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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, to include protective packaging for glass, sharp and fragile items. 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 or in a designated location on the container 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.

## 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
  - 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 shall have a DOFS Online Evidence Submission Form or a DNA Database Submission Form. (Exception: BA/Urine kits where the submission form is contained inside the sealed kit with required information.)
- 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 repackage 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, used field test kits, and syringes are not accepted.
  - Syringe contents may be submitted without prior approval. The contents should be dispensed onto a cotton ball or clean gauze then packaged in a plastic container.
- Wet plant material and wet mushrooms are not accepted. Any wet material must be dried prior to submission.
- Marijuana:
  - Effective September 2019, GBI DOFS Chemistry will accept leafy material evidence weighing over ~ 30 grams with an incident date after 5/10/2019 for testing. Cases over 100 pounds will only be accepted by appointment. Appointments can be made for the HQ laboratory by contacting [Mgr.chem@gbi.ga.gov](mailto:Mgr.chem@gbi.ga.gov). Appointments for regional labs can be made by contacting the main phone number for the laboratory where the evidence is to be submitted.
- See the [Laboratory Services Manual](#) for additional information.

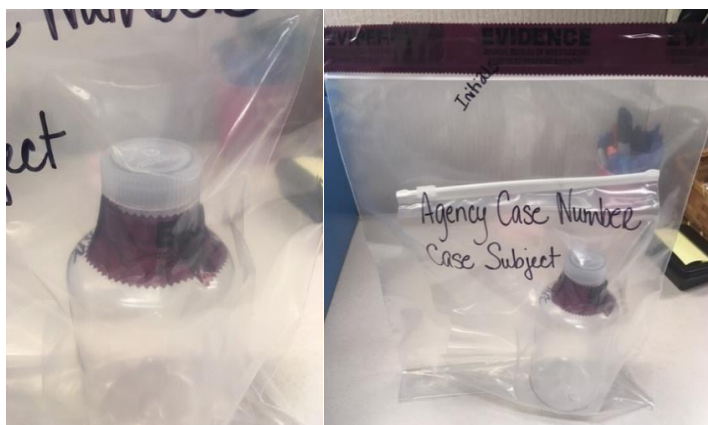
**All Liquids** (includes wet solid material)

- Liquids with a volume of 1000 mL (1 Liter) or less will be submitted in leak-proof screw top containers. These bottles should be double bagged in clear plastic evidence bags.
- Liquids with a volume greater than 1000 mL (1 Liter) will be submitted in screw top hazmat type buckets( as pictured below) of appropriate size. The inner contents of the bucket can be plastic bags or other containers at the discretion of the submitting agency for integrity of evidence purposes.
- Buckets must be labeled with unique case information and sealed. If more than one bucket is submitted from the same case, it will be labeled to indicate the unique number as well as the total number in the submission (example: Bucket 1 of 10 or 1/10).

Examples of proper liquid sample containers:



Examples of proper liquid packaging:



Less than 1000mL (1 Liter):



Greater than 1000mL (1 Liter):

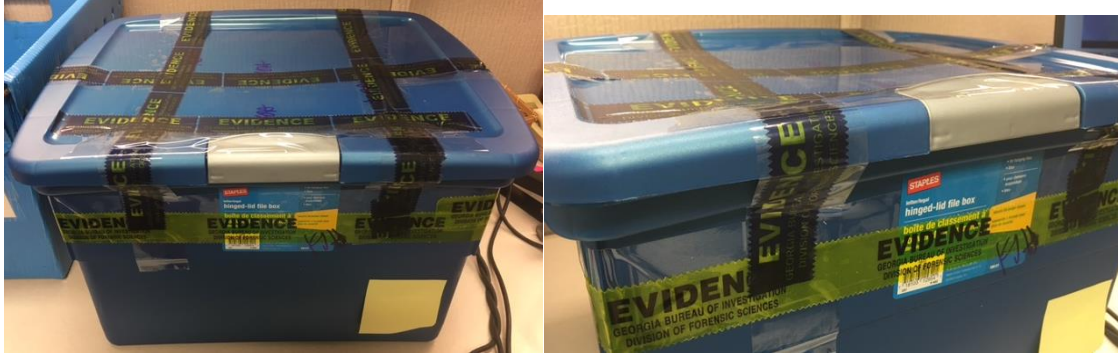
**Solid Samples over 1 kilogram** (powder, crystals, tablets)

- All solid samples over 1 kilogram will be submitted in boxes or plastic containers.
- No box larger than 15"x15"x15" will be submitted without prior approval from the LM/CSM.
- Boxes or plastic containers will not weigh more than 25 pounds (approx 10-12 kg)
- Boxes cannot be reused.
- Boxes and plastic containers from the same case will be labeled to indicate the unique number as well as the total number in the submission (example: Box 1 of 10 or 1/10). Boxes and plastic containers must also contain unique identifying case information.
- Boxes will have ALL seams and corners taped with packing tape and evidence tape or with reinforced fiber tape and evidence tape.
- Plastic containers will have all tops taped with packing tape and evidence tape or with reinforced fiber tape and evidence tape.



- For powder and crystal cases, there must be an inner liner/barrier to avoid leaks. The inner liner can be plastic bags or paper bags at the discretion of the submitting agency.

Examples of proper solid sample 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.