

**NCSBI QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM  
for EVIDENCE CONTROL and ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

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I. PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

1. Section Goals

- 1. Provide state and local law enforcement agencies an efficient and knowledgeable liaison for the submission of physical evidence to the laboratory on official criminal investigations.
- 2. Ensure the quality and integrity of evidence is

maintained while in the control of the Evidence Control Unit.

3. Provide efficient tracking and accountability of all evidence submitted to the Crime Laboratory.
4. Provide the laboratory with an efficient system to store, return or dispose of evidence upon completion of analysis.
5. Ensure laboratory reports are distributed to appropriate individuals in a timely manner.
6. Ensure laboratory case files are secure, tracked and maintained according to laboratory procedures and archived according to the State Records Retention and Disposition schedule.
7. Provide an efficient system for the coordination of court appearances for all laboratory personnel.

## 2. Scope

The Quality Assurance/Quality Control program described in this manual is intended to ensure that The Evidence Control and Administrative Services Section is operating according to established procedures, that the files are processed and maintained according to procedures, that the integrity of evidence submitted is maintained, and that evidence accountability is maintained.

## 3. Program Objective

1. Ensure uniformity and accountability in computer records, case file processing, evidence handling procedures and evidence handling documentation.
2. Measure quality performance with written procedures.
3. Ensure accuracy of the computer tracking system.
4. Monitor employee compliance with procedures.
5. Provide feedback and guidelines to employees so they will know what is expected.
6. Ensure employees are competent in performing tasks assigned and in interpreting procedures.
7. Provide for a safe workplace.

## 4. Authority and Accountability

1. The section supervisor is responsible for the Quality Assurance/Quality Control functions pertaining to the day-to-day operation of the section.
2. The Evidence Technicians are responsible for carrying out the day-to-day processing of evidence

according to procedure and performance of data entry into the lab=s computerized file in the absence of the Processing Assistants.

3. The Processing Assistants are responsible for the day-to-day entry and modification of data into the laboratory computerized files.
4. The Word Processors assigned to Administrative Services are responsible for case file security and maintenance, report dissemination and court coordination of laboratory personnel.
5. Each employee is delegated the responsibility to call lab supervisors/analysts for assistance with individual case complications or case acceptance.
6. The Section Safety Officer is designated the responsibility of monitoring evidence refrigerators in the section and inspecting the section for safety of operations.

## 2. Qualification and Training of Personnel

1. Job Description: A copy of all job descriptions within the Evidence Control and Administrative Services Section will be maintained by the Section Supervisor.
2. Successful completion of an in-house training program for Evidence Technicians which covers the following will be expected of all new employees and documented by the section training officer:
  1. Lab Policies and Procedures
  2. Identification and security of evidence
  3. Chain of custody requirements
  4. Computerized lab files
  5. Lab section requirements and procedures
  6. Evidence Return/storage
  7. Courtroom testimony
3. Employees will be encouraged and afforded the opportunity to attend schools, seminars, etc. recommended by the Section Training Officer whenever schedules can be arranged and funds allocated.

## 3. Documentation

1. Current Manuals: A copy of the following manuals will be maintained by each employee:

1. Evidence Guide (Evidence Control Unit only)
2. Crime Laboratory Procedures Manual (on-line incorporated in the SBI Policy And Procedure Manual)
3. Technical Procedure Manual for individual assignments
4. SBI Policy Manual(on-line incorporated in the SBI Policy and Procedure Manual)
5. SBI Administrative Orders (copies)
6. Safety Manuals: Laboratory Safety Manual, Chemical Hygiene Plan and Bloodborne Pathogens Plan

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Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Originating Unit: Evidence Control & Administrative Services Section

2. Schedules and Procedures for Inspections and Calibration of pertinent equipment will be documented. See Section V.
  3. An inventory will be maintained of all equipment issued to the Evidence Control and Administrative Services Section. All equipment will be inspected annually and accounted for according to the Crime Laboratory Procedures Manual.
  4. Personnel records will be maintained by the Section Supervisor and subdivided into the following categories:
    1. Personnel history, assignments, promotions, etc.
    2. Commendations
    3. Complaints and disciplinary action
    4. Training
    5. Evaluations
  5. Safety Manuals: A copy of the Department of Justice Safety Manual will be maintained in the Section=s front office and available for all employees. A copy of the Laboratory Safety Manual will be maintained by each employee along with a copy of the Chemical Hygiene Plan and Bloodborne Pathogen Plan.
  6. Certification: Designated individuals in the section will acquire and maintain Division of Criminal Information limited certification in accordance with DCI requirements to operate the Omnixx program.
4. Operational Guidelines - Evidence
1. Case Data Entry

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1. Instructions for case entry into the computerized files are available in the LIMS AHelp@ files. A copy of this manual is provided to each Evidence Control Unit employee.
  1. Unless impractical, all submissions are to be clocked in and logged in the computer at time of receipt.
  2. A log is to be maintained indicating the lab number, person assigned, person logging in, and technician receiving case.
  3. Modifications can be made by employee entering case to the record at time of entry.
  4. All significant record changes are to be made by the Processing Assistants or Section Supervisor.
  5. Case folders are to be prepared by the Processing Assistants as needed.
  6. Section Supervisors/Analysts are to be contacted for assistance in submissions or rejections of evidence when the need arises.

B. Evidence Handling

1. Evidence is only to be received by Evidence Technicians, Laboratory Analysts or trained individuals designated by the Assistant Director of Laboratory Services.
2. Evidence is distributed to the Evidence Technicians by county assignment. In the absence of technicians during lunch breaks and leave, a rotation list is adhered to and maintained by the Processing Assistants.
1. Bureau guidelines for the receipt(including completion of the chain of custody on the SBI-5), identification, storage and handling of evidence submitted to the Crime Laboratory are documented in the SBI Crime Laboratory Procedures and the Evidence Control Unit Evidence Handling Technical Manual. Evidence Technicians are to maintain copies of both manuals.

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Date:

Originating Unit: Evidence Control & Administrative Services Section

4. Guidelines establishing case acceptance criteria can be found in the SBI Evidence Guide. Each Evidence Control Unit employee is to maintain a copy.
  5. All evidence received for examination or disposition will be stored under the appropriate conditions to prevent degradation or contamination of the evidence.
  6. All evidence returned to contributor will be processed for mail/retention according to the disposition recorded on the laboratory report.
  7. Proper postage will be calculated and affixed to each package along with a copy of the laboratory report, SBI-69 or other documentation.
  8. Retained evidence will be identified and stored appropriately for pick up.
3. Record Keeping of Cases Processed in Evidence Control
1. An SBI-5 will be signed by the submitting officer and the technician at time of receipt. The technician will sign the chain of custody upon returning the evidence to the officer or department. Only external transfers will be documented on the SBI-5. All internal transfers will be maintained in the computerized LIMS program.

Issue Date: 6/15/03 (#8)

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Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Originating Unit: Evidence Control & Administrative Services Section

2. A case log in LIMS will be maintained by the Processing Assistants (See Appendix A) with the following data:
  1. analyst assigned

2. date received by lab
3. person logging in case
4. technician receiving case
5. laboratory number

2. A United Parcel Service receipt will be maintained for all cases returned to agencies via UPS indicating data pertinent to that package.

D. Case Files handled by Evidence Control

1. Original and colored folders will be prepared according to the Crime Laboratory Procedures Manual.
2. File folders will be maintained with the evidence until case is completed and returned to the technician. At which time the technician will either:
  1. Forward the folder to the section reviewers, or
  2. On cases held for agencies other than regular contributors, the case file will be sent to the Processing Assistant. The copies will be mailed by the Processing Assistants, and the folder returned to the technician to be placed with the evidence until picked up.
  3. Folders on cases held for the regularly scheduled departments will be maintained by the technician with the evidence until the evidence is picked up. The officer=s copy of the lab report will be maintained in the designated file.

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Originating Unit: Evidence Control & Administrative Services Section

3. Section reviewers will forward the case files to Administrative Services for copy distribution and filing.
4. Case folders checked out by Administrative Services will be returned according to the Crime Laboratory Procedures Manual. (See Appendix B & B1).

E. Case Files Processed by Administrative Services

5. Laboratory reports being mailed without evidence and laboratory copies to appropriate officials shall be mailed by the Word Processors at least twice weekly.

Copies of SBI-5's and LIMS chain of custody shall accompany appropriate copies.

6. Case notes shall be stapled together according to the crime laboratory procedures. Administrative documents shall be attached to the front file jacket with the person=s initials and the case file number in the right top corner of the document. Envelopes containing illustrative evidence are to be stapled to the back of the file jacket. It is the responsibility of Administrative Services to ensure all case files are in compliance with laboratory procedures prior to filing.
7. All case files will be secured and in the control of Administrative Services and will be checked out to appropriate laboratory personnel as needed according to the Crime Laboratory procedures. (See Appendix B & B1). The section supervisor or designee will be responsible for after hour retrieval of laboratory files.

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Originating Unit: Evidence Control & Administrative Services Section

6. Court Coordination

1. It will be the responsibility of the court coordinator assigned to the unit to accept and process subpoenas for all laboratory personnel, coordinate with the analysts/technicians on court appearances, provide the analyst/technician with a section pager and prepare the case file for court as needed. (See Appendix E).

5. Control of Equipment and Supplies

1. Equipment

1. All equipment will be ordered by the Section Supervisor.
2. An inventory will be maintained by the Section Supervisor.
3. Inspection and monitoring of the evidence refrigerator will be completed and documented



on the log attached as Appendix C by the Safety Officer in accordance with instructions found on the form.

## 2. Supplies

1. Ordering supplies will be the responsibility of the designated Processing Assistant based on section needs. Adequate safety supplies will be maintained for all section personnel.
2. Receipt of supplies will be logged on the Supply Inventory form (See Appendix D).

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Originating Unit: Evidence Control & Administrative Services Section

## 3. Monitoring of Equipment

1. Refrigerator: Each evidence refrigerator will be monitored weekly. Each will be logged on the monitoring log by the Section Safety Officer. Any problems noted with temperature or operation will be reported to the section supervisor. (See Appendix C).
2. Postage Meter/Scales: To be checked and calibrated by an outside source per maintenance agreement on the machines. The vendor takes responsibility to keep machines in compliance with U.S. regulations.
3. Computer files: To be maintained according to Division procedures. The Systems Administrator will be contacted for any program problems or adjustments.

## VI. Audits

1. SBI Internal Audit: The SBI Evidence Control and Administrative Services Section is audited every three years by the SBI Inspection Team appointed by the Director. During this time, all phases of the operation of the section are scrutinized including: case file maintenance, evidence handling and accountability, security, leave and time management, equipment inventory, adherence to SBI policies and procedures, personnel records, etc.

2. The Evidence Control and Administrative Services Section is inspected annually by the our in-house SBI Quality Assurance Audit team for ASCLD-LAB.
3. Section Internal Audits/Inspections
  1. The Section Supervisor or his/her designee will review case folders on all cases processed by the evidence technicians to ensure accuracy in chain of custody and stamp each SBI-5 with AECU/initials@ identification.
  2. The Section Supervisor will randomly review incoming/outgoing evidence to ensure compliance of the Crime Laboratory handling procedures.
  3. Utilizing the LIMS assignments for each technician, the Section Supervisor will inspect evidence in the possession of each technician for accountability and compliance with all evidence handling procedures. The evidence inspected will be randomly selected by the section supervisor.
  4. Safety Inspection: The Section will be inspected monthly by the Section Safety Officer and a report submitted to the Section Supervisor for further action.

#### VII. Safety

1. Policy: The Evidence Control and Administrative Services Section will operate in compliance with the Department of Justice Safety Manual and the Crime Laboratory Safety Manual.
2. Safety Officer: One member of the Section will be designated as the Section Safety Officer. The Section Safety Officer will attend laboratory safety meetings, keep the section informed of safety issues discussed at the safety meetings, monitor the section for safety standard compliance and report these findings to the Section Supervisor.

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Originating Unit: Evidence Control & Administrative Services Section

VIII. Monitoring of Court Testimony

Court testimony of Evidence Technicians will be monitored in accordance with the State Bureau of Investigation Policy & Procedures Manual, Procedure 34, pages 1 - 2.

IX. Departures from Documented Policy / Procedures

Departures from the documented policies and procedures will be done in accordance with the State Bureau of Investigation's Crime Laboratory Directive #03-02.

X. Complaints

Complaints will be dealt with in accordance to the State Bureau of Investigation Policy & Procedure Manual, Procedure 24.

XI. Disclosure of Information

Information will be disclosed in accordance with the State Bureau of Investigation Policy & Procedures Manual, Policy 5, page 12.

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Originating Unit: Evidence Control & Administrative Services Section

APPENDIX A: LOG OF CASE DATA ENTRY  
A1: LOG OF RESUBMITTED CASES

APPENDIX B: LOG OF FILE CHECK-OUT & SIGN IN  
B1: CARD PLACED IN FILE CABINET AT  
THE RELEASE OF A CASE FILE

APPENDIX C1: TEMPERATURE MONITORING  
C2: INSPECTION/MONITORING OF  
EQUIPMENT FORM(REFRIGERATORS)

APPENDIX D: SUPPLY RECEIPT INVENTORY LOG

APPENDIX E: PAGER CHECK-OUT LOG

APPENDIX C1

## Temperature Monitoring

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The working temperature of all refrigerators will be checked weekly with a lab thermometer. The temperature noted will be recorded on a Temperature Quality Control Record by the section designated Safety Officer. The record will be submitted to the Supervisor yearly.

The equipment will be calibrated initially when placed in service.

Any consistent temperature change from the 35N to 45N tolerance or any operational problems should be reported to the section supervisor.