



Wilmington Police Department Crime Laboratory
Quality Management System Procedure
Evidence Control

1.0 Purpose

This procedure describes evidence control procedures.

2.0 Discussion

Laboratory personnel adhere to these strict procedures for the transportation, receipt, handling, protection, storage, retention and disposal of evidence. Civilian laboratory personnel do not transport evidence outside the building (with the exception of latent print evidence) and do not dispose of evidence.

3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 WPD: Wilmington Police Department
- 3.2 P&E: Property and Evidence
- 3.3 WPCL: Wilmington Police Crime Laboratory
- 3.4 LR#: Laboratory Report number; unique identifier

4.0 Procedures

- 4.1 The Crime Laboratory adheres to all applicable standard operating procedures issued by the Property and Evidence Section. All evidence submitted for analysis is submitted through the P&E Section with a Request for Examination form, QF202.8. Laboratory personnel accept evidence from the P&E Section, maintain chain-of-custody and return to the P&E Section upon completion of work. Evidence is placed in the secured evidence storage provided in the P&E lobby or to P&E personnel. Samples stored by the P&E Section are stored in the secured evidence area that is controlled by key card access. Latent print evidence is the only evidence that does not adhere to this process. Latents are stored permanently and securely in the CSI unit. Latents are submitted through the drop-box outside the CSI office or the Latent Print drop-box.
- 4.2 All cases accepted for testing are assigned a unique identifier, a Laboratory Report number (LR#). This number begins with the acronym WPCL (Wilmington Police Crime Laboratory), the two digit year received and a four digit number starting with '0' to indicate it is a forensic alcohol case sample, '1' to indicate a forensic drug case, '3' to indicate a computer forensics case and '4' to indicate a latent print case. The remaining digits are the first number indicate the number of cases received in the lab for that year for that type of testing. The year is represented with two digits. For example, the 'tenth' forensic alcohol sample that is received for analysis in 2009 has the LR# assignment WPCL-09-0010 and the 'tenth' forensic drug case received for analysis in 2012 has the LR# assignment WPCL-12-1010. Proficiency samples are assigned laboratory report numbers exactly as if they were case samples.



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- 4.3 There are no items or sub-items to identify for forensic alcohol cases as a single kit is identified with the LR#. If more than one kit is submitted as part of the same agency case number, a unique LR# is assigned to each kit. Forensic drug cases with more than one item or sub-item are assigned a unique LR#. Each item is identified with an item number corresponding to the item number assigned by the investigating officer. The assigned item number is identified on the Request for Examination form, QF202.8. Sub-items are items that are packaged within a single item, but are separated and subject to testing individually. Sub-items are identified by adding a decimal point and integer following the item number. The integer after the decimal point starts with 1 and goes up consecutively with the number of sub-items. For example, item #3 is submitted for testing and has five smaller baggies of white powder inside the primary packaging. These sub-items are labeled 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5. Sub-items are repackaged at single item #3 for return to property and evidence and are tracked according to the LR# and assigned primary item number. Note: Instrument software may not allow for decimal points in the item name. In this instance the decimal point will be signified by an underscore (_).
- 4.3.1 Latent print envelopes are submitted as a primary item (X). Latent lift cards are identified as a sub-item and are numbered as Card 1, Card 2, etc. The sub-item number corresponds to the card number (e.g. X.1, X.2). Each print on a card is identified as a sub-item to the latent lift card and are designated using letters (e.g. X.1A, X.1B, X.2A)
- 4.4 Laboratory personnel log evidence information into the Sample Information Log for each individual discipline. Logs are located on the shared network (Z:) drive or (R:) drive. Evidence is examined during this process and/or prior to opening to check for proper sealing and accurate case information in the log. Improperly sealed evidence is evaluated for tampering. If the analyst or technician determines that the integrity of the evidence is compromised by improper sealing or information is incorrect on the log, then the evidence is returned to P&E or submitting CSI/Officer, is not analyzed and a note is included in the Sample Information Log.
- 4.5 Evidence items that are subdivided by the laboratory are identified as sub-items in the case notes. Sub-items are identified and tracked with the original item.
- 4.6 Evidence is not left unattended or unsecured in the laboratory or office areas. Chain-of-custody is maintained at all times. Evidence is stored in the locked evidence refrigerator, safe, or other secured storage provided in the laboratory areas, secured CSI bay or other secured administrative areas.
- 4.7 Personnel maintain the chain-of-custody for evidence in their custody and document the receipt and transfer of evidence and the work performed.



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4.8 The process of examination/analysis of evidence is not open-ended. A justifiable explanation for frequent or additional examination/analysis is documented in the case notes.

5.0 Health and Safety

There are no specific health or safety requirements associated with these procedures.

6.0 Records Management

Laboratory chain of custody records are kept in the case file and/or stored electronically. Records and documents produced by the P&E section are maintained by that section according to their policies.

7.0 References

- 7.1 ISO/IEC 17025:2005, Section 5.8.1
- 7.2 ASCLD/LAB-International: Supplemental Requirements for the Accreditation of Forensic Science Testing Laboratories, Section 5.8.1.1, 5.8.1.1.1, 5.8.1.1.2, 5.8.4.1, 5.8.4.2
- 7.3 WPD Property and Evidence SOP
- 7.4 Quality System Manual, QD001, Section 2.8, Handling of Test items

8.0 Appendices

None

9.0 Revision Table

Revision #	Effective date	Revised by	Description of Revisions
Original Issue	10/01/2012	B. Pridgen	
1	10/23/2012	B. Pridgen	Addition of 4.8
2	10/09/2014	A. Hutson	Clarification of temporary storage in 4.6 and how sub-items are identified in instrument software in 4.3.
3	12/17/2014	B. Pridgen	Addition of CSI bay to 4.6.
4	04/01/2016	B. Pridgen	Changes to 2.0, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.7 to include latent prints and computer forensics processes.



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Authorization

This Standard Operating Procedure, Revision Issue #4, has been approved and authorized by:

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Date

Ralph M. Evangelous
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Date

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