

MICROANALYSIS REQUEST DATABASE

USER MANUAL



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Director _____ Date:
Roger C. Thompson

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Chief Criminalist _____ Date:
Jane S. Burton

Criminalist _____ Date:
Timothy A. French

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1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this manual is to familiarize new employees with databases employed in the Microanalysis Section of the laboratory to track requests for examination.

This document will also serve to set standardized guidelines for all personnel who enter data to follow. In order for the database to provide accurate information, the data must be entered in the same format each time by every analyst.

The database is currently located on the department R drive at:

R:\CMPD\Department\Crimelab\Sensitive\Micro

Each person in the section will have a short-cut on their desktop PC to access the database.

2 ENTERING REQUESTS

The requests for examination come from either detectives or officers. Once received, a request is date stamped with the date it is submitted to the lab. The case request is then entered into the database. This is done using the "Request Backlog" form in the database. Once the form opens, click on the "Add New Request" button and the form will show a blank record. The complaint number is entered and then the "Search for other requests for this case" button can be clicked to be sure that there is not an outstanding request already for this case. If there is, the report will show the request. Depending on the situation, the request will then either be placed into the case file with the existing request, given to the analyst that has already taken possession of the prior request, or in the case of a different examination type, a new case file may be generated. If a new request is being entered into the database, the following information needs to be filled in: date of request (the date the officer requested the exam), the type of case, the unit (serology, DNA or trace) and the type of exam.

In the situation where a DNA analyst is working/screening a serology case and then proceeds to perform DNA analysis on the evidence, a second request for the case will need to be entered into the database and the analyst will simply take possession of the new DNA request. In this case the date of the new (DNA) request is the date that it is entered into the database. Similarly, if someone other than a DNA analyst completes a serological screening and there is evidence that is suitable for DNA analysis, a new case file will be generated and a new entry made in the database.

3 TAKING POSSESSION OF A CASE

When the analyst takes the case request (file), they will have to take possession of the request in the database. This is done so that the unassigned requests can be distinguished from the others. This is accomplished by opening the "Request Backlog" form and then clicking on the search button on the tool bar (binoculars). Enter the complaint number as shown on the form (xxxx xxxx xxxxxx). Clicking the "Find Next" button will then pull up the record for that request. The analyst then selects their name from the drop-down list and enters the date they are taking the request.

When the request is taken by an analyst, the case will usually be entered into the LIMS database

**CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT CRIME LABORATORY
MICROANALYSIS SECTION**

once the evidence is received. The data from the request database is not linked to the LIMS database.

4 REQUESTS THAT ARE NOT COMPLETED/WORKED

In the event that a request is no longer needed, the case is dropped or for any reason is not to be examined, a date will be entered in the “date assigned” field, but no analyst will be listed in the “analyst assigned” field. This will allow for searches of requests that were not worked. Therefore, if an analyst takes possession of a case that they feel may not be worked, they have two options. The first is that they should not enter their name in the analyst field until after they have had communications with the requesting officer. A second option is for the analyst to simply go back to that record and remove their name from the case when it is dropped. In this instance, someone searching for the case file will know who has the file once it is removed from the request stack.

5 QUERIES/REPORTS

There are numerous queries and reports for generating lists for case prioritization and statistical calculations. New queries and reports may be written as needed.

The screenshot shows a software window titled "Request Backlog". It contains several input fields and buttons. At the top left is a "Complaint Number" text box. To its right is a button labeled "Search for other requests for this case". Below these are two columns of fields: "Date of Request" (text box) and "Type of Case" (dropdown menu); "Unit" (dropdown menu) and "Type of Exam" (dropdown menu); "Analyst Assigned" (dropdown menu) and "Date Assigned" (text box). To the right of the "Date Assigned" field is a button labeled "Add New Request". Below the input fields is a "User Instruction" box containing the text: "To remove a request from the database without taking possession and/or examination, simply enter a date in the Date Assinged field without selecting an analyst name." At the bottom of the window is a record navigation bar with the text "Record: 253 of 253" and navigation icons.

Current data entry form.