



SAN DIEGO POLICE

CRIME LABORATORY

LABORATORY OPERATIONS MANUAL

Revised June 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. [Laboratory Introduction](#)
2. [Administrative Support Unit](#)
3. [Crime Scene Reconstruction](#)
4. [Crime Scene Unit](#)
5. [Firearms Unit](#)
6. [Forensic Biology](#)
7. [Forensic Chemistry Unit](#)
8. [Forensic Technology Unit](#)
9. [Latent Print Unit](#)
10. [Polygraph Unit](#)
11. [Quality Assurance](#)
12. [Safety](#)
13. [Trace Evidence Unit](#)
14. [Narcotics Vault](#)
15. [Regional Computer Forensics Lab \(RCFL\)](#)

1. LABORATORY INTRODUCTION

The San Diego Police Department Crime Laboratory is a full-service criminalistics laboratory comprised of the following units and programs:

- Administrative Support
- Crime Scene
- Crime Scene Reconstruction
- Firearms
- Forensic Biology
- Forensic Chemistry
- Forensic Technology
- Latent Prints
- Polygraph
- Quality Assurance
- Regional Computer Forensics Laboratory (RCFL)
- Safety
- Trace Evidence
- Narcotics Vault

The general operating hours of the laboratory are 0700-1700 hours, Monday through Friday. Inquiries can be made by calling 531-2577 during these hours. The Commanding Officer, Assistant Crime Laboratory Managers (Program Coordinators) and/or Lieutenant have oversight over all laboratory programs and units.

Crime scene specialists, criminalists, a polygrapher, a narcotics vault employee, and a duty supervisor are on call 24 hours a day.

2. ADMINSTRATIVE SUPPORT UNIT

UNIT DESCRIPTION

The unit consists of ~~two~~three Office Support Specialists, a Clerical Assistant, and a Supervising Administrative Aide. The unit coordinates efforts on laboratory case files, subpoenas, ordering supplies for the laboratory, and compiling administrative information for reports to the crime laboratory manager, and payroll.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILTIES

Administrative Aide Duties

- A. Supervise three Office Support Specialists. Write performance evaluations, counsel, and advise employees.
- B. Prepare, route/obtain approvals of, and track laboratory requests for purchases. Create spreadsheets showing expenditures, projected expenditures, and justification for purchases.
- C. Contact vendors to obtain quotes, invoices, valid insurance and endorsements, business tax certificates, and contract information. Work closely with Fiscal Management staff to ensure all necessary purchase documents are in order (i.e., sole source memos, quotations) and City Purchasing have everything needed to provide the laboratory with our purchase orders.
- D. Track spending of all laboratory PO's verify receipt of goods and reconcile invoices. Work closely with Fiscal Management to resolve payment issues with vendors. Use the One SD SAP system to monitor PO's and invoices.
- E. Assemble and coordinate routing/approvals of training requests for laboratory employees.
- F. Reconcile blood draw charges while checking against the laboratory's blood/urine log and FileOnQ database for accuracy. Consult with Chemistry supervisor to reconcile inaccuracies or problems.
- G. Review and approve toxicology requests, contact detectives, and consult with Chemistry supervisor to resolve issues.

- H. Keep files of updated Statement of Qualifications for laboratory employees.
- I. Coordinate with the Fiscal Management analyst and laboratory supervisors to facilitate inspection of laboratory assets.
- J. Work closely with the Commanding Officer and Assistant Crime Lab Managers and assist other laboratory supervisors with administrative, training and purchasing issues.

Office Support Specialist Duties

- A. Answer phone calls from officers, public, City Attorney's Office, D.A.'s Office, etc.
- B. Help walk-in traffic.
- C. Scan and file alcohol reports, narcotics reports, and toxicology results by uploading them to accepted storage medium.
- D. Process and distribute subpoenas.
- E. Take outgoing mail to the mail room, pick up and distribute incoming mail.
- F. Prepare payroll.
- G. Prepare overtime report.
- H. Prepare and distribute the attendance roster.
- I. Order and distribute office supplies.
- J. Provide assistance and training to Detectives and Officers on how to navigate and request testing via the laboratory request system.
- K. Check submitted requests for accuracy.
- L. Ensure all required documentation is submitted with requests (i.e., search warrants, consent forms, etc.).
- M. Scan laboratory case files and maintain hardcopy files of ongoing cases.
- N. Purge case files in accordance with the retention policy. Processes laboratory work requests submitted by investigative units.

3. CRIME SCENE RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Criminalists involved in the program are required to be on-call several weeks a year. When on-call, they are required to respond to crime scenes to employ their expertise in one of the below listed areas. Criminalists are responsible for assessing and interpreting the scene evidence, providing a written report in a reasonable period of time, and for providing expert testimony in trials as needed.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

This program is administered by a supervising criminalist, acting in the capacity of a crime scene program coordinator and technical lead. The following are responsibilities of that coordinator:

- A. Establish the on-call schedule for the criminalists to ensure callout coverage
- B. Assess the training needs of the reconstructionists and facilitate any necessary training
- C. Conduct periodic meetings to discuss issues
- D. Conduct technical or administrative reviews of the crime scene reconstruction reports as needed
- E. Facilitate the proficiency testing program for the reconstructionists

RECONSTRUCTIONIST AT THE CRIME SCENE

The on-call reconstructionist is required to have expertise in the following areas:

- A. Bloodstain pattern interpretation
- B. Firearms trajectory reconstruction
- C. Alternate light source applications
- D. Chemical presumptive tests including bullet strike marks, and
- E. General scene reconstruction

4. CRIME SCENE UNIT

UNIT DESCRIPTION

Crime Scene Specialists (CSS) are on 24-hour call back for homicide investigations and other crime scenes. The CSS services are requested by a sergeant (or above), the watch commander, or laboratory supervisors.

The Crime Scene Unit consists of one Crime Scene Specialist Supervisor, ten Crime Scene Specialists and one laboratory technician. The CSS photographs and collects evidence at crime scenes, autopsies, search warrants, hospitals, and suspect processing. Additionally, they process evidence and crime scenes for latent prints.

The Crime Scene Unit utilizes its lab technician, interns and/or volunteers to process evidence for latent prints and to assist at crime scenes.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Crime Scene Specialist

- A. Call back
 - 1. Available on a rotating 24-hour schedule to assist in investigations.

- B. Crime scene/morgue scene/victim and subject processing
 - 1. Respond to the scene.
 - 2. Examine scene for physical evidence.
 - 3. Photograph, collect and preserve evidence.
 - 4. Prepare evidence and photograph lists.
 - 5. Process scene and evidence for latent prints.
 - 6. Prepare reports.

- C. Vehicle processing
 - 1. Photograph and examine for evidence.
 - 2. Process vehicle for latent prints.
 - 3. Prepare reports.

- D. Evidence processing
 - 1. Process items for latent prints using various techniques.
 - 2. Preserve latent prints (i.e. lifts or photography).
 - 3. Process items for the identification, collection and preservation of latent prints, DNA, trace, shoe/tire impression, and blood evidence.
 - 4. Prepare reports.

- E. Court testimony
- F. Administrative services
 - 1. Department and Unit training,
 - 2. Assist in determining budget, equipment, and supply needs,
 - 3. Other duties as needed.

Crime Scene Unit Supervisor

- A. Supervises the collection and preservation of crime scene evidence and the development of latent print evidence,
- B. Reviews reports to ensure that evidence is properly recorded and described,
- C. Oversees that correct procedures are followed to ensure that the integrity of the evidence is properly maintained,
- D. Determines work schedules,
- E. Sets case priorities and making assignments as necessary,
- F. Provides technical direction and coordination in the training of subordinates,
- G. Maintains inventory of supplies and equipment,
- H. Evaluates subordinates' performance,
- I. Conducts unit inspections to monitor compliance with unit and laboratory policies and procedures and,
- J. Prepares staff work to include:
 - 1. statistics
 - 2. projections of expected workload
 - 3. staff reports.

Interns/Volunteers

The Crime Scene Unit uses interns and volunteers to provide technical support. The following qualifications are required for the position:

Technical support personnel will be trained in the collection and preservation of latent prints, DNA, trace, shoe/tire impression, and blood evidence. Upon completion of this training, the technical support personnel will be competency tested in the above-mentioned areas.

The technical support trainee will be allowed to attend crime scenes under the supervision of a Crime Scene Specialist.

5. FIREARMS UNIT

UNIT DESCRIPTION

The Firearms Unit consists of one NIBIN Program Administrator (Supervising Criminalist), four criminalists of which one is the Technical Lead and four laboratory technicians.

The Firearms Unit provides examination, analysis, identification, and expert testimony on firearms evidence in criminal matters and administrative and other special investigations. The unit also acts as a resource on firearms information.

Generally, criminalists will examine firearms evidence to make visual, microscopic, and chemical evaluations and comparisons. Their observations and conclusions will be reported in written reports and in courtroom testimony if called upon to do so. The laboratory technicians perform IBIS entry and conduct operability tests to a more limited extent than the criminalist and will testify in court when necessary.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Criminalist III (Technical Lead/Administrator)

The duties of the Criminalist III in the Firearms Unit also include those of the Criminalist I and II in addition to:

- A. Coordinating the technical operation of the unit in accordance with quality assurance standards.
- B. Creating, reviewing, and/or revising technical policies and procedures prior to final approval by the Supervisor and Quality Manager.
- C. Coordinating training of new and current employees.
- D. Developing technical training modules in the unit.
- E. Coordinating, reviewing, and approving new method and instrument validations and verifications, including documentation, prior to final approval by the Quality Manager.
- F. Acting as a technical reference for the unit Supervisor, Quality Manager, and any auditors.
- G. Acting as a mediator, when necessary, in the technical review process.
- H. Providing technical consultation, as needed, to members of the unit and other laboratory employees.
- I. Working with the supervisor and Quality Manager to ensure

criminalist compliance with QA, laboratory, and unit policies and procedures.

- J. Evaluating new technologies to determine if appropriate for the unit.
- K. When technical problems are identified, coordinating with the Quality Manager and Supervisor to ensure appropriate corrective actions are taken.
- L. Act as the NIBIN Program Administrator when the Administrator is unavailable.

Criminalist I and II

- A. Determining firearms operability
- B. Firearms identification
- C. Making appropriate trace evidence screens on the items being examined
- D. Bullet comparisons
- E. Cartridge case comparisons
- F. Gunshot residue (GSR) distance determination
- G. Determining possible firearms used in a case
- H. Firearm test fire
- I. Ammunition comparison
- J. Trigger pull determination
- K. Unloading impounded firearms
- L. Crime scene reconstruction (Criminalist II only)
- M. Silencer evaluation
- N. Verifications
- O. Preparation of reports
- P. Technical reviews of firearms related reports
- Q. Training of new employees
- R. Assist in determining Unit needs
- S. Court room testimony
- T. Serial number restoration
- U. Maintenance of the ammunition reference library
- V. Gun write-offs with the Property Room
- W. Help with the annual inventory of the Firearms reference collection, if requested by the supervisor
- X. IBIS Entry
- Y. Caliber identification
- Z. Any other task as needed by unit or unit supervisor

Laboratory Technician

- A. IBIS Entry
- B. Determining firearms operability

- C. Unloading firearms upon request of the Property Room
- D. Assisting with the annual inventory of firearms collection
- E. Maintenance of the ammunition and breakdown collections
- F. Assist the firearms unit as needed in other duties
- G. Assists in preparation of laboratory records for discovery
- H. Firearm test fire(s)
- I. Preparation of reports.

Unit Supervising Criminalist/NIBIN Program Administrator

- A. Assigning and prioritizing casework,
- B. Interviewing and hiring employees,
- C. Reviewing reports and examining case notes,
- D. Evaluating employee performance,
- E. Reviewing and approving training records.
- F. Providing orientation for new employees or criminalists newly rotated into the unit,
- G. Tracking the progress of assigned casework and status of backlogs,
- H. Preparing budget requests, memos or reports as requested by the laboratory manager,
- I. Compiling monthly statistics,
- J. Reviewing and revising analytical procedure or unit policy as needed,
- K. Providing information and/or conducting meetings to keep the staff informed about Department, laboratory, and criminalist events.

6. FORENSIC BIOLOGY UNIT

UNIT DESCRIPTION

The Forensic Biology Unit is comprised of eighteen Criminalists, a DNA Technical Manager, a CODIS Administrator, eight Laboratory Technicians, and two Supervising Criminalists.

The Forensic Biology Unit provides analysis on all reasonable requests from most investigative units of the San Diego Police Department using the most current technologies available.

The Forensic Biology Unit's primary duties are to analyze items of physical evidence to locate and identify biological material and perform DNA analysis on that biological material.

The biological materials that the unit can either presumptively identify, or confirm the presence of, are: blood, semen, and saliva. DNA analysis may be performed on all of these substances as well as hair, bone, and other body fluids or tissues.

The DNA testing capabilities of the Forensic Biology Unit include both autosomal and Y chromosome STR DNA testing. Mitochondrial DNA, SNP, and forensic genetic genealogy testing are not performed at the San Diego Police Department Crime Laboratory.

Additional duties performed by the Forensic Biology Unit include the validation and implementation of new technologies, courtroom testimony, and participation in the crime scene reconstruction program as described in Section 3.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervising Criminalist

The Supervising Criminalists of the Forensic Biology Unit oversee the Forensic Biology Unit and analysts. The responsibilities will include assigning casework, interacting with attorneys and detectives to determine case priorities, and monitoring the overall job performance of analysts.

- A. Establishes casework priorities based on negotiations and discussions with investigators and district attorneys,
- B. Assigns casework to analysts,
- C. Reviews reports and examines case notes,
- D. Reviews and evaluates the performance of subordinates,
- E. Works with the DNA Technical Manager to review and establish unit specific policies and analytical procedures when appropriate,
- F. Interviews and hires new employees,
- G. Trains the new employees on department policies and procedures,
- H. Works with the DNA Technical Manager to coordinate analyst training,
- I. Keeps track of workload statistics,
- J. Prepares budget requests,
- K. Holds unit meetings to disseminate department, laboratory, or unit specific information, and
- L. Prepares reports as required by the Command Officer, Assistant Crime Laboratory Managers, or Lieutenant.

DNA Technical Manager

The DNA Technical Manager will oversee the technical operation of the DNA Laboratory as outlined by the FBI Director's Quality Assurance Standards for DNA Testing Laboratories. The DNA Technical Manager will evaluate new technologies, resolve technical problems, assess, and design training programs, and ensure the unit adheres to all quality assurance requirements. The DNA Technical Manager is authorized to shut down the DNA laboratory should a serious technical problem develop.

- A. Reviews, revises and approves any DNA-related technical policy or procedure prior to final authorization by the Quality Manager,
- B. Approves and oversees training of new and existing employees (when applicable) in DNA analytical procedures, including completion of training documentation,

- C. Oversees, reviews and approves DNA method validation, including completion of validation documentation, prior to final authorization by the Quality Manager
- D. Works with the Quality Manager on any QA reports involving a DNA technical issue, and reviewing and signing off on those reports,
- E. Acts as a technical reference for the Quality Manager,
- F. Performs technical reviews of DNA case files,
- G. Acts as a mediator when necessary, in the technical review of DNA casework in the Forensic Biology Unit,
- H. Provides technical consultation as needed to the members of the Forensic Biology Unit,
- I. Works with Unit Supervisor and Quality Manager to ensure compliance of the DNA analysts with QA and Unit policies and procedures,
- K. Reviews the DNA proficiency tests completed by the Forensic Biology Unit,
- L. Conducts casework analysis, and
- M. Prepares reports as required by the Commanding Officer, Assistant Crime Laboratory Managers, or Lieutenant.

Casework CODIS Administrator

The Casework CODIS Administrator is responsible for the security and integrity of the local CODIS network, the CODIS software, and the data within the local database. The Casework CODIS Administrator ensures the data within the local CODIS database is in compliance with National DNA Index System guidelines.

- A. Oversees the entering of DNA profiles from casework into the local database,
- B. Ensures that DNA profiles are searched against the local CODIS database,
- C. Uploads data to the California CODIS database,
- D. Downloads and searches DNA profiles from the CJIS WAN website,
- E. Performs upgrades to the CODIS software with the assistance of the CODIS Help Desk,
- F. Ensures that a backup is maintained for the information in the local database,
- G. Assists in the training of analysts in the operation of CODIS software, and
- H. Disseminates CODIS information to the rest of the Forensic Biology Unit.

Criminalist I and II

The job descriptions for Criminalist I and II are similar except that Criminalist II analysts are expected participate in the crime scene reconstruction program. In addition to the normal educational requirements of the Criminalist position, DNA Criminalists must complete college-level classes in Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Genetics, and Statistics and/or Population Biology.

Criminalist I and II's primary duties involve locating and identifying biological material on items of physical evidence and performing DNA analysis. Analysts are required to document all exams, tests, observations, results, summarize the findings in a written report, and if necessary, testify in courts of law.

- A. Receives, inventories, screens, and preserves items of physical evidence
- B. Locates and identifies biological material,
- C. Conducts DNA analysis to determine possible associations between the evidence and any reference samples provided,
- D. Writes reports summarizing the findings and provides expert testimony in court,
- E. Remains technically current and knowledgeable in appropriate analytical methods,
- F. Participates in the evaluation and validation of new technologies or methodologies,
- G. Participates in any special projects as assigned by the Supervising Criminalist or Laboratory Manager,
- H. Informs the Supervising Criminalist or DNA Technical Manager of problems that develop at any stage of a case, and
- I. Uses the technical manual, unit policies manual and general quality assurance manual to deal with any procedural question or analytical method.

Laboratory Technician

- A. Receives, inventories, screens, and preserves items of physical evidence
- B. Locates and identifies biological material.
- C. Samples evidence for DNA testing by qualified analysts.
- D. Checks the calibration of instruments such as pipettes, thermal cyclers, and balances.
- E. Orders chemicals and supplies for Forensic Biology.
- F. Maintains an accurate inventory of all chemicals located in the unit.

- G. Ensures that laboratory instruments, communal work areas, and floors are cleaned and decontaminated.
- H. Ensures that the operating temperatures of the unit ovens, incubators, refrigerators, and freezers are monitored.
- I. Ensures that victim, suspect, and physiological, and reference mouth swab kits are prepared for departmental use or for the collection of evidence at area hospitals.
- J. Performs other tasks as assigned by the Supervising Criminalist.
- K. Assists in preparation of laboratory records for discovery.

Interns/Volunteers

Interns working in the Forensic Biology Unit will typically have earned or are working toward a four-year or advanced science degree.

Interns and volunteers will assist the unit by performing certain clerical duties, cleaning the laboratory work areas and monitoring the operating temperature of equipment.

These activities will always be performed under the direct supervision of a Laboratory Technician or Criminalist.

Depending on the experience level of an intern or volunteer they may also be involved in laboratory projects such as the validation of new technologies. This validation work will always be performed under the direct supervision of the DNA Technical Manager and within Forensic Biology Policy.

7. FORENSIC CHEMISTRY UNIT

UNIT DESCRIPTION

The Forensic Chemistry Unit (FCU) is budgeted for eight positions: one supervising Criminalist, two laboratory technicians, and six criminalists.

This unit performs controlled substance analysis, alcohol analysis, and maintains the evidential breath alcohol instruments and trains officers to perform breath alcohol testing.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervising Criminalist

- A. Supervision of the analysis of alcohol in blood, breath, and urine samples as well as the supervision of the analysis of controlled substances,
- B. Ensure proper procedures are followed,
- C. Ensure adequate unit staffing levels every day,
- D. Ensure that new analysts receive the proper training and pass appropriate competency tests, written tests, and mock courts,
- E. Serve as a liaison between the contractors, department, district attorney's office, city attorney's office, and other end users of the laboratory,
- F. Inspect logs and records to ensure unit policies are being followed,
- G. Evaluate employee performance,
- H. Prepare staff reports:
 - 1. budget requests
 - 2. monthly unit statistics
 - 3. special projects
- I. Support and represent the staff in all professional endeavors in the unit to upper management, and
- J. Monitor and approve electronic timecards.

Criminalist I and II

- A. Analysis of impounded evidence including blood and controlled substances,
- B. Maintain neat work environment,
- C. Monitor instruments and arrange for repair as needed,
- D. Prepare reagents as needed,

- E. Prepare legible notes and/or reports on all substances analyzed,
- F. Maintain proper chain of custody for evidence,
- G. Testify in court on analyses when called to do so,
- H. Keep supervisor informed of operations, problems, and unusual circumstances,
- I. Carry out special projects as requested by supervisor,
- J. Act as a technical resource for the Department and others as needed,
- K. Assist other analysts with training in analytical and administrative procedures and technical problems,
- N. Participate in the development of new procedures,
- O. Testify as alcohol and controlled substance analyst and as an alcohol impairment expert,
- Q. Prepare alcohol standards and quality control samples for use in analytical procedures,
- R. Perform and record calibration checks on breath testing instruments and maintain maintenance records of unit instruments used in casework,
- S. Prepare monthly statistics,
- T. Participate in and/or organize drinking studies as needed,
- U. Prepare individual reports for detectives for crimes other than Health and Safety and DUI violations. These include vice cases, sex crime cases, and homicides,
- V. Follow laboratory, Title 17, and safety procedures, and
- W. Teach breath instrument operator classes.

Criminalist III (Technical Lead)

The duties of the Criminalist III in the Forensic Chemistry Unit also include those of the Criminalist I and II in addition to:

- A. Coordinating the technical operation of the unit in accordance with quality assurance standards.
- B. Creating, reviewing, and/or revising technical policies and procedures prior to final approval by the Quality Manager.
- C. Coordinating training of new and current employees in analytical procedures and ensuring completion of training documentation.
- D. Developing technical training plans in the unit.
- E. Coordinating, reviewing, and approving new method and instrument validations and verifications, including documentation, prior to final approval by the Quality Manager.
- F. Acting as a technical reference for the unit Supervisor, Quality Manager, and any auditors.
- G. Acting as a mediator, when necessary, in the technical review process.

- H. Providing technical consultation, as needed, to members of the unit.
- I. Working with the supervisor and Quality Manager to ensure criminalist compliance with QA, laboratory, and unit policies and procedures.
- J. Evaluating new technologies to determine if appropriate for the unit.
- K. When technical problems are identified, coordinating with the Quality Manager and Supervisor to ensure appropriate corrective actions are taken.

Laboratory Technician

- A. Order needed supplies for Forensic Chemistry unit.
- B. Prepare and stock reagents as needed.
- C. Wash and stock lab ware as needed.
- D. Assist in monitoring instruments and arranging for repair as needed.
- E. Follow proper safety procedures.
- F. Keep supervisor informed of operations, problems, and unusual circumstances.
- G. Maintain proper public relations.
- H. Carry out special projects as requested by the supervisor.
- I. Participate in the development of new procedures, as needed.
- J. Help maintain and stock the unit and Room 138, breath instrument room.
- K. Assist Criminalist in breath instrument maintenance and quality assurance.
- L. Dispose of hazardous material and chemical waste as needed.
- M. Assists in preparation of laboratory records for discovery.
- N. Preliminary analysis on controlled substances.

8. FORENSIC TECHNOLOGY UNIT

UNIT DESCRIPTION

The Forensic Technology Unit (FTU) consists of one full time working supervisor, four full time criminalists trained to provide laboratory analyses of mobile devices and related materials, and one laboratory technician.

The unit is responsible for extracting and/or examining digital evidence stored in mobile devices for the purpose of providing investigators with evidence that may assist in their investigation.

The unit also maintains the Cellebrite room located on the 5th floor by deploying system updates, adding users, troubleshooting, training of detectives to use the Cellebrite software in the room and maintaining the digital evidence network. The training includes in-person classes via Success Factors and reaffirmed through one-on-one assistance and technical support as needed.

The examiners are available for technical assistance, such as recovery of data from corrupted storage media, conversion of audio/video tape to cd/dvd format, management of data files extracted by detectives, etc.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Criminalist III (Technical Lead)

The duties of the Criminalist III in FTU also include those of the Criminalist I and II in addition to:

- A. Coordinating the technical operation of the unit in accordance with quality assurance standards.
- B. Creating, reviewing, and/or revising technical policies and procedures prior to final approval by the Supervisor and Quality Manager.
- C. Coordinating training of new and current employees.
- D. Developing technical training modules in the unit.
- E. Coordinating, reviewing, and approving new method and instrument validations and verifications, including documentation, prior to final authorization by the Quality Manager.
- F. Acting as a technical reference for the unit Supervisor, Quality Manager, and any auditors.

- G. Acting as a mediator, when necessary, in the technical review process.
- H. Providing technical consultation, as needed, to members of the unit and other laboratory employees.
- I. Working with the supervisor and Quality Manager to ensure criminalist compliance with QA, laboratory, and unit policies and procedures.
- J. Evaluating new technologies to determine if appropriate for the unit.
- K. When technical problems are identified, coordinating with the Quality Manager and Supervisor to ensure appropriate corrective actions are taken.

Criminalist I and II:

- A. Extraction of data from mobile devices.
- B. Analysis of extracted data.
- C. Preparing reports on mobile device examinations.
- D. Court testimony.
- E. Training investigators in evidence collection pursuant to mobile device examinations.
- F. Maintaining equipment.
- G. Assuring quality control elements of the program are implemented throughout the process.
- H. Projecting, planning, and reviewing new technologies as they become available.

9. LATENT PRINT UNIT

UNIT DESCRIPTION

The Latent Print Unit is composed of one Supervising Latent Print Examiner, one Latent Print Examiner III (Technical Lead), ten Latent Print Examiners, and three Latent Print Examiner Aides.

The Latent Print Unit is an integral part of the San Diego Police Department Crime Laboratory. The unit is charged with the responsibility of analyzing, comparing, and evaluating latent print evidence related to crimes.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Latent Print Examiner III (Technical Lead):

The duties of the Latent Print Examiner III also include those of the Latent Print Examiner II in addition to:

- A. Proposes new latent print technical policies and procedures in compliance with laboratory procedures, accreditation standards, and advances in the latent print field.
- B. Revises current technical procedures.
- C. Assists in the training structure of laboratory personnel in latent print analysis and comparisons.
- D. Supports method validations by writing or reviewing validation studies.
- E. Recommends new technical equipment and supplies.
- F. Troubleshoots and resolves equipment issues.
- G. Serves as a technical resource for the unit to help resolve technical issues.
- H. Acts as a mentor that provides technical support to laboratory personnel in the latent print unit.
- I. Leads the technical section of unit briefings.

Latent Print Examiner I and II:

- A. Analyze latent print evidence to determine suitability.
- B. Perform latent print comparisons for identifications.

- C. Search latent print evidence through Automated Latent Print Systems (ALPS).
- D. Perform technical reviews of casework in areas of competency.
- E. Collect known print exemplars, when needed.
- F. Provide training to latent print unit personnel.
- G. Consults with attorneys for trial preparation.
- H. Prepares materials for presentation of evidence in court.
- I. Serves as an expert witness in Municipal, Superior, and Federal Courts on all phases of latent print examination.
- J. Prepare and maintain records of examinations performed.
- K. Writes official reports, indicating what evidence was submitted, the results of the examination, and the disposition of the items of evidence.

Latent Print Examiner Aide

- A. Analyze latent print evidence to determine suitability.
- B. Search latent print evidence through Automated Latent Print Systems (ALPS).
- C. Process, collects, and preserves items of evidence using various techniques for latent prints, DNA, and trace evidence.
- D. Perform technical reviews of casework in areas of competency.
- E. Collect known print exemplars, when needed.
- F. Retrieve and return Latent Print evidence for the unit.
- G. Verify case information recorded on evidence packaging for completeness and accuracy.
- H. Distribute email correspondence for the Latent Print unit.
- I. Coordinate with Department personnel when officer corrections are needed.
- J. Scan, distribute, and file case packet information for the unit.
- K. Maintain records for the ALPS award recognition program.
- L. Serves as an expert witness in Municipal, Superior, and Federal Courts.
- M. Prepare and maintain records of examinations performed.
- N. Writes official reports, indicating what evidence was submitted, the results of the examination, and the disposition of the items of evidence.

Supervising Latent Print Examiner

- A. Supervises the administration and daily operations of Examiners.
- B. Coordinates, assigns, and tracks casework, status of backlogs, and compiles monthly statistics.
- C. Coordinates, assigns, and approves training and training records.
- D. Completes administrative reviews of unit reports.
- E. Ensures that policy and procedures are followed and evaluates new policies or proposals for changes in unit procedures.

- F. Reviews unit needs and prepares budget requests, memos, or reports as requested by Management.
- G. Coordinates work schedules of staff and performs employee evaluations.
- H. Conducts interviews and recommends employees for hire to Management.
- I. Provides information and/or conducts weekly meetings to keep staff informed about Unit, Laboratory, and Department events.
- J. Serves as the AFIS/ALPS coordinator/administrator.

10. POLYGRAPH UNIT

UNIT DESCRIPTION

The unit consists of Polygraphers who conduct polygraph exams for both Investigations and Backgrounds. The unit is budgeted for three full-time examiners and is located on the 5th floor of the Police Headquarters building.

The examinations are scheduled by appointment. All examinations are recorded, and real time observation is available for the investigator. A polygrapher is available for emergency call back for critical investigative needs.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Polygrapher I, II, and III

- A. Schedule polygraph examinations,
- B. Conduct pre-employment and criminal examinations in a competent, professional manner,
- C. Discuss cases with detectives prior to conducting the polygraph examination.
- D. Prepare accurate reports for conducted polygraph examinations.
- E. Conducting technical reviews.
- F. Rotate on-call responsibilities between examiners in the Polygraph Unit.
- G. File all examinations electronically for storage.
- H. Inform the Supervisor of needed equipment repairs or replacements.
- I. Alert the Supervisor to problems that develop which cannot be routinely handled.

Supervising Polygrapher

- A. Supervises and participates in conducting complex interviews and interrogations involving the use of psychophysiological devices for determining truthfulness;
- B. Oversees the day-to-day operations of the unit and ensures polygraph examinations are conducted in a technical, competent, and professional manner;
- C. Represents the Polygraph Unit as a subject matter expert;
- D. Guides department management on making informed policy decisions by coordinating exams and utilizing the correct methods, procedures, and question formulation;
- E. Provides polygraph examination briefings to investigative units on the outcome of polygraph exams;

- F. Inspects polygraph equipment and updates polygraph software;
- G. Maintains the master unit schedule;
- H. Creates and maintains a rotation list for an on-call polygrapher to provide service to the department 24 hours a day, seven days a week;
- I. Schedules polygraphs for the department, allied agency criminal polygraphs, and all department background polygraph examinations;
- J. Communicates with requestors and prepares and provides a confirmation for examinations;
- K. Disseminates polygraph reports to administrative staff and ensures appropriate routing;
- L. Maintains database folders for proper record keeping of polygraphs;
- M. Maintains daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly statistics and reports;
- N. Reviews publications, journals, and attends conferences to ensure appropriate methods are being used;
- O. Maintains and updates the Polygraph Unit manual and training manual;
- P. Drives to crime scene locations and scheduled polygraph examinations in jails;
- Q. Provides training to subordinate staff.

11. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM

Quality assurance is a core responsibility of all Crime Laboratory personnel. Rigorous quality assurance practices ensure the laboratory provides reliable and defensible services to the Department.

~~Quality management is a prime function and responsibility of every member of the Crime Laboratory. It is through rigorous quality assurance practices that the laboratory can ensure it is providing a reliable service to the Department.~~

The laboratory will maintain a comprehensive Quality Assurance Program administered by the Quality Manager.

~~The laboratory will maintain a quality assurance program administered by a quality manager (QM).~~

The Quality Assurance Program includes the following elements:

~~The quality management program consists of the following elements:~~

- Personnel competence and training
- Selection, development, validation, verification, and documentation of analytical methods
- Traceability of measurements and reference materials
- Equipment calibration, performance checks, and maintenance
- Measurement uncertainty estimation, where applicable
- Technical and administrative case review
- Proficiency testing and other competence monitoring activities
- Monitoring and review of testimony
- Internal audits, external assessments, and management reviews
- Corrective actions, remedial actions, and preventive (risk-based) actions
- Document control and record retention
- Management of nonconforming work
- Continuous improvement of the management system

~~—Training,~~

~~A. Methods selection, development, validation and documentation,~~

~~A. Equipment maintenance,~~

~~A. Technical and administrative case review,~~

~~A. Proficiency testing,~~

~~A. Testimony monitoring, and~~

~~A. Inspections/audits.~~

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE QUALITY MANAGER

- Administers the laboratory's Quality Assurance Program to ensure compliance with ISO/IEC 17025 and ANAB AR 3125
- Oversees the laboratory's proficiency testing program, including selection of appropriate tests, monitoring performance, and documenting corrective actions as required
- Maintains documentation related to personnel training, competence, and proficiency testing
- Coordinates internal audits, external assessments, and surveillance activities; tracks findings; and verifies the effectiveness of corrective actions
- Maintains and updates the laboratory's Quality Assurance Manual and all controlled documents
- Oversees the laboratory's document management system and ensures secure and accurate record retention
- Assists unit supervisors in identifying nonconforming work, investigating technical issues, determining root causes, developing corrective actions, and verifying implementation
- Facilitates risk-based decision-making processes and documents preventive actions consistent with ISO/IEC 17025:2017 requirements
- Ensures testimony is monitored to ensure accuracy, consistency with laboratory practices, and ongoing staff competence
- Ensures measurement uncertainty is evaluated and maintained for applicable methods
- Proposes updates and improvements to the Quality Assurance Program to the Laboratory Manager based on audit results, performance metrics, corrective actions, and evolving accreditation requirements

~~Oversees and administers the laboratory's proficiency testing program,
 Maintains training, proficiency test, and validation documentation,
 Schedules and coordinates assessments and internal audits,
 Maintains and updates the laboratory quality manual,
 Maintains instrument calibration, performance, and maintenance records,
 Oversees the laboratory's document management system,
 Assists unit supervisors to investigate technical problems, develop remedial actions,
 and verify implementation of corrective actions,
 Proposes corrections and improvements to the laboratory's quality management
 program to the laboratory manager.~~

12. SAFETY PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The safety program is administered by the designated safety officer under the authority of the crime laboratory manager.

The safety program involves inspections of various elements of unit safety, including stored chemicals, hood efficiency, management of biological and hazardous waste materials, safety training of new employees, training on annual requirements, and regular documentation of various safety activities.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Safety Officer is responsible for the ensuring the below occur:

- A. Laboratory inspections,
- B. Required safety training of employees,
- C. Coordinate the disposal of biological and chemical hazardous waste,
- D. Maintenance of required safety documentation.

13. TRACE EVIDENCE UNIT

UNIT DESCRIPTION

Two criminalists are assigned full time to the Trace Evidence Unit. These criminalists are under the direction of a supervising criminalist.

The criminalists in the Trace Evidence Unit perform several different types of analyses. These include examinations in the areas of:

- hairs and fibers
- physical match
- impression evidence
- fire debris
- primer gunshot residue
- miscellaneous examinations
- crime scene reconstruction

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Criminalist I

- A. Performs a variety of trace evidence analyses,
- B. Completes documentation of casework through generation of notes and report,
- C. Testifies in court as to result,
- D. May participate in crime scene investigation, and
- E. Assists in vehicle processing

Criminalist II

- A. Performs a variety of trace evidence analysis
- B. Generates casework documentation and reports, interprets results in court
- C. Performs crime scene reconstruction
- D. Will assist in joint investigations such as vehicle processing with Crime Scene Specialists.

Criminalist III (Technical Lead)

- A. Coordinates the technical operation of the unit in accordance with quality assurance standards.
- B. Creates, reviews, and revises technical policies and procedures prior to final approval by the Quality Manager.
- C. Coordinates training of new and current employees in analytical procedures and ensures completion of training documentation.
- D. Develops technical training plans in the unit.
- E. Coordinates, reviews, and approves new method and instrument validations and verifications, including documentation, prior to final approval by the Quality Manager.
- F. Acts as a technical reference for the unit Supervisor, Quality Manager, and any auditors.
- G. Acts as a mediator, when necessary, in the technical review process.
- H. Provides technical consultation, as needed, to members of the unit.
- I. Works with the supervisor and Quality Manager to ensure criminalist compliance with QA, laboratory, and unit policies and procedures.
- J. Evaluates new technologies to determine if appropriate for the unit.
- K. When technical problems are identified, coordinates with the Quality Manager and Supervisor to ensure appropriate corrective actions are taken.

Supervising Criminalist

- A. Assigns and prioritizes casework
- B. Interviews and hires employees
- C. Reviews and establishes policy
- D. Reviews reports and examines case notes
- E. Reviews and evaluates subordinates' performance
- F. Orients new employees on Department Policies and Procedure
- G. Coordinates training of new employees in analytical procedures
- H. Prepares budget requests
- I. Keeps track of workload statistics
- J. Holds regular meetings to keep staff informed about Department, Laboratory, and Criminalistics events
- K. Prepares reports as required by the Commanding Officer or Assistant Crime Lab Managers.

14. NARCOTICS VAULT

UNIT DESCRIPTION

The Narcotics Vault is located on the 5th floor in the Headquarters Business Center. The Vault is staffed by one property and evidence supervisor and two police property and evidence clerks (PPEC). The Vault is staffed from 0630 to 1600 hours. The service counter is open from 0630 to 1600 hours for release or return of evidence to court or for analysis. This includes narcotic impounds as well as blood and urine samples.

The Narcotics Vault is responsible for the storage and tracking of blood, urine and narcotic related substances impounded at the San Diego Police Department facilities. These items are held until they no longer have evidentiary value. Narcotic analysis result information is available to officers, detectives, investigators, by accessing the database or over the phone, through the Vault. Vault personnel will:

- A. Pull narcotics for destruction on a regular basis
- B. Participate in narcotic burns
- C. Participate in the annual vault inventory
- D. Transport narcotics from area stations
- E. Pull blood and urine samples ready for destruction every two weeks
- F. Retrieve blood and urine samples needing alcohol or tox testing impounded in the Property Room, when requested, and
- G. Receive blood and urine samples impounded in Room 138.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Police Property and Evidence Clerk

- A. Receive and separate narcotic impounds,
- B. File impounds in the vault,
- C. Process impounds for disposal and destruction,
- D. Record chain of custody of impounds,
- E. Release information over phone to investigators regarding analytical results,
- F. Notifies officers of non-sealed narcotics evidence or any other discrepancies that need to be addressed,
- G. Receive blood and urine samples from Room 138,
- H. File blood/urine samples,
- I. Prepare splits of blood or urine samples as directed by subpoenas,

- J. General housekeeping,
- K. Participation in the destruction of blood, urine, and narcotics evidence,
- L. Assists in completion of yearly Vault inventory, and
- M. Other tasks as assigned by the supervisor.

Police Property and Evidence Clerk Supervisor

- A. Verify narcotics samples (in percentage or as a whole) marked for destruction
- B. Coordinate the “burn” (destruction of narcotics) with SWAT/Narcotics, the burn facility, laboratory staff, truck rental vendor, and Fiscal,
- C. Interface with Canine Unit for release and destruction of narcotics samples for dog training purposes,
- D. Prepares bulk samples, as needed, for immediate destruction according to Health and Safety codes,
- E. Monitors and evaluates employee performance,
- F. Directs the completion of the yearly Vault inventory pertaining to narcotics impounds,
- G. Prepares reports, memos, and budgetary documentation as directed by the commanding officer or laboratory manager,
- H. Initiates follow-up procedures for unsealed evidence notices, and
- I. Compilation of Unit statistics.

15. REGIONAL COMPUTER FORENSICS LAB (RCFL)

UNIT DESCRIPTION

The San Diego Regional Computer Forensics Laboratory (RCFL) is located at 10385 Vista Sorrento Parkway and is housed on the first floor of the FBI's San Diego Field Office. The RCFL is a multi-agency task force devoted entirely to the examination of digital evidence in support of criminal and national security investigations. The unit contains both sworn and non-sworn personnel from State, Local and Federal agencies and is staffed from 0600-1700 hours, Monday through Friday.

Each RCFL is governed by an Executive Board that operates in a manner similar to that of a board of directors. The San Diego RCFL's Executive Board is composed of senior representatives from each of the participating agencies, and is chartered to review any policy, procedure, practice and/or rule affecting the day-to-day operations of the RCFL. The LEB does not hold any legal authority. The San Diego RCFL is accredited by ANAB since 2018 and was accredited by ASCLD/LAB previously since 2008.

The primary mission of the RCFL is to effectively meet the digital forensics needs of all law enforcement agencies and departments throughout the San Diego and Imperial Counties. The SDR CFL's casework is prioritized according to the magnitude and time-sensitivity of the crime under investigation – regardless of the identity or jurisdiction of the submitting law enforcement agency or department.

Personnel assigned to the RCFL assist with the seizure of digital evidence, conduct an impartial and objective analysis of digital evidence using the best available tools and procedures available, and rigorously train its Examiners so they may effectively testify in court when needed. The RCFL also provides training to all participating agencies and departments located in its service area, in the proper techniques for seizing, storing and analyzing computer evidence—at no cost to these agencies.

The San Diego Police Department currently provides two Detectives to the RCFL. Investigators are available for call-out on cases as needed. These detectives report to the Commanding Officer/Crime Laboratory Manager, Assistant Crime Laboratory Managers/Lieutenant or FET Sergeant.

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Police Detective

The San Diego Police Department currently assigns police Detectives to the RCFL as their participating members of the task force. The Detectives are trained by both the FBI's Computer Analysis Response Team (CART) and various outside vendors to obtain the CART Computer Forensic Examiner certification. As such, the role of the police Detective at the RCFL is to conduct impartial examinations of submitted digital evidence and not to act as the investigator or case agent. Detectives from the San Diego Police Department may examine evidence from agencies other than our department, just as examiners from other agencies may examine evidence from the San Diego Police Department.

- A. Plans and prioritizes assigned casework,
- B. Acquires and utilizes suitable hardware and software interfaces to handle specific data handling situations,
- C. Ensures to the best of their ability that original evidence is not altered or destroyed while in the examiner's care and custody,
- D. Secures all signed out case evidence and derivative evidence according to security policy,
- E. Documents the forensic examination in reports and notes according to standards established by the SDR CFL Director,
- F. Identifies, diagnoses and corrects error and problem conditions encountered in the acquisition and examination of original evidence,
- G. Provides on-site or telephonic technical computer forensic assistance to law enforcement entities requesting such assistance in the seizure of original digital media for possible submission to the SDR CFL,
- H. Acts as the subject matter expert on digital forensic matters for Federal, State and local or military law enforcement agencies as requested,
- I. Provides training in forensic examination techniques to law enforcement entities as requested and approved by the SDR CFL Director,
- J. Provides court testimony on assigned case related matter as requested, and
- K. Is available for travel outside the SDR CFL jurisdiction to provide case support to other federal, state or local law enforcement agencies as directed by the SDR CFL Director.

FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT

Sworn task force members assigned to the RCFL are allocated vehicles and overtime funding from the Asset Forfeiture Funds program. Each sworn task force member from the San Diego Police Department receives a take home vehicle with a gas card and has the opportunity to work a specified allotment of overtime each month, as long as the overtime is related to an active examination he/she is working. The vehicles and overtime are controlled by FBI policies and procedures.