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## Technical Procedure for Case Documentation

**1.0 Purpose** – To provide guidelines for documenting casework in the Firearms Section.

**2.0 Scope** – This procedure applies to all cases examined in the Firearms Section.

### **3.0 Definitions**

- **Clerical review** – A review of the case file documentation for grammatical and typographical correctness.
- **Combined Administrative/Technical (Admin/Tech) review** – A combined review that involves both an in-depth review of the examination documentation used as a basis for the findings and conclusions and their validity as stated in the Laboratory Report and a review of the case file documentation for consistency with Laboratory policy and for editorial correctness.
- **Verification review** – A review of any microscopic comparisons, unsuitability for comparison determinations, and serial number restoration attempts.

**4.0 Equipment, Materials, and Reagents** – N/A

### **5.0 Procedure**

#### **5.1 Case Notes**

**5.1.1** List the evidence received in the case.

**5.1.1.1** The Laboratory item number. The Agency item number, in parentheses, assigned to the submitted item(s) by FA [e.g., Item 1 (Your Item 2)]. If the Laboratory and Agency item numbers are the same, they may be combined [e.g., Item 1]. The Agency item number may be listed at the end of each item description.

**5.1.1.2** The number of items associated with the Laboratory item number (e.g., Three, One, Thirty-five, Numerous).

**5.1.1.3** If known, the full name of the make or manufacturer of the submitted items (e.g., Smith & Wesson, CCI, Glock, Hi-Point Firearms).

**5.1.1.4** The full name of the caliber of the item(s) if applicable.

**5.1.1.5** The model designation of the item, if known.

**5.1.1.6** The serial number of the item, if known.

**5.1.1.6.1** If the serial number has been obliterated, the item description will state “serial number obliterated”.

**5.1.1.6.2** If the firearm did not have a serial number, the item description will state “no serial number”.

**5.1.1.7** The description of the item(s) (e.g., pistol, fired bullet, fired cartridge case).

**5.1.1.8** An example would be:

Item 1 : One (1) Hi-Point Firearms, caliber 45 Auto, model JHP, serial number 123456, semiautomatic pistol. (Your item 3)

**5.1.2** The case notes shall include all worksheets, notes, sketches, photographs, and any other documentation used to arrive at the conclusions reported. FA-generated or stored notes or worksheets may include sketches, photographs and miscellaneous documentation (e.g., manufacturers' literature); these items shall be imported into the Case Record Object Repository. If any item is scanned, it shall include the Laboratory case number, date, and examiner's initials.

**5.2 Pre-Report Review Process**

**5.2.1** A separate clerical review may be requested for cross reference cases.

**5.2.2** A verification review shall be requested for all unsuitability for comparison determinations, and for serial number restoration attempts.

**5.2.3** A combined verification/clerical review shall be requested for microscopic comparisons cases.

**5.2.3.1** Because cross reference cases may have a separate clerical review, a verification review may be requested for these cases rather than a combined verification/clerical review.

**5.2.4 Clerical Review**

**5.2.4.1** Those individuals authorized to perform clerical reviews can be found on the Work Authorization Record.

**5.2.4.2** The clerical review shall include:

**5.2.4.2.1** A review of the case notes for grammatical and typographical errors.

**5.2.4.3** If any errors or omissions are found, the clerical reviewer shall return the review explaining the reason for the return in the space provided. The caseworker shall correct the errors or omissions and continue the review.

**5.2.4.4** If no errors are found or if the correction of errors has been made, the clerical reviewer shall approve the case.

**5.2.5 Verification Review**

**5.2.5.1** Those individuals authorized to perform verification reviews can be found on the Work Authorization Record.

**5.2.5.2** The verification review shall include, if applicable:

**5.2.5.2.1** Verification of all microscopic comparison conclusions.

**5.2.5.2.1.1** Any evidence that needs microscopic verification shall be transferred to and from the designated reviewer unless the verification is performed in the presence of the caseworker.

**5.2.5.2.1.2** If a difference in microscopic comparison conclusions should arise between the caseworker and the verification reviewer and the two cannot come to an agreement on a reported conclusion after additional discussions and examination, the review of the item(s) in disagreement shall be taken to a second reviewer. The second reviewer shall examine the item(s) in question and convey his/her conclusions to the caseworker and reviewer. If, after additional discussion among the three, no consensus can be reached regarding the conclusion for the item(s) in question, the most conservative results shall be reported.

**5.2.5.2.1.3** Microscopic comparisons performed for the purpose of grouping items for NIBIN entry need not be verified.

**5.2.5.2.1.4** The reviewer shall include a statement as to what result(s) was/were verified in the review comment block.

**5.2.5.2.2** Verification of unsuitability for comparison determinations.

**5.2.5.2.3** Verification of the accuracy of restored serial number examinations by visually observing all restoration results.

**5.2.5.3** If any errors or omissions are found, the verification reviewer shall return the review explaining the reason for the return in the space provided. The caseworker shall correct the errors or omissions and continue the review.

**5.2.5.4** If no errors are found or the correction of errors has been made, the verification reviewer shall approve the review.

**5.3 Case Report**

**5.3.1** For NIBIN entry only cases, the NIBIN Entry Report will serve as the laboratory report.

**5.3.2** After the case notes and required pre-report reviews are complete, the Laboratory Report shall be created.

**5.3.2.1** Verify the information contained in the Report against the submission information found on the Request for Laboratory Examination Form or its electronic equivalent. Follow the reporting guidelines as prescribed in the State Crime Laboratory Quality Manual and the Laboratory Procedure for Reporting Results.

**5.3.2.2** Copy the Items Submitted and Reporting Results areas from the case notes to the report.

#### **5.4 Post-Report Review Process**

**5.4.1** After completion of each report for all cases, the Forensic Scientist or IBIS Technician (caseworker) shall send the case for a required admin/tech review.

##### **5.4.2 Admin/Tech Review**

**5.4.2.1** Those individuals authorized to perform admin/tech reviews can be found on the Work Authorization Record.

**5.4.2.2** The admin/tech review shall include:

**5.4.2.2.1** A review of the report and notes to ensure that all reported results are explained and supported by the notes.

**5.4.2.2.2** A review of the report and the submission information included on the Request for Laboratory Examination Form or its electronic equivalent to ensure the accuracy of the information in the report.

**5.4.2.2.3** Confirmation of the inclusion of all required documents in the Case Record Object Repository.

**5.4.2.2.4** Confirmation of the completion of required clerical and/or verification reviews.

**5.4.2.3** If any errors or omissions are found, the admin/tech reviewer shall return the review explaining the reason for the return in the space provided. The caseworker shall correct the errors or omissions and continue the review.

**5.4.2.4** If no errors are found or the correction of errors has been made, the admin/tech reviewer shall approve the case.

**5.4.2.5** In the event that a stop work notification is received after work has begun, but before a verification review has been performed, the admin/tech review shall ensure the Laboratory Report follows the Laboratory Procedure for Stop Work Orders.

**5.4.3** After approval of all reviews, the caseworker shall release the report.

#### **5.5 Standards and Controls – N/A**

**5.6 Calibration – N/A**

**5.7 Maintenance – N/A**

**5.8 Sampling – N/A**

**5.9 Calculations – N/A**

**5.10 Uncertainty of Measurement – N/A**

**6.0 Limitations – N/A**

**7.0 Safety – N/A**

**8.0 References – N/A**

**9.0 Records**

- FA Worksheets
- FA Case Report
- FA Case File Report
- Work Authorization List

**10.0 Attachments – N/A**

Revision History		
Effective Date	Version Number	Reason
06/25/2021	11	<p><b>Header</b> and throughout – corrected to reflect organizational change.</p> <p>Throughout – change “technical/administrative” to “administrative/technical” or “admin/tech”.</p> <p>Throughout – change removed “section’s” in front of Work Authorization List</p> <p>Remove all references to GSR/pellet pattern and tool mark examinations.</p> <p>Remove all references to Ks and Qs item designations</p> <p><b>3.0</b> definition of verification review – add “unsuitability for comparison determinations”, removed reference to GSR exams and money</p> <p>Separate review process into pre-report and post-report sections.</p> <p>New <b>5.1.2</b> – added “applicable”.</p> <p>New <b>5.2.1</b> and <b>5.2.3.1</b> – clarify requirements for cross reference cases.</p> <p><b>5.2.5.2.1.3</b> – changed “IBIS” to “NIBIN”</p> <p><b>5.2.5.2.3</b> – removed “the” and added “all restoration”</p> <p>Added new <b>5.2.5.2.1.4</b></p> <p>Added new <b>5.3.1</b>.</p> <p>Moved old <b>5.2.2</b> to <b>5.1.1</b> and updated.</p> <p><b>5.3.2</b> – Added “and required reviews”</p> <p><b>5.3.2.1</b> and <b>5.4.2.2.2</b> – Added “Laboratory”</p> <p>Added new <b>5.3.2.2</b>.</p> <p>Removed old <b>5.3.5.2.3</b> and <b>5.3.5.2.4</b></p> <p><b>5.4.2.1</b> - changed “List” to “Record”</p> <p>Updated <b>5.4.2.5</b> to follow laboratory stop work procedure</p>