

## Table of Contents

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Packaging .....            | 2 |
| Proper Seal .....          | 2 |
| Labeling .....             | 2 |
| Paperwork .....            | 3 |
| Other Considerations ..... | 3 |
| Forensic Biology .....     | 3 |
| Chemistry .....            | 4 |
| Firearms .....             | 4 |
| Toxicology .....           | 4 |
| Trace Evidence .....       | 5 |

**All evidence shall be properly packaged, sealed and labeled. The [Laboratory Services Manual](#) has additional detail for officers.**

## **Packaging**

- Firearms submitted for the sole purpose of test-firing and entry into the NIBIN system are exempt from packaging requirements.
- Biological samples must be submitted in leak resistant containers (e.g., tubes, bottles).
- Package non-biological evidence in paper bags, envelopes, boxes or other suitable containers to prevent loss or damage to the evidence and minimize potential safety hazards. Suspected drug evidence must be packaged in clear, sealed outer plastic bags with an inner bag/container for the evidence, so that the contents cannot escape the outer packaging. See the [Laboratory Services Manual](#) for exceptions. Evidence for Fire Debris (arson) analysis must be submitted in airtight glass or metal containers.
- Large or bulky items that cannot be easily packaged (e.g., car doors, carpets) can be submitted without packaging. These items must be submitted in a manner that will preserve the integrity of the evidence and will not compromise the analytical testing to be performed.

## **Proper Seal**

- A proper seal consists of an appropriate closure of the packaging that will prevent loss or contamination of the evidence contained within. Evidence must be sealed with evidence tape or heat seal or be contained in a self-sealing evidence container that will indicate if the package is opened. Paper or clear packing and transparent office tapes are not suitable for use as tamper evident tape. They may, however, be used to secure and close packages. To be considered tamper evident, the tape must leave some indication on the package that it has been broken or removed.
- A proper seal for items submitted requiring Trace Evidence analysis or collection consists of a complete closure that will prohibit the loss or contamination of microscopic evidence. A proper tape seal must extend across the entire opening of the container.
- Tamper-evident evidence tape must have initials across the seal onto the bag/container to be considered a proper seal.
- Heat seals must have initials across the seal to be considered a proper seal.
- Self-seal containers must have initials across the seal to be considered a proper seal.

## **Labeling**

- Label all packages with the case and item number(s), if appropriate, of the evidence contained within the package.
- All items of evidence must have both last name and first name of victim/subject and agency case number or other unique identifying information on each evidence item or on the outside of each package. (Exception: BA/Urine kits where the submission form is contained inside the sealed kit with required information.)

## Paperwork

DOFS will not perform services without the proper forms being submitted.

- **Submission Form:**

Legible, completed submission form (not sealed in package with evidence) with the following minimum information:

- Agency name
- Agency case number (if available. May also be obtained from case evidence or report.)
- County of incident
- Victim/Subject name(s) or other unique identifier information
- Representative (Officer)
- Brief description of evidence
- Service Request

**Exceptions to submission forms:**

- All evidence submitted to the laboratory, except items from the GBI Investigative Division, an in-house autopsy and requests for entry into the NIBIN system, shall have a DOFS Evidence Submission Form, a BA/TOX Kit Evidence Submission Form, a DNA Database Submission Form or County Medical Examiner Form. Due to the volume of cases submitted by Atlanta Police Department, they may employ a submission form in grid format.
- Out-of-state agencies may use their own forms when submitting evidence.

- **Incident Report:**

An incident report, case summary or GBI Property Receipt is required for Biology and Trace cases.

(Exception: No incident report/case summary is required for GSR kits.)

## Other Considerations

- DOFS will not accept specimens to be analyzed as a secondary test for alcohol or drugs at the request of a suspect or agent of the suspect.
- DOFS will not routinely accept urine samples from probation officers on probation revocation cases.
- Loaded weapons, gas cylinders and explosives are NOT to be placed in the lockbox.
- [Evidence Collection Kit Ordering Information](#)

## Forensic Biology

- The Forensic Biology section will accept requests of all case types including property crimes. The Forensic Biology section, however, does not accept requests related to drug cases or drug paraphernalia. Contact or touch DNA are special requests and will be

considered only in cases of violent crimes (homicides, sexual assault, etc.) when no other forensic evidence is available or other testing has produced nonprobative results. Contact or touch DNA requests should be cleared by the Forensic Biology management team prior to addition of service.

- Victim clothing and/or bedding items are not usually accepted on sexual assault cases where a rape kit is submitted for examination. These items may be accepted on cases where no rape kit exists or if kit examination results are negative.
- Biological stained evidence can not be submitted in plastic.
- Requests for hair examination in cases where a suspect has been identified must include appropriate known hair samples from subjects and victims (hair request), or be approved by the Trace Evidence section manager or designee. If any hair is found that meets the Biology criteria for DNA analysis, the Trace Evidence section will add the DNA service before transferring the hair root to the Biology section. If no suspect exists in the case, and investigative lead information is desired (CODIS), known hair samples may be required for elimination purposes on a case by case basis (hair-no suspect request).
- [Evidence Collection Kit Ordering Information](#)

## Chemistry

- Fire debris:
  - Samples must be submitted in sealed jars and/or cans.
  - Liquid samples must not exceed 25 mL and must be in a leak proof container. If the amount of liquid appears to be more than 25 mL, the officer will be notified to repack the liquid. (Note: 25 mL is equivalent to approximately 1/10 of a cup or approximately 5 teaspoons.)
- Suspected khat must be brought to the immediate attention of the Chemistry Section Manager/Laboratory Manager or designee.
- Razor blades and used field test kits are not accepted.
- Syringes and their contents are not accepted without prior approval of the Chemistry Section Manager or regional lab manager, as applicable.
- Wet material is not accepted. Wet material must be dried prior to submission.

## Firearms

- Loaded firearms are not typically received. Notify evidence receiving personnel if a loaded firearm needs to be submitted.

## Toxicology

- Mark packages in red to indicate the individual has Hepatitis, HIV or AIDS.
- [Evidence Collection Kit Ordering Information](#)

## Trace Evidence

- Requests for hair comparison must include appropriate known hair samples from subjects and victims.  
If no suspect exists in the case, and investigative lead information is desired, known hair samples may be required for elimination purposes on a case by case basis.
- [GSR Evidence Collection Kit Ordering Information](#)
- GSR kits collected from the victims of gunshot wounds (including suspected suicides) will not be routinely accepted without prior approval from the Trace Evidence Manager.
- Items other than GSR kits, such as clothing, will not routinely be accepted for GSR analysis.