



## Quality Management System Procedure

Pitt County Sheriff's Office Forensic Services Unit

Issued by the Quality Manager

Effective Date:

2020/01/15

Ver:

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### QSP 5-09-1 – Ensuring the Validity of Test Results

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#### Purpose

To describe monitoring activities in the Pitt County Sheriff's Office Forensic Services Unit (Laboratory) Quality System.

#### Scope / Field of Application

This procedure is applicable to all Laboratory personnel.

#### Definitions and Acronyms

- **External Proficiency Test** – A test prepared by, provided by, and reported to a source outside the laboratory, in which the results are unknown to the analyst/examiner.
- **Internal Proficiency Test** – A test produced by the Laboratory in which the expected results are unknown to the Forensic Scientist.
- **Proficiency Test** – test to evaluate the continuing capability of a Forensic Scientist to perform their specific job function.
- **Proficiency Test file** – All documentation related to a proficiency test, either in paper or electronic format.
- **Quality Assurance** – An integrated system of management activities involving planning, assessing, reporting, and implementing quality improvements to ensure that a process or service is 1) of the type and quality needed and expected by the client and 2) in conformity with accreditation standards and norms of the scientific community.
- **Re-examination of evidence** - A form of testing in which a second Forensic Scientist tests the evidence without knowledge of the original test results.

#### Responsibility

Laboratory personnel  
Forensic Scientist

#### Materials Required

N/A

#### Procedure

##### Internal Case Quality Assurance

1. The monitoring and validity of results to include the use of QC samples shall be described in Section Technical Procedures.

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2. Quality control (QC) measures shall be used to evaluate accuracy, precision, and contamination in case analysis. QC may include, but is not limited to, the following:
  - Certified reference materials and internally generated reference materials.
  - Reference collections.
  - Statistical tables.
  - Positive and negative controls.
  - Control charts.
  - Alternative methods.
  - Inter-laboratory comparison or proficiency-testing programs.
  - Replicate testing using the same or different methods.
  - Retesting of reference materials.
  - Correlation of results from tests conducted for different characteristics of an item of evidence.

#### **Technical and Administrative Review**


1. The technical and administrative review of forensic case files shall be conducted as provided in QSP-5-09-4 Administrative and Technical Review.

#### **Testimony Monitoring**

1. Monitoring and evaluating testimony are necessary to ensure that the testimony is accurate, understandable, and scientifically sound. Testimony monitoring also gauges whether the employee has displayed a demeanor and professional appearance consistent with all applicable policies and procedures of the Laboratory.
2. The testimony of Forensics Services Unit personnel shall be monitored and evaluated on an annual basis. This testimony shall be evaluated by an authorized technical reviewer in that discipline. This evaluation shall be recorded on form # 5-9-6-F1, Testimony Review and maintained by the Quality Manager. If an analyst does not testify during a calendar year then the Quality Manager will document this in a memo and store in Laserfiche.

Form # 5-9-6-F1, Testimony Review is available to be distributed to members of the court to evaluate the witness. Feedback shall be provided to each employee, and documented on Form # 5-9-6-F1, by the Quality Manager, Technical Leader

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or designee who shall initiate remedial action(s) as necessary. Records of testimony monitoring shall be retained by the Pitt County Forensics Services Unit.

### **Proficiency Testing**

1. Proficiency Testing shall be conducted in accordance with QSP 5-09-3 Proficiency Testing.
2. Each Forensic Scientist or technician who conducts forensic casework shall successfully complete at least one proficiency test each year in each discipline in which casework is performed.
3. The QM shall monitor the status of the proficiency testing program. An annual status report of the proficiency testing program shall be prepared by the QM in conjunction with the Annual Laboratory Quality System Review as provided in the QSP 4-15-1 Management Review.

### **Corrective Action**

1. Any deficiencies, discrepancies, or issues shall be handled as provided in QSP 4-11-1 Corrective Action and QSP 4-09-1 Control of Nonconforming Work.


### **Re-examination of Casework**

1. Forensic cases shall not normally be re-worked; however, upon approval by the Lab Director or pursuant to a court order, the case may be re-worked by another qualified Forensic Scientist. The Forensic Scientist shall not review the final report or discuss the results with the original Forensic Scientist prior to the re-examination.
2. Once the re-examination is complete, the Technical Leader or designee shall compare the reported results of the two examinations. The results of this re-examination shall be documented in Section proficiency files and a copy provided to the QM. The Technical Leader shall report any discrepancy immediately to the QM and Lab Director for action.

### **Documentation**

- Laboratory and Section Court Testimony Evaluation records (Testimony Review)
- Proficiency Test Review Form
- Laboratory and Section Proficiency Test records

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- Case Re-examination records

### Reference Procedures/Forms

QSP 4-09-1 Control of Nonconforming Work  
 QSP 4-11-1 Corrective Action  
 QSP 4-15-1 Management Review  
 QSP 5-09-3 Proficiency Testing  
 QSP-5-09-4 Administrative and Technical Review  
 Form # 5-9-6-F1, Testimony Review  
 Section Technical Procedures

### References

N/A



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#### **REVISION HISTORY**

<b>CURRENT VERSION</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	<b>SUMMARY OF CHANGES</b>
1	2019/11/18	Original Version.
2	2020/01/15	Under Testimony Monitoring added analyst who does not testify.

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