

6. Evidence Handling Procedures

- A. The operational guidelines set forth in the Crime Laboratory Procedure Manual, the Crime Laboratory Evidence Manual, and the Drug Chemistry Section Policy/Procedure Manual will be followed to ensure that evidence is properly handled and accounted for and that a proper chain-of-custody is maintained.
- B. The chemist will ensure that all evidence received is in a sealed condition and will make proper notations in the laboratory notes if the evidence is unsealed or damaged. If the evidence is received from an evidence technician or another Crime Laboratory employee, the transfer of evidence will be documented by entering the transfer in the laboratory automation system. If the evidence is received directly from a law enforcement officer, the chemist will sign and date the chain-of-custody on the Request For Examination Of Physical Evidence Form (SBI-5) and give a copy of the form to the submitting officer. Once the evidence is transferred, the chemist will ensure that the evidence container has been identified with the appropriate laboratory file number and the chemist will place his/her initials and the date the evidence was received on the evidence container. The chemist will then place the evidence in his/her assigned evidence locker or evidence refrigerator.
- C. Upon opening the evidence container, the chemist will compare the contents with the information on the SBI-5. If there is a discrepancy with the evidence, the chemist will get a second chemist to witness the discrepancy. The chemist will make proper notations of the discrepancy in the laboratory notes and also on the SBI-5. The chemist will then transfer a copy of the SBI-5, on which the discrepancy is noted, to the Section Supervisor. If it is a significant discrepancy, the Section Supervisor will initiate an inquiry by contacting the department or agency that submitted the evidence. If a significant discrepancy occurs, the Section Supervisor will direct the chemist to enter the discrepancy in the laboratory automation system.
- D. During the analysis, the chemist will identify each item of evidence with the laboratory file number, item number, date, and his/her initials.
- E. With the exception of blood evidence, after the analysis is completed the chemist will return the evidence to the evidence container and then seal and properly identify the container with the laboratory file number, date, and his/her initials.

The chemist will return the evidence to his/her assigned evidence locker until it is returned to the appropriate evidence technician, officer, or transferred to another Crime Laboratory employee for further analysis.

- F. After the analysis is completed, blood evidence will be returned to the chemist's evidence refrigerator and held for a period of at least sixty days. If there are not any requests for disposition of the blood evidence during this sixty-day period, the blood evidence will be destroyed. The destruction will be witnessed by another chemist or an evidence technician and this destruction will be documented in a log that is maintained in the Section.