Georgia Bureau of Investigation Division of Forensic Sciences
Certified Marijuana Examiner's Program Assistance Visits

Agency:_____

Date: _____ **Auditor(s)**_____

GENERAL CRITERIA: ASSISTANCE VISIT INFORMATION

All agencies that have GBI-DOFS certified marijuana examiners, and where marijuana testing is being performed, will be provided an assistance visit from GBI-DOFS staff at least once every three years.

Each agency will be evaluated on the criteria stated in this document. Discrepancies from these criteria will be noted during the on-site assistance visits. Every attempt will be made by DOFS staff to assist the agency in establishing and maintaining their marijuana testing program. If an issue is identified on sequential site visits, the DOFS site assessor will notify the Marijuana Coordinator, Chemistry section management, and/or designee to determine the course of action.

Personnel performing specific tasks shall be qualified on the basis of appropriate training; 16 hour course of study followed by proficiency tests and issue of a GBI certificate. Any individual performing marijuana testing with a valid GBI certificate is authorized to sample, test, calibrate balances, operate microscopes and balances, issue reports, and give opinions/interpretations of their analyses. Certificates should be retained indefinitely and should be accessible.

Requirements for the Marijuana Certified Examiner's Course (MJ CEC) are available to marijuana examiners on the disk they received in class or can be retrieved from http://dofs.gbi.georgia.gov following the "training" link for MJ CEC or from the "downloads" link to the MJ CEC equipment list.

Equipment

The agency shall possess or have access to all items of sampling, measurement and test equipment required for the correct performance of the tests. The agency shall have instructions on the use and operation of all relevant equipment, and on the handling and preparation of items for testing where the absence of such instructions could jeopardize the results of tests. All instructions, standards, manuals and reference data should be available to personnel.

Test and calibration equipment, including both hardware and software, shall be safeguarded from adjustments which would invalidate the test and/or calibration results.

1. Balances

The agency must utilize calibrated balances that meet the following requirements:

a. Balances shall be electronic digital analytical balances that read to at least 0.1 g.
b. Balances must be calibrated annually by an outside vendor. Traceability of measurement shall be assured by the use of calibration services from companies that can demonstrate competence, measurement capability and traceability

The balance certificates shall include the following information:

Report Information:

1) Model number
2) Serial number
3) Date
4) Agency
5) Calibration expiration date
6) Company name
7) Technician name
8) Contact information

Calibration Information:

1) Class of weights used during calibration: ASTM Class 3 (or equivalent) or better for small capacity balances. ASTM Class 6 or NIST 105-1 1990 class F or better for large capacity balances.)
2) Value of weight used (ex—200.0g)
3) Weight traceability information (NIST, National Institute of Standards and Technology)
4) Balance readings "before" service/calibration and balance readings "after" service/calibration

c. Before and after casework on any given day, balance calibrations must be checked using calibration check weights. A low end and a high end check weight are the minimum requirements for successful calibration checks. Additional weights in the range are suggested. A balance must be internally calibrated when the balance value of any of the calibration check weights are off by more than 3 times the readability of the balance. All balance calibration checks must be recorded in a logbook accessible to the testing personnel.

d. Balance logbooks should contain:

i) the identity of the item of equipment;
ii) the manufacturer's name, type identification, and serial number or other unique identification
iii) initials of person performing calibration check;
iv) the current location, where appropriate;
v) dates and results of all calibrations and adjustments;
vi) maintenance carried out to date;
vii) any damage, malfunction, modification or repair to the equipment.

Example:

Balance: Mettler Toledo S/N: 23456

Date	Analyst	B/A	Zero value (0.0g)	low weight value (1.0g)	high weight value (500.0g)	Zero value (0.0g)
5/5/2005	ABC	Before	0.0	1.0	500.0	0.0
5/5/2005	ABC	After	0.0	1.0	500.0	0.0

e. Check weights for balances must be NIST traceable and Class IV or better. Certificates of traceability must be maintained by the agency and available for review.

2. Microscopes

Microscopes shall be cleaned and serviced as needed

Sampling

The agency shall conduct sampling of evidence as instructed in the MJ CEC when it carries out sampling of substances, materials or products for subsequent testing. The current version of the procedures contained within the MJ CEC training materials can be found on the disk distributed in the MJ CEC or can be retrieved from http://dofs.gbi.georgia.gov following the "training" link for MJ CEC or from the "downloads" link to the MJ CEC equipment list.

As instructed by the MJ CEC, agencies shall follow the below sampling procedures.

1. The individuals testing samples for marijuana:
   a. open one case at a time;
   b. determine net weights of samples prior to further testing;
   c. use microscopy and chemical tests to determine results;
   d. don't test their own cases, unless no other option is feasible;
2. Enough samples must be taken and tested in order to prove the highest charges.
3. Representative samples of material shall be taken; for example, if brown and green material is received, both types must be tested and reported.
4. In cases of numerous bags, if the initial testing is negative, all bags must be tested to determine the results of the case. Sufficient notes must be present in the case file to clearly delineate bags tested and results of each bag.
5. Items tested within a case must be marked for identification purposes. The sampling process shall be designed so as to ensure that items cannot be confused physically or when referred to in records or other documents.
6. Upon receipt of the test item, abnormalities or departures from normal or specified conditions, as described in the test or calibration method, shall be recorded.

Records sufficient to demonstrate that the testing followed those procedures should be maintained by the agency.

DOCUMENTATION

The marijuana testing agency will maintain case files, case notes and testing records, in addition to balance and microscope instructions/manuals, if available, for a period defined by the agency.

When assessments identify an issue with the marijuana testing program of an agency, the agency is responsible for taking suitable corrective actions prior to subsequent assistance visits.

Follow-up assessments may be performed as needed to further assist agencies with their testing programs and to assess the status of any corrective actions. Follow-up assessments to assess corrective actions should be scheduled within 6 months of the original assessment.

Reporting the results

The results of each series of tests shall be reported accurately, clearly, unambiguously and objectively, and in accordance with any specific instructions in the testing and/or sampling plans.

1. The net weight of the sample shall be reported on the final report.
2. Positive results must be based on 3 positive tests. These tests must be microscopy, Duquenois-Levine chemical test, and Fast Blue B (KN reagent) chemical test.
3. Negative results can be based solely on microscopy, or microscopy and color tests in combination.
4. Inconclusive results can be based on disagreeing tests; for example, a small plant that has a positive microscopy but is too weak to yield positive results on color tests.

5. If a sample is decomposed (for example, due to improper storage) a report may be released stating that the case was not examined due to the nature of the sample.

The organization should have procedures to be implemented when any aspect of its testing and/or calibration work, or the results of that work, do not conform to the requirements or procedures contained within the MJ CEC. Upon request and with Chemistry Section Manager/Lab Manager approval, GBI-DOFS may retest case samples.

Assuring the quality of test and calibration results

All examiners shall complete the MJ CEC. The certified examiners shall complete proficiency tests every 4 years thereafter and are issued new certificates upon each successful completion of the MJ CEC.

OVERALL SITE CONDITIONS

Testing/Calibration Area

Access to and use of areas affecting the quality of the tests and/or calibrations shall be controlled. The organization shall determine the extent of control based on its particular circumstances.

Purchasing services and supplies

The organization must purchase:

1. Pouch type Duquenois-Levine test kits that contain 3 ampules. The ampules must contain Duquenois Reagent, concentrated HCl, and chloroform.
2. Pouch type Fast Blue B Reagent (KN Reagent) test kits that contain 2 ampules. The ampules must contain Fast Blue B reagent and sodium hydroxide.
3. Binocular stereoscope
4. Digital electronic balance that reads to at least 0.1 g, but the balance can be more precise

Test kits must be stored at room temperature and out of direct sunlight.

The organization shall ensure that purchased supplies, reagents, and consumable materials meet with GBI-DOFS MJ CEC standard specifications. Validation of test kits is suggested, but not mandatory, using a known marijuana sample.