

Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory  

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**Forensic Biology Administrative Manual**

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**Section 1 Forensic Biology Discipline Locker Key Policy**

- 1.1 Evidence lockers in the Forensic Biology discipline are self-assigned. An analyst may choose any locker(s) for storing evidence. When lockers are not in use, keys are stored in the locks.
- 1.2 A master set of locker keys is stored in the discipline supervisor's office. These may only be used with permission from the discipline supervisor or designated individual.
- 1.3 If one of the locker keys is lost, the discipline supervisor shall be notified.

**Section 2 Forensic Biology Literature Review Policy**

2.1 Any member of the Forensic Biology discipline may put forward an article of scientific literature for members of the discipline to read, as appropriate to their areas of competency.

2.2 A spreadsheet is maintained on the lab network which tracks scientific literature put forward to the Forensic Biology discipline.

2.3 Analysts document their readings in the LIMS.

2.4 Literature review documentation is monitored annually by the DNA Technical Manager.

**Section 3 Extended Absence Policy**

When an analyst is away from the laboratory for an extended period of time (three months or longer), he/she will be required to successfully complete an internal competency test before resuming casework analysis. The scope of the competency test and authorization to resume casework are the responsibility of the DNA Technical Manager and/or the discipline supervisor.

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#### **Section 4 Forensic Biology Case Report Close-Out**

- 4.1 Once a forensic biology report has been completed, the following administrative tasks must be completed:
- Bench notes and checklist retained in LIMS in case record
  - CODIS Specimen Detail Report retained in LIMS in case record (if applicable)
  - DNA Screening and DNA Central Log files retained in annual DNA case record in LIMS (if applicable)
  - Report sent to submitting agency (and prosecutor if required)
  - Release of report documented in LIMS
  - Electronic data retained on lab network (if applicable)
- 4.2 These tasks may be completed by the analyst or an administrative designee.
- 4.3 It is the responsibility of the analyst to confirm that all of the above tasks have been completed correctly.

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## **Section 5                    Annual Forensic Biology Quality Review**

- 5.1 An annual review of the quality system in the Forensic Biology discipline will occur concurrently with the lab wide annual quality system review.
- 5.2 The quality review of the Forensic Biology discipline will be approved by the DNA Technical Manager.
- 5.3 At a minimum, the quality review of the Forensic Biology discipline will include the following:
  - Audit (internal and/or external) of the Forensic Biology discipline
  - Inventory of long-term biological evidence storage
  - Collection of feedback from discipline members regarding improvements to discipline manuals
  - Review and updates to manuals
  - Review of all verifications, validations and performance checks. Follow-up as required.
  - Conduct an overview of all Forensic Biology CARs and QRFs for the preceding year
  - Assessment of discipline-wide adherence to literature review policy
- 5.4 Documentation of the Forensic Biology quality system annual review will be by memo to the lab QA Manager.

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**Section 6 Continuing Education Records**

All DNA personnel (except for technicians) annually receive a minimum of 8 cumulative hours of continuing education, in accordance with the FBI QAS requirements.

Continuing education is documented in the analysts training record in LIMS. The record is reviewed and approved by the discipline supervisor and the DNA technical manager. The following information is required in the record:

- Course title
- Documentation of attendance (may include certificates, agenda/syllabus, etc.). Shall include an attendance list for internal training
- Training date(s) number of continuing education hours
- Evaluation of course (content, instruction, relevance, etc.)

Additionally, the following is required for continuing education provided by lab personnel:

- A record of the presentation
- The curriculum vitae of the presenter

Programs based on multimedia or internet delivery require written documentation of approval by the DNA technical manager.

Documentation required specifically for internal and/or multimedia education is retained in the Forensic Biology discipline share.

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### **Section 7 Contingency Plan for DNA Technical Manager**

Pursuant to the FBI QAS, the laboratory must have a documented contingency plan if the technical manager position is vacated. The plan will be as follows:

- If a current staff member is qualified to serve as DNA Technical Manager, that individual will be appointed as an interim technical manager.
  - If the laboratory has more than one qualified individual, the discipline supervisor will coordinate with top management to appoint an interim technical manager. This individual will serve until a permanent replacement is hired.
  - The laboratory may continue to do work and issue reports under this scenario.
- If no current staff members are qualified to serve as the DNA technical manager, the DNA Technical Leader from another laboratory will be hired to serve in an interim capacity until a suitable replacement can be found.
  - The laboratory may not begin new casework until an interim technical manager is in place.

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## **Section 8 Proficiency Tests**

This section provides additional guidance on handling of proficiency tests, where it varies from the handling/procedures of routine casework.

- The applicable results pages provided by the internal/external test provider will become part of the bench notes and are typically the first numbered pages.
  - A LIMS report is drafted in addition to completing the required pages for the external provider.
  - STR tables from the external provider take the place of the lab's STR table, when applicable.
- Items will be reported as per the test provider's instructions when these vary from normal reporting procedures. However, they must be examined as per lab protocol.
  - For example, the current provider for external hair proficiencies submits 2 hairs as a single item and forces reporting of one result for both. The analyst shall still examine each hair separately and document them individually within the bench notes. If the same conclusion is not reached for each, consult with the Technical Manager for guidance on how to report to the external provider.
  - Any unusual findings that have the potential to impact the interpretation (such as possible drop-out, differential observations, etc.) should be noted in the test provider's comment section.
- Test takers may consult with a similarly qualified peer during the course of their examinations, provided that person is not assigned the same test.
  - Consulting another qualified examiner is required when specified as per the laboratory procedure.
- Upon completion of the test, test materials are stored in the designated location in the discipline rather than being returned to one of the laboratory's secure evidence storage locations.
- Submission of external test results
  - FTS
    - The laboratory quality manager will provide the analyst with the FTS test information and the laboratory case #
    - The analyst logs in to the FTS site to retrieve the test result form, enter results and save to the FTS system

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- The analyst provides the technical reviewer with a printed copy of the completed results form for review; corrections are made as required
- The analyst notifies the laboratory quality manager when the test is completed, report released in LIMS and notes complete in case images
- CTS – the procedure for CTS tests is provided in the laboratory quality manual

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**Appendix A: Revision History**

<b>FBAM 2015 R1 Page</b>	<b>FBAM 2015 R0 page</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Revision made</b>
7-8	n/a	Section 8	<b>Added</b> procedural information for submission of external proficiency test results

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