scene Officer – Law enforcement officer from the requesting agency who is heading the investigation and to whom the finished crime scene reports will be sent.

Lead Investigator – Law enforcement officer ultimately responsible for the crime scene investigation.

Requesting Agency – The agency that has requested the assistance of the Crime Scene Response Team.

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Appendix A

**Technician
Crime Scene Notes**

**Lab Number:
Date:
Initials:**

Page of

Callout Information

Notified by: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

Request: _____

Case Information

Investigating Agency: _____ Agency # _____

Case Officer / Investigator: _____

Date Arrived at Scene: _____ Time Arrived at Scene: _____

Scene Location: _____

Scene Description: _____

Information provided about the scene: _____

Activities Performed:

- Photos: _____
- Diagram: _____
- DNA Swabs: _____
- Bio/Trace Collection: _____
- Latent Prints: _____
- Casts/Lifts: _____
- Other: _____

Wrap Up:

MSDS Provided (yes/no): _____ Date/Time Completed: _____

Evidence Custody Information _____

Lifts and/or Photos Custody Information _____ Date _____

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Appendix C

Technical Review of Technician Reports

Case #:

Remote Lab Processing

Reviewer:

Date:

Structure of notes

- RLS
- Lab processing notes
- Thumbnails of photos
- Notes are numbered, initialed, dated and include laboratory case number

Notes content

- Written description of processing including visual exam
- Evidence is described and includes item numbers
- Includes controls and results
- Corrections are lined out, initialed and dated
- Lists swabs, lifts etc. generated

Photos – Total Number:

- Reviewed for focus and composition
- Backed up on I drive

Report

- Lists or describes lifts, swabs, generated
- Information in report is consistent with and documented in notes
- Includes disclaimer to send evidence to lab in Anchorage
- RLS is scanned into Justice Trax
 - o RLS lists evidence processed
 - o RLS is signed by officer, shows chain of custody of items
 - o RLS shows the receipt of lifts, etc. by officer

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Appendix D

Technical Review of Technician Reports

Case #:

Vehicle

Reviewer:

Date:

Structure of notes

- RLS
- Lab processing notes if applicable
- Thumbnails of photos
- Notes are numbered, initialed, dated and include laboratory case number

Notes content

- Written description of actions
- Evidence is described and includes placard numbers
- Corrections are lined out, initialed and dated

Photos – Total Number:

- Reviewed for focus and composition
- Backed up on I drive

Report

- Includes type of scene, location (address) and date
- Vehicle descriptors (make, model, license number etc.)
- Describes actions taken
- Describes evidence and includes placard numbers
- Evidence left in custody of: name and date
- CD of photos provided: name and date
- Describes or lists evidence generated (lifts, swabs etc.) using identifiers
- Attachments: evidence list and photo log
- Information in report is consistent with and documented in notes
- RLS is scanned into Justice Trax

Attachments to Report

- Located in image folder of justice trax
- Evidence list
 - Placard numbers
 - Description of evidence
 - Collection information (cast, lift etc.)
- Photo log
 - Describes photos
 - Listed by photo file numbers

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Appendix E

Technical Review of Technician Reports

Case #:

Crime Scene

Reviewer:

Date:

Structure of notes

- RLS
- Lab processing notes if applicable
- Thumbnails of photos
- Notes are numbered, initialed, dated and include laboratory case number

Notes content

- Written description of actions
- Evidence is described and includes placard numbers
- Corrections are lined out, initialed and dated

Photos – Total Number:

- Reviewed for focus and composition
- Backed up on I drive

Report

- Includes type of scene, location (address) and date
- Describes actions taken
- Describes evidence and includes placard numbers
- Evidence left in custody of: name and date
- CD of photos provided: name and date
- Attachments: evidence list and photo log
- Information in report is consistent with and documented in notes
- RLS is scanned into Justice Trax

Attachments to Report

- Located in image folder of Justice Trax
- Evidence list
 - Placard numbers
 - Description of evidence
 - Collection information (cast, lift etc.)
- Photo log
 - Describes photos
 - Listed by photo file numbers

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