



San Diego Police Forensic Science Section



Latent Print Unit Policy Manual

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Issuing Authority: John Simms, Quality Manager

1.1 UNIT OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION

The Latent Print Unit is located on the 6th floor (room 670) of the San Diego Police Department Headquarters building. The building address is 1401 Broadway, San Diego, CA 92101, Mail Station 725. The hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 0530 hours until - 1630hours.

The Latent Print Unit is composed of one supervisor, Latent Print Examiners and Latent Print Aides

LATENT PRINT UNIT FUNCTIONS

The Latent Print Unit is an integral part of the San Diego Police Department ASCLD-LAB International Accredited Crime Laboratory. The unit is charged with the responsibility of examining the friction ridge evidence recovered from crime scenes while maintaining evidence integrity.

SECURITY

The Latent Print Unit door will remain closed and locked during business hours. - The unit is considered a secure evidence storage room. Only the electronic card key should be used to unlock the door.

Latent Print Unit personnel will maintain the security of their evidence casework in progress by doing the following:

- When leaving their desk for any reason during the day, they will ensure case evidence left on their desk is not in an area where the evidence can be knocked off or fall into a trash/shred container.
- When - on extended absence such as vacation, furlough, medical leave, etc., the case evidence will be packaged in the original envelope(s) and left on their desk for access by the unit supervisor.

2.1 INCOMING EVIDENCE

A. Policy

Latent Print Unit personnel will retrieve latent print evidence (envelopes and exemplars) from the property room. All new evidence must include a barcode.

Information on the envelopes must be accurately documented and reflect the contents within.

B. Procedure

- 1) Latent print envelopes are retrieved from the Property Room. Property room personnel will scan the bar codes indicating that the evidence was released to the Latent Print Unit.
 - a. Unsealed evidence envelopes will be sealed by Latent Print Unit personnel using -evidence tape.-The words "sealed by lab" will be written across the label Initial and date the sealensuring that ½ of the writing is on the envelope and ½ of the writing is on the evidence seal.
 - b. Upon returning to the unit, Latent Print Unit personnel will scan the bar codes indicating that the evidence was received by the unit.
- 2) Evidence received with a property tag (ie. without a barcode) will be handled as follows.
 - a. LPU personnel will sign the Property Room check-out log and the back of the property tag to receive the evidence.
- 3) Evidence with incomplete and/or incorrect documentation will be handled as follows.
 - a. If any item needs to be repackaged (i.e., officer used wrong envelope, barcode was placed over case information or if the barcode was used as a seal), the original container will be kept inside the new envelope and the case information will be

written on the new envelope.

b. If any of the following are incorrectly documented on the envelope, Latent Print Unit personnel will correct the problem(s) if possible.

- i. Name of victim
- ii. Case number
- iii. Incident number
- iv. Contents (ie. number of cards, elimination exemplars, CDs/photos)

c. If the case number or incident number is incorrect on the latent lifts, Latent Print Unit personnel will correct the problem(s) if possible.

d. When the latent lifts are blank or have insufficient information to complete the case, the officer will be notified and required to come to the unit to complete the documentation. At a minimum, the latent lifts should have the name of the lifting officer, the date of recovery and the location from which the lifts were taken.

e. For non-latent print evidence (ie., shoe impression lifts, fabric impression evidence, biological fluids, etc.), both the officer and the supervisor of the appropriate section will be notified.

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2.2 LATENT PRINT EXAMINATION REQUESTS

A. Policy

A Latent Print Unit Request Form (PD-299) is needed for a manual comparison to a subject. Refer to the Work Requests section of the Quality Assurance (QA) Manual for exceptions to this policy.

Evidence from Harbor Police or any other outside agency must have upper administration approval for the work to be done. If so, it will be issued a San Diego Police Department incident number.

Cases assigned proactively do not require a request.

Any cases that are not assigned proactively or require priority rush work to begin must be approved by the unit supervisor.

The supervisor or personnel serving an Out of Class Assignment (OCA) will prioritize and assign all requests.

B. Procedure

- 1) Requests are normally received and processed through the Clerical Unit.
- 2) All work requests will be reviewed by either the supervisor or (OCA) initialed and dated.

2.3 CASE MANAGEMENT COVER SHEET

A. Policy

The Cover Sheet is used by Latent Print Unit personnel to gather statistical data.

B. Procedure

- 1) Complete the case coversheet with the following guidelines in mind:
 - a. Case or incident #.
 - b. Crime Type – Property or Person.
 - c. Case Type – Proactive (no PD-299), ALPS (ALPS search requested on PD-299), Manual (Latent Print Comparison requested on PD-299), or Temp print to Latent Inquiry (TLI)
 - d. Date completed (report date).
 - e. Prints of value remaining – Yes or No.
 - f. Examiner.
 - g. Evidence analyzed – total number of cards/images/scans.
 - h. ALPS – total number of ALPS searches including datasets.
 - i. Manual – total number of manual examinations including elimination comparisons and known to known comparisons.
 - j. Information on subjects identified including the name and unique identifier.
 - k. Information on the lifting officer, detective or crime scene specialist to include name and ID number for the ALPS awards program.

- 2) The coversheet is reviewed during technical review.

- 3) The coversheet will be retained by the supervisor after administrative review.

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2.4 RELEASING EVIDENCE

A. Policy

Latent print evidence may be released to the courts, officers, detectives or an independent examiner. If an independent examiner is to conduct an exam in the Latent Print Unit, the supervisor must give approval prior to the exam taking place. Copies of the latent print evidence can be provided upon request or it can be viewed upon appointment.

The appropriate chain of custody will be completed.

B. Procedure

1) Court

- a. When an examiner releases evidence from the latent print unit, the barcode will be scanned to document the transaction in FileOnQ. Additional comments will be added to specify who received the evidence.
- b. When an examiner releases evidence that was retrieved from the Property Room, the following documentation is required:
 1. A Court Evidence Receipt (PD-233) form must be completed to comply with Property Room evidence release procedures.
 2. The Court Evidence Receipt must be signed by the court clerk to verify custody of evidence retained by the court.
 3. The original (white) will be given to the Property Room while the copy can be placed into the case file as an administrative document.
- c. Any officer, detective or district attorney investigator who requests the release of original evidence and/or known exemplars (i.e. for court or outside examination) must sign for the evidence prior to its release.
- d. The court order (or request) will be placed in the case file.

2) In-house examination

- a. A court order or the authorization by the assigned prosecutor to make available the original evidence for an in-house examination will require the completion of the following steps:
 1. An inventory of the evidence prior to viewing.

2. A chain of custody entry, completed by the outside examiner is sufficient documentation for receiving the evidence.
3. The evidence must also be inventoried at the completion of the exam in the presence of the outside examiner.
4. The examiner receiving the evidence being returned will document receipt on the chain of custody.

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3.1 OBTAINING AND MARKING EVIDENCE (ENVELOPES, CARDS, PHOTOGRAPHS, CDS, ETC.)

A. Policy

The contents of any envelope submitted will be referred to as an item. All items must have case number and/or incident number, initials of analyst, and date.

Subsequent examinations by the initial examiner do not require additional documentation of initial and date if the evidence is still in the possession of the examiner. If the evidence has been returned to property and is checked back out for subsequent examinations by the original examiner, the examiner MUST re-mark the evidence with initials and date.

Numbering of individual items is not necessary with the exception of latent print cards either not previously numbered or incorrectly numbered by a submitting office.

Morgue prints will normally be received packaged in clear plastic sleeves, sealed with clear tape and enclosed in a sealed, barcoded manila envelope. If an examiner needs to unseal a sleeve, it must be opened in the processing room of the Crime Scene Unit. The examiner will be responsible for the resealing of the sleeve. Morgue prints should be handled using personal protective equipment (PPE).

When photo CDs are received, a printout will be made of the images as thumbnails, identifying information for each image must appear on the thumbnail printouts. Any images determined to be suitable for further examination can be printed in a larger format and marked per unit policy. All printouts will be filed with the case notes. If an image is printed on photographic paper and it is smaller than the standard paper size, then it will be taped to an 8 ½" x 11" sheet of paper and marked as per QA policy. Each CD must be marked with initials of examiner, date and case number.

B. Procedure

- 1) Obtain evidence from unit files or Property Room.
- 2) Verify the correct case number is documented on each item and verify the information using the Criminal Records Management System (CRMS) database.

- 3) Assure that all cards taped together and photographs have the case number marked on them.
- 4) Latent print cards or hinge lifters that are received securely attached on top of one another (i.e., taped or stapled), will be considered one card/item.
- 5) Sequential numbering of latent print cards taped together will be done by the examiner if not already numbered by the officer. Latent print cards will be marked for example as 1 of 4, 2 of 4, etc. List or identify cards taped together in the case notes using the matrix or copy of the lift card(s).
- 6) Known print exemplars will be marked for example as 1 of 4, 2 of 4, etc.
- 7) The person retrieving known exemplars from the San Diego County (local) Document Archive System or California Department of Justice (DOJ) and/or FBI Automated Archive System will:
 - a. Stamp the known exemplars with the local, DOJ or FBI stamp to designate which database they came from, sign and date the stamp.
 - b. Known exemplars printed from the archive systems do not need a bar code.
- 8) A barcode will be created for known print exemplars not generated electronically (i.e. inked finger or palm cards, or major case prints). These cards are considered original evidence. Finger and/or palm prints generated by the , local, DOJ, and FBI archive systems are not considered evidence because they can be repeatedly reproduced electronically. These copies will be kept in the case notes. Crime Scene Unit personnel will barcode any morgue prints they receive.
- 9) Exemplars obtained by an examiner will be barcoded. The name of the individual and the case number must appear on each exemplar. Either one barcode can be created for each individual or a barcode can be placed on each exemplar. The barcode must state the total number of exemplars for each individual.
 - a. Exemplars for property or person crimes (non-homicides) will be placed in a blank envelope with an additional barcode placed on the outside of the envelope. These cases will be booked into Property.
 - b. Exemplars for barcoded homicide cases will be placed in a

homicide envelope and an additional barcode will be placed on the outside of the envelope.

- c. For exemplars for homicide cases booked into property using the paper property tags, the barcode is not placed on the outside of the envelope. For these older cases, the property tag number must be entered into FileOnQ under "Paper Property Tag number" These exemplars will be filed in the original homicide envelope.

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3.2 LATENT PRINT EXAMINATION AND MARKING OF EXAMINED IMPRESSIONS

A. Policy

ACE-V is the acronym for the scientific methodology of: analysis (A), comparison (C), evaluation (E), and verification (V).

All identifications and exclusions will be verified.

In an identification, the latent print card and exemplar will be documented by both the examiner and verifier. Refer to the following procedure.

B. Procedure

The following criteria is a quality assurance standard adopted to provide a minimum standard with which to evaluate the case examiner's determination of suitability for comparison.

1) Suitability for Comparison

A latent print will be determined to be suitable for comparison if it contains at least eight clear minutiae that are easily discernible in a finger print (including middle and lower joints), and at least twelve clear minutiae that are easily discernible in a palm or plantar print. These minutiae are located during the analysis, prior to comparison. In addition, the latent print must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a) Discernible source area
- b) Discernible orientation
- c) At least one focal point (e.g. core, delta, crease, scar)
- d) At least one target area (a target area is the friction ridge detail in the latent print that has been selected for search to the known exemplar)

Latent Prints that do not meet the above listed criteria may be marked suitable for comparison at the discretion of the case examiner. The case examiner must document on a photograph/image, which data permitted them to determine the latent print was suitable for comparison and include a copy in their case notes.

2) Suitability for Exclusions

The following criteria is a quality assurance standard adopted to provide a minimum standard with which to evaluate the case examiner's determination of suitability for exclusion. A latent print will be determined to be suitable for exclusion if it meets all of the following criteria:

- a) Discernible source area
- b) Discernible orientation
- c) At least one focal point (e.g. core, delta, major crease, scar)
- d) First and second level detail (second level detail around a focal point is required)
- e) More than one target area (a target area is the friction ridge detail in the latent print that has been selected for search to the known exemplar)

Latent prints that do not meet the above listed criteria may be marked suitable for exclusion at the discretion of the case examiner. The case examiner must document on a photograph/image, which data permitted them to determine the latent print was suitable for the exclusion and include a copy in their case notes.

3) Visually examine the evidence.

- a. If there are sufficient characteristics to perform a comparison, the impression will be marked using the following guidelines:
 - 1. A red permanent marking pen will be used to mark the impression to be examined.
 - 2. Each impression (to be examined) will be assigned a subsequent alpha-character beginning with the letter "A" on each card corresponding with the matrix.
 - 3. An arc over the top of the impression indicates a finger or fingertip.
 - 4. An impression located between two lines indicates a lower (second or third) finger joint.
 - 5. An impression which has been circled indicates that the anatomical orientation cannot be discerned.
 - 6. Partial palm or footprints will be marked with a line at the proximal position opposite the fingers or toes.
 - 7. If an annotation is incorrect, it will be crossed out, initialed and dated, and the correct annotation will be made.
- b. For any impressions which are incidental to the lifting process, indicate on the copy of the lift card using an arrow or circle that the impressions are possible officer's prints.

4) Visually examine the known exemplars.

- a. Is the area necessary for a comparison available in the known exemplar? If not, access the county or state finger or palm print archive systems for additional exemplars.

5) Analysis

- a. The examiner conducts a thorough visual assessment of friction ridge detail

determining if sufficient quality and quantity of detail are present. The examiner analyzes for:

1. First-level detail

Analysis of ridge flow/pattern type; includes core, delta location, ridge count, ridge flow and any ridge damage – scarring or genetic.

2. Second-level detail

Analysis of the friction ridge path; includes ridge length, ridge sequence, ridge type, lateral spatial relationship between ridges.

3. Third-level detail

Analysis of ridge shape/thickness/thinness and relative pore location.

4. If the friction ridge impression is determined to be unidentifiable, the examiner documents their results. No further examination is performed.

6) Comparison

a. When the data in the ridge impression is determined to be sufficient for comparison, the examiner evaluates the ridge data for sufficiency to individualize. The examiner will:

1. Choose a target area of ridge detail to begin the comparison
2. Determine correspondence between the source impression and exemplar based on
 - a. Ridge flow data (Level 1)
 - b. Ridge path data (Level 2)
 - c. Ridge shape data (Level 3)

7) Evaluation

a. The examiner formulates a conclusion based upon the analysis and comparison of the source impression and exemplar standard. The evaluation is based upon the significance of agreement or disagreement between ridge data. Assessments are made regarding sufficient clarity and agreement of data to individualize the source impression.

8) Verification

a. A second examiner repeats the “ACE” process. The examiner performs an independent analysis (A), comparison (C), and evaluation (E) between the impression and exemplar.

- b. In the event of a disagreement between examiner and verifier, refer to laboratory QA policy Casework Review for resolution.
- c. The verifier, if in agreement with the identification, will document the evidence.

C. Marking Procedure of Identified Impressions

- 1) The documentation will be placed as close to the identified impression as possible without disrupting or interfering with any other impression. The following information will be marked in red:
 - a. The name of the identified individual.
 - b. Area of friction ridge skin identified.
 1. Finger number or palm (i.e., #1 RT, #1 right thumb, LP, Left palm). The description can be abbreviated or written out.
 - c. Date the identification was established.
 - d. Initials of the examiner making the identification.
- 2) The known exemplar used for the identification will require the following documentation in red ink:
 - a. Date the identification was established
 - b. Examiner initials
- 3) The verifier, if in agreement, will document the evidence using red ink with initials and date near the primary examiner's notation on the evidence and exemplar.
- 4) If the identification is made off an image from a CD/DVD, the examiner and verifier will date and initial (in red) on the working copy that was used.

D. Latent to Latent Comparison/Documentation

If a latent-to-latent comparison is performed, and the conclusion is that they are from the same source, case notes must be documented on the evidence and/or in the case notes.

- 1) If you are documenting multiple lifts of the same impression, it can be shown by writing on the lift card or photograph. This can occur on the same or separate lift cards. Examples for writing this on the evidence would be:

- Impression A is the same lift as impression B (if both appear on the same card)
- Impression A on card 3 is the same lift as impression B on card 4

No side by side comparison sheet or verification is required.

2) If you are documenting a comparison of a latent-to-latent, then a side by side comparison sheet is needed in addition to writing on the lift card or photograph. Examples for writing this on the evidence would be:

- Impression A is made by the same source as A on card 3
- From the same source as impression A on card #3
- A and C are from the same source, etc.

A verification is required and the words "I agree" must be written by the verifier along with their initials and the date. A separate comparison sheet is not needed from the verifier. If the verifier feels a need for additional information, a note page can be added.

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3.3 KNOWN TO KNOWN COMPARISONS

A. Policy

Known print to known print (K to K) comparisons are conducted when requested and if multiple cards were printed for the same subject and will be retained in the case notes. All known to known comparisons must be verified prior to reporting the results and will only be conducted in the latent print unit. They will not be performed in a courtroom or in the District Attorney's Office.

B. Procedure

- 1) Compare exemplars.
- 2) If there is no identification, no further documentation is required other than the normal indication in the notes.
- 3) If there is an identification, document the exemplar(s) with "K to K", date and initials. The verifier will document the identification in red near the primary examiner's documentation.

3.4 IDENTIFICATION IN DEATH CASES

A. Policy

When requested by a medical examiner, the Latent Print Unit will assist in the identification of unknown deceased persons. This usually occurs when advanced decomposition hinders the routine identification process or when other circumstances require expertise from a latent print examiner.

The examiner will record:

- 1) Finger and palm prints from the unknown decedent for identity purposes.
- 2) All friction ridge skin from the hand for elimination purposes.
- 3) Plantar impressions when warranted.

Only by request and Chief's approval will latent print examiners assist in the identification of deceased in major disasters.

Choices for recording friction ridge skin are as follows, and may not be limited to just one technique. Decide which procedure is best or required before starting with a recovery method:

- 1) Inked and morgue spoon method.
- 2) Powder "Kinderprint" method.
- 3) Tissue Builder Method.
- 4) Removing fingers, palms, feet, or friction ridge skin.
- 5) Silicone ("Mikrosil" or "Accutrans") casting material.
- 6) Re-hydration Technique.
- 7) Refer to the techniques guide for recording friction ridge detail from deceased persons located in the Latent Print Unit.

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3.5 ALPS/AUTOMATED FINGERPRINT IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM (AFIS)

A. Policy

All ALPS quality impressions will be searched through the local database. The examiner will follow the ALPS criteria as a guide to determine which impressions are ALPS quality. If an impression meets the ALPS search criteria and does not result in a hit, the impression must be enrolled. A hit is defined as.....

Examiners, at their discretion, can search any impression that does not meet the ALPS criteria and determine if such impression should be enrolled in the unsolved database.

For person crimes, a local and FBI search is required. Currently, palm impressions can only be searched through the local database. An examiner can use their discretion for searching additional databases including datasets (a search of a latent impression to a person or persons).

If the search results in a "Hit", an identification can only be made if the original evidence was compared to the exemplar(s). If the comparison results in an identification, the exemplar(s) used will be retained with the case notes.

If elimination prints were received on a case being worked proactively, they may be compared to the ALPS-quality impressions at the discretion of the examiner. If a request (PD-299) is received for an ALPS search and an elimination comparison, the Supervisor/OCA may contact the detective to check if the elim comparison is needed at the time of the search.

B. Procedure

Suitability for ALPS Search and Enrollment

The following criteria are quality assurance standards adopted to provide a minimum standard with which to evaluate the case examiner's determination of suitability for ALPS search and enrollment.

1) FINGERS:

A latent finger print will be determined to be suitable for ALPS search and enrollment if it contains at least eight clear minutiae that are easily discernible, form a cluster and are not scattered throughout the print. These minutiae are located during the analysis. In addition, the latent print must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a) Discernible orientation
- b) An approximate core location

Due to repeatability factors, if the following areas are searched, then the

latent print must include at least twelve clear minutiae that are easily discernible, form a cluster, and are not scattered throughout the print:

- a) Only the delta
- b) Only the area below the pattern area
- c) Only the area above the pattern area

2) PALMS:

A latent palm print will be determined to be suitable for ALPS search and enrollment if it contains at least twelve clear minutiae that are easily discernible, form a cluster and are not scattered throughout the print. These minutiae are located during the analysis. If you have a large palm print with an abundance of data, it is highly recommended that multiple searches in different areas of the palm print are performed.

- Each finger impression to be searched will be annotated correctly with a red pen with an arc (circle line, etc.), a letter and a "P" number.)
- Each palm impression to be searched will be annotated correctly with a red pen line at, a letter and a "PP" number. If the orientation is unknown, circle the impression.
- Searched impressions will be annotated correctly. Refer to page 14, Chapter 3.2, Section B.3. Each finger impression will be designated with a "P" (i.e., print) and be sequentially numbered, P1, P2, P3, etc. Each palm impression will be designated with a "PP" (i.e., palm print) and be sequentially numbered, PP1, PP2, PP3, etc.
- If an impression has been labeled with a "P" or "PP" number, and for any reason an examiner decides not to search it, the "P" or "PP" number must be crossed out.

Ten print to Latent Inquiry (TLI) Hits on cases previously worked.

Policy

- 1.) There are two (2) possible scenarios for TLI hits:
 - a. If there is a TLI ALPS hit on a subject that has never been identified in the case, the examiner will work the case and generate a new note packet and report.
 - b. If there is a TLI ALPS hit on a subject that had previously been identified in the case, the Supervisor will first case-manage. The Supervisor will contact the Detective, notifying them of the unconfirmed TLI hit. If no other work is required per the Detective, the examiner will add the TLI notification template and the TLI print out(s) to their original note packet. ONLY these added note pages will go through technical review. It is recommended that the latent print examiner use the same technical reviewer who did the first TP in the original case. The additional note pages, and any cross-outs on the original notes (first page and original last page), will go through administrative review.

3.6 AFIX TRACKER/COMPARATOR

A. Policy

The use of AFIX Tracker is optional.

If AFIX Tracker is on a computer system, the system must be part of a quality control check documented in Latent Print Policy Document 6.2.

To use AFIX Tracker, an analyst must complete a competency test at the end of AFIX Tracker training.

Access to the database is gained with a controlled hard lock.

The database is maintained on the Department local area network. For casework purposes, only Latent Print Unit personnel will access the database.

The examiner must complete comparisons on all friction ridge areas of the exemplars and not rely on the computerized candidate list.

If an examiner experiences technical problems while using the AFIX Tracker / Comparator program contact the software vendor:

AFIX TECHNOLOGIES, INC.
205 N. WALNUT/ PITTSBURGH KS. 66762
1-877-438-2349
WWW.AFIX.NET

B. General

The AFIX Tracker software is designed to search individual crime cases or the entire database.

Tracker can perform searches on knowns-to-knowns, knowns-to-latents, latents-to-knowns, and latents-to-latents.

Evidence is scanned and displayed in high resolution (600 or better) for side-by-side comparisons. A latent print examiner can, in addition to Tracker searches, use Comparator to perform manual comparisons similar in use to other computer program aids such as Adobe Photoshop software.

The procedures for entering/searching latent and known prints into the system are located under the "HELP" tab, which is built into the AFIX Tracker / Comparator program. Instructions for the use of the tracker

system can be found in the "AFIX Tracker Maintenance and Quality Control" book located in the Latent Print Unit.

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3.7 REWORKING CASES PREVIOUSLY EXAMINED

Policy

Additional work may be requested on cases previously worked by examiners no longer with the department. The supervisor will determine what work will be performed prior to assignment.

If the new examiner does not agree with the conclusion of the previous examiner, they may consult with another examiner and notation(s) must be made in the notes. The supervisor and QA manager must be notified of any discrepancy, disagreement, or clerical error with the previous work.

The numbering and/or lettering system used at the time of the original request will be continued with the exception of the known exemplars. The name of the subject will be used instead of the "K#" (K refers to known exemplars). In one system, Q#s were used. The "Q" stands for Questioned. The cards were documented as Q1-5, meaning envelope #1, card #5. In another system, the envelopes were numbered sequentially. For example, if more than one envelope was received on a case, the first envelope would be labeled #1 (1-7), the next envelope would be #2 (1-7), etc.

The examiner only needs to complete the internal chain of custody form for the envelopes used for the new exam. All latent print cards, photos and known exemplars need to be dated and initialed.

Refer to 4.3 Latent Print Case Notes.

All reports issued by the new examiner will follow current reporting procedures. If Q#s were used in the original report, refer to Q#s in the current report.

If a verification/technical review was not performed on the previous exclusions, the results of those exclusions must be verified by the new examiner.

4.1 REPORTS

A. Policy

All comparisons, computer searches, and identifications require a General Lab Formal report to be written after completion of the work and results obtained. One report may be issued to report the results of all individuals compared in a case or one report may be issued for each subject in a case.

All reports must comply with the general format presented in the Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual. The unit supervisor or OCA must review all reports prior to issuance. All reports must have an original signature.

The examiner responsible for examining the evidence, conducting or reviewing computer search results, and generating the final report in the case will be the one to sign the report.

Under no circumstances will any suspect identification information be released without verification. If a verifier is not available, the unit supervisor will be notified.

If elimination prints were received, the report must reflect that they were received and whether or not they were compared. It is at the discretion of the examiner to compare them or not.

B. Procedure

- 1) Complete a report based on the elements involved in the case.
- 2) PD-299 Form
 - a. Upon completion of the case, the PD-299 will be kept as an Administrative Document (Admin Doc) and will be initialed and dated by the Latent Print Examiner.
- 3) Correction to a report
 - a. Refer to Quality Assurance Manual – Issuing Corrections policy.

4.2 EVIDENCE DISPOSITION

A. Policy

Envelopes will be sealed and the seal will be initialed and dated before being returned to the Property Room. Cases retrieved from the Property Room will be checked out and returned by unit personnel.

Document any evidence released to the court in FileOnQ and with a Court Evidence Receipt (PD-233) which will be returned to the Property Room.

An examiner may keep a case (such as homicides or a series of cases related by suspect) in their possession for up to one year. If the examiner requests to retain the case longer, then both the supervisor and crime laboratory manager must approve the request.

B. Procedure

- 1) The sealed envelopes will be placed in the bin for return to the Property Room.
- 2) Retain electronic copies of known exemplars in the case notes.
- 3) Barcoded known exemplars will be returned to the Property Room.

4.3 LATENT PRINT CASE NOTES

A. Policy

For all latent prints that are annotated, the case examiner must document their analysis on a photograph/image and include a copy in the case notes.

Notes must be taken to record the features used for comparison in the latent and known prints (i.e. Identification or Inconclusive leaning towards an identification). For impressions that have been annotated, a documented conclusion must be included. If any impression was annotated previously to receiving the case, only those impressions compared need to have a documented conclusion.

The latent print internal chain of custody form will be used to document the evidence transfers between the examiner, verifier, and the technical reviewer.

All lift cards in which an analysis is performed must be copied and retained in the case notes. When working cases that include old worksheets or matrix/lift tables, a new set of case notes must be completed. Refer to section 3.7 for more information regarding cases previously worked.

The first page of all notes will be initialed and dated by the examiner performing the technical review.

The examination date (exam date) is the date that work begins on a case, and must be noted on the first page of the note packet.

The completed date is the date of the report. The completed date does not have to appear on any of the note pages.

The verifier will indicate their verification of identifications on a side-by-side print out. The document produced by the verifier must have the word "verification" appear on that note page along with their initials and the date. If the verifier feels a need for additional information, a note page can be added.

For exclusions, handwrite in "I agree with all exclusions" on the matrix, or where the examiner has stated the conclusion. All statements of agreement need to be initialed.

B. Procedure

- 1) The note packet must contain the following information if applicable

depending on the case circumstances (also refer to QA manual):

- a. From where the evidence was received.
 - b. Whether or not the evidence was sealed.
 - c. Exam date.
 - d. Barcode number.
 - e. Copies of all latent print cards or photos (front and back)
 - f. Copies of all images and scans (front and back).
 - g. Results of analysis and comparison.
 - h. Print out of identified latent and known print, side by side must be initialed by examiner.
 - i. Supporting data for exclusions (i.e. print out, card annotation etc.).
 - j. ALPS information (impressions and databases searched, search results).
 - i.) A printout showing the impression searched (including minitias, P/PP number, search results (Hit or no Hit), databases searched, and whether it was compared or not compared.
 - ii.) A printout of the "Search Confirmation" page if the search resulted in a "Hit" showing the impression searched and the candidate.
 - iii.) A copy of the finger and/or palm print exemplars obtained from the appropriate archive system.
 - k. Techniques used.
 - l. Disposition of evidence: the report and notes must accurately reflect where the evidence is going.
 - m. Chain of custody form.
- 2) Complete Worksheet 2 (WS2) reflecting any communications with persons associated with the case.
 - 3) The examiner must write the case number on photographs or papers that are not standard letter size and attach them to a standard letter size (8½" x 11") blank piece of paper documented with the appropriate data.
 - 4) Electronic copies of known exemplars will be documented with the appropriate data.
 - 5) Each page of the case notes will contain the following information:

- a. Case or incident number.
- b. Page number.
- c. Date.
- d. Examiner's handwritten initials.

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6.1 REVIEW PROCESS FOR LATENT PRINT CASEWORK

A. Policy

All cases (100%) will be technically reviewed.

The technical reviewer/verifier will determine if the conclusions reached were reasonable. All identifications and exclusions will be re-compared and verified. The remaining latent print evidence will be technically evaluated to assure the original analysis and conclusions are reasonable. The technical reviewer will review all reports, notes, and evidence for errors and inconsistencies, will ensure that the documentation of the evidence has been done properly and that unit policy and procedures were followed.

When corrections need to be made on the original evidence, the examiner must line out the mistake and initial and date the correction. If the correction is clerical in nature and the evidence has already been copied for the note packet, the correction should be made on the original evidence, but the examiner does not have to make a new copy for the note packet. The examiner can make the same correction on the copied page and state that the original evidence was corrected.

When discrepancies in the analysis or conclusion are discovered, the technical reviewer/verifier must address corrections or suggestions for change directly with the primary examiner. The technical reviewer cannot initial any paperwork until all corrections/changes have been made.

The examiner who performs the technical review does not have to be the verifier on the case.

It is recommended that each examiner maintain a log book showing the name of the examiner who performed the technical review.

B. Procedure

1) Technical Review

- a. Refer to section 4.3A for requirements on documenting the review.
- b. In the event of a disagreement between the primary examiner and reviewer, refer to laboratory QA policy - Casework Review.
- c. -- If the technical reviewer suggests additional print(s) to be run through the ALPS database and it is agreed upon by both examiners, the original examiner must annotate the impression(s), make a new copy of the card (s), and write in their notes that after technical review an additional print(s) were

run. If an examiner changes an opinion based on the review, they must make the appropriate notations to document the new opinion in their notes. In both cases, the examiner must keep all original notes.

- d. If an examiner changes an opinion based on the review, keep all original documentation and make the appropriate notations to document the new opinion.

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6.2 AFIX TRACKER PERIODIC QUALITY CONTROL CHECK

A. Policy

A periodic quality control check will be performed every six months whether or not casework is entered and searched.

The QC Log will be maintained in the unit.

Documentation of the Periodic Quality Control Check (QCC) must be listed on the AFIX Tracker Maintenance Log and Quality Control sheet.

If the AFIX Tracker program is re-installed, a QCC will be done at that time. If the AFIX Tracker QCC check does not perform to expectations, no casework will be processed through the Tracker until the problem is resolved.

B. Procedure

- 1) The Periodic QCC is accomplished by searching known prints called QCC prints against the Biographical database.
- 2) Typically, searches are made either against the fingerprint database or the palm print database or both that make up the Biographical database. In order to verify that searches are done correctly it will be necessary to enter and search the QCC prints.
- 3) You will find the QCC fingerprint and partial palm prints mounted on 3"x5" cards located in a sleeve in the AFIX Tracker maintenance log. These are the prints that you should enter and search. These items are not evidence but only reference material.
- 4) Standard control prints (stored in the Biographical database) consist of a ten-print card and a set of palm print cards. Standard control prints have been previously entered so there is no need to re-enter them. These items are not evidence but only reference material.
- 5) A Periodic QCC verifies that an accurate search was done and that the AFIX Tracker System is functioning properly.
- 6) If the results obtained from searching the QCC prints are non-identified, re-run the search again.

7.1 PROFICIENCY TEST PROGRAM

A. Policy

Latent Print Examiners who have completed training and are independently working cases will be required to participate in annual proficiency testing.

B. Procedure

- 1) The technical process including all documentation and technical and administrative reviews must be done like - normal case work, following all unit policies and procedures. The summary form provided by the proficiency testing company will replace a formal report and must have a technical and administrative review (initials and date) on every page.
- 2) If an examiner is unable to complete the proficiency test or part of the proficiency test due to poor quality photos, the examiner will confer with the supervisor to determine course of action.
- 3) If there are any other proficiency-related questions, refer to the Laboratory's proficiency test policies in the QA manual on the G drive, and to the ASCLD-LAB - Proficiency Review Program document located on the:

G-Drive/Latent Prints/ASCLD-LAB Proficiency Review Program

7.2 LATENT PRINT UNIT TRAINING PROGRAM

A. Policy

The unit supervisor is responsible for the administration of the training program.

The Latent Print Examiner training programs can be up to two years depending on the job classification and previous experience.

Training outlines for each position are in the training manual and will be used to document the training process.

The trainer is responsible for ensuring the trainee has completed the module to competency. The supervisor is responsible for the completion of training and all associated paperwork.

B. Procedure

- 1) Obtain the training documents from the supervisor.
- 2) Document start dates.
- 3) Have trainee initial the subject module.
- 4) Both the trainer and trainee will initial and date of completion.
- 5) Refer to QA policy for additional information on training and testing requirements.

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