FBI Laboratory
Practices for Preparing, Reviewing, and Issuing Laboratory Reports and Retaining Records in Forensic Advantage (FA)

1 Purpose

These practices specify the requirements for performing verifications, preparing, reviewing, and issuing a *Laboratory Report* (7-1 LIMS), and retaining case-related records using Forensic Advantage (FA) to conform to the requirements of the FBI Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual (QAM) and the applicable accrediting body(ies).

2 Scope

These practices apply to FBI Laboratory personnel who prepare or issue *Laboratory Reports* and/or generate case-related records in FA. These practices also apply to FBI Laboratory personnel who perform verifications, conduct technical reviews, and conduct administrative reviews in FA. Appropriate level 2 documents will contain procedures for performing verifications; conducting technical and administrative reviews; preparing and/or issuing *Laboratory Reports*; and/or generating case-related records; reporting/using Investigative Lead, Intelligence, or Information Products (i3) products; and for Laboratory Director and Quality Manager approved initiatives. See Laboratory Operations Manual (LOM) - Practices for Providing Investigative Lead, Intelligence, or Information (i3) for requirements regarding i3 products and the LOM - Practices for Preparing, Reviewing and Issuing Laboratory Reports and Retaining Records for Legacy Cases for requirements regarding Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) or prohibited cases.

3 Practices

Every *Laboratory Report* (Appendix A) must be associated with a Case Record. Any information required by ISO/IEC 17025, ISO/IEC 17020 or ANAB AR 3125 not covered in a *Laboratory Report* or an i3 product will be maintained in the FBI Laboratory. [QAM - Sections 7.8.1.3 and 7.8.1.3.1]

3.1 Formatting a *Laboratory Report*

Each *Laboratory Report* will contain administrative information about the request for examination; a listing and description of evidence; a Results of Examinations section when forensic examinations have been conducted; a Remarks section; and a name block; and will be digitally signed in Sentinel by the person issuing the *Laboratory Report*.

Appropriate fields in the *Laboratory Report* will be populated by FA. The text entered for each *Laboratory Report* will be Times New Roman font. Typically, the font size used in the body of

the *Laboratory Report* is 12-point; however, different font sizes may be used in charts. The bold, italic, or underline functions may be used, and charts and/or images, may be included as necessary.

3.1.1 Administrative Information

The Agency Reference(s), Subject(s), and Victim(s) fields are optional and may be empty or deleted if the contributor did not provide that information in the request for examination or if the information is classified.

If an examiner has any concerns regarding the administrative information, they will contact the person managing the case to verify that information is accurate.

3.1.2 Listing and Description of Items

The FBI Laboratory Evidence Designators section contains a listing and description of the item(s) from FA which were submitted to, or examined in, a particular unit, discipline, and/or category of testing. Headings, for example, distinguishing items from the victim and the subject, may be used. The person issuing the *Laboratory Report* will include a statement identifying the discipline/category of testing/examination/evidence management being reported. This statement will follow the listing and description of evidence. Alternatively, the results of examination section may provide this information.

3.1.3 Results of Examinations

The Results of Examinations section contains methods, results, opinions, limitations, interpretations, and/or conclusions of forensic examinations conducted by a particular examiner. This information may be under a separate heading(s) as specified in Level 2 documents. Additionally, the requirements in QAM – Section 7.8 will be followed.

3.1.3.1 The wording used to convey the results of examinations is left to the discretion of the examiner, in accordance with the applicable Department of Justice Uniform Language and Reports (ULTR) document(s), the applicable FBI Approved Standards for Scientific Testimony and Report Language (ASSTR), any applicable level 2 documents regarding reporting, and is acceptable to the technical reviewer.

3.1.3.1.1 When comparative examinations result in an association, the significance of that association will be included in the *Laboratory Report* in a statistic or a qualitative statement.

3.1.3.1.2 When comparative examinations result in the elimination of a person or object, the *Laboratory Report* will clearly communicate the elimination.

3.1.3.1.3 When an inconclusive result is reported, the reason(s) will be clearly stated in the *Laboratory Report*.

3.1.3.1.4 A *Laboratory Report* will include additional information, when it is necessary for the interpretation of the examination results, such as:

- information regarding specific examination conditions;
- a statement of conformity with requirements or specifications, as described in QAM - Section 7.8.6;
- additional information that may be required by specific methods, authorities, or contributors.

3.1.3.1.5 Measurement uncertainty will be included in the *Laboratory Report*, or as an enclosure, when it is relevant to the validity or application of the examination results; a contributor's instructions require it; it affects conformity to a specification limit; or when the measurement impacts the evaluation of a specification limit stated by a regulatory body, a statute, case law, or other legal requirement.

3.1.3.1.6 The measurement uncertainty will:

- include the measured quantity value, y, along with the associated expanded uncertainty, U, and the coverage of probability;
- be in the format of $y \pm U$;
- be limited to at most two significant digits, unless there is a recorded rationale for reporting additional significant digits;
- be reported to the same level of significance as the measurement result.
- where applicable, be presented in the same unit as that of the measurand or in a term relative to the measurand (e.g., percent).

3.1.3.2 If evidence is received and the request for examination is to compare the submitted evidence with another item(s) from a separate request(s), the FBI Laboratory number(s) assigned to the item (s) from a separate request(s), will be referenced in the Laboratory Report. If the item(s) was submitted from a different Case ID number(s), the separate Case ID number(s) will additionally be referenced. This does not constitute a combined report.

3.1.3.2.1 If evidence is compared to another item(s) from a closed request without a specific request for comparison (i.e., TEDAC case inter-comparisons), the parameters of the comparison will be recorded in the case notes and described in the Laboratory Report.

3.1.4 Individual Characteristic Database (ICD) Searches

3.1.4.1 If a forensic sample (e.g., latent print, test fire, DNA profile) is searched as a one-time event, then a *Laboratory Report* must be generated clearly stating the results of the ICD search. A one-time event means that the sample will not be retained in the database and automatically searched against the database on some routine basis.

3.1.4.2 If a forensic sample is, or will be, entered into a database(s) and is repeatedly searched with negative results, a *Laboratory Report* is not required for each search. However,

the first time the sample is entered into the database, written notification (e.g., email, letter of notification*, Laboratory Report*) must be generated which clearly informs the contributor that the sample was, or will be, entered into the database. Any time a positive association is made, written notification (e.g., email, letter of notification, *Laboratory Report*), must be generated. A record of the notification will be maintained.

3.1.5 Remarks

The Remarks section will contain, at a minimum, the disposition of the evidence contained in the *Laboratory Report*, contact information for the examiner, contact information for submission status inquiries, the facility(ies) and/or site(s) where work was conducted, as well as a statement regarding the location of the supporting records. This section may also contain information pertinent to the request, evidence not inventoried, examination cancellations, examinations not conducted, and special evidence handling and storage instructions. Any additional information for this section will be specified in appropriate level 2 documents.

3.1.5.1 Disposition of Evidence

Each *Laboratory Report* will contain a statement that will address the disposition of the items of evidence and secondary evidence, as applicable. The disposition statement may state that the items:

- Are enclosed with the *Laboratory Report*.
- Will be returned to the contributor under separate cover from the *Laboratory Report*.
- Will be retained.
- Have been consumed during the examination process.

3.1.5.2 Contact Information

3.1.5.2.1 Each *Laboratory Report* will contain a statement providing contact information, including the title, name, email address and/or telephone number of the person issuing the *Laboratory Report*, should the contributor have questions about the content of the report.

3.1.5.2.2 Each *Laboratory Report* will include a telephone number and/or email address of the person and/or unit to contact regarding the status of the submission.

3.1.5.3 Facility Statement

Each *Laboratory Report* will contain a statement which identifies the facility(ies) and/or site(s) where any work (i.e., examination, processing, verification) was performed. The location where each task was performed does not need to be specified.

3.1.5.4 Opinions/Interpretations and Supporting Records Statement

Each *Laboratory Report* that contains conclusions will contain a statement referencing the

applicable Department of Justice Uniform Language and Reports document(s). Additionally, a *Laboratory Report* that contains opinions and interpretations will have a statement indicating that the report contains the opinions and interpretations of the issuing examiner(s) and is supported by records retained in the FBI Laboratory file. A *Laboratory Report* that contains opinions and interpretations will also contain language advising contributors of the time required for discovery requests to be processed.

3.1.5.5 Information Pertinent to the Request

This information may include investigative assistance information or sample collection instructions.

3.1.5.6 Evidence Not Broken Down

If the evidence is being returned prior to the container(s) being opened and/or the content broken down, the person managing the case will issue a *Laboratory Report* explaining that no examinations were conducted and the evidence was not broken down.

3.1.5.7 Examination Cancellations

If instructions are received from the contributor to cancel a request for examination, all cancellation instructions and the name of the person who canceled the request for examination will be recorded in the Case Communication Log in FA. If the cancellation instruction is provided via email, the email(s) will be retained in the 1A(s)/1C(s).

3.1.5.7.1 Cancellation Prior to Any Examinations

If instructions are received from the contributor to cancel a request for examination and no examinations have been initiated by the FBI Laboratory at the time the request was received, the person managing the case will issue a *Laboratory Report* that includes a listing and description of the evidence. The *Laboratory Report* must include a statement in the Remarks section indicating that the examinations were canceled, by whom, and when.

3.1.5.7.2 Cancellation After Examination Initiation

If an examiner is instructed to discontinue examinations after they have been initiated, the affected examiner will determine the appropriate stopping point in the examination process. The *Laboratory Report* must include a statement in the Remarks section indicating that the examinations were canceled, by whom, and when. All results of any completed examinations will be included in the Results of Examinations section in a *Laboratory Report*.

Additionally, if there are any remaining examinations that have not been initiated, the person who received the instruction to discontinue examinations will contact the person managing the case. The person managing the case will issue a *Laboratory Report* that includes a listing and description of the evidence. The *Laboratory Report* must include a statement in the Remarks

section indicating that the examinations were canceled, by whom, and when.

3.1.5.8 Examinations Not Conducted

3.1.5.8.1 When a request for a type of examination that is not conducted in the FBI Laboratory is received, the person managing the case will issue a *Laboratory Report* and include a detailed explanation in the Remarks section that describes why the requested examination was not conducted.

3.1.5.8.2 When a request for a type of examination that is conducted in the FBI Laboratory is received, but will not be conducted, the appropriate examiner will issue a *Laboratory Report* and include a detailed explanation that describes why the requested examination was not conducted. If there are results included in the *Laboratory Report* for another type of examination, then the detailed explanation may be under separate heading(s) as specified in a level 2 document.

3.1.5.8.3 When evidence is received damaged and/or the integrity of the evidence has been compromised to the extent that no examinations will be conducted, the appropriate examiner will issue a *Laboratory Report* and include a detailed explanation that describes why the requested examination(s) was not conducted.

3.1.5.8.4 When EMU receives TEDAC evidence submissions that are deemed to be unsuitable for examination due to the nature of the evidence, prior processing performed on the evidence at a forward lab that precludes FBI Laboratory examinations, and/or the evidence is submitted with a request for storage only and examinations are deemed unnecessary prior to storage, these submissions will be sent directly for storage to the TEDAC Repository or to the EMU bunker, as appropriate, after in-processing is completed. In lieu of a *Laboratory Report* in these situations, EMU personnel will send an email to the contributor stating the following:

- the referenced evidence will not be examined by any discipline/unit at this time;
- the reason it will not be examined at this time (e.g., nature of the evidence, prior processing performed on the evidence at a forward lab, the contributor only requesting the evidence be stored); and
- the evidence will be stored in the TEDAC Repository or EMU bunker, as appropriate.

This email will be separate and will be sent in addition to the acknowledgment email.

3.1.5.9 Special Evidence Handling/Storage Instructions

Instructions to the contributor may be included in the *Laboratory Report* addressing evidence handling and storage (e.g., to freeze, refrigerate the returned evidence).

3.1.6 Name Block

The name and unit of the examiner(s) responsible for the content of the *Laboratory Report* will immediately follow the Remarks section.

3.1.7 Enclosures

3.1.7.1 Enclosures may be attached to the *Laboratory Report* and serialized in Sentinel or physically mailed to the contributor. If the *Laboratory Report* is being serialized in Sentinel and the enclosure is being mailed, at a minimum, the first page of the report must be printed and attached to the enclosure. For external contributors, the *Laboratory Report* and enclosures will be mailed together.

All enclosures must be accounted for on the first page of the *Laboratory Report*. The enclosure count will be placed on the bottom left margin of the first page of the *Laboratory Report*, above the page number.

3.1.8 Major Cases and Other Cases with Multiple Examiner *Laboratory Reports*

3.1.8.1 Multiple examiners from a caseworking unit(s) may prepare one *Laboratory Report* for a major case or other cases as deemed appropriate by a Unit Chief(s). If applicable, contributing examiners will terminate their Case Record(s) in FA and record in the Case Communication Log that their results have been included in the issuing examiner's report.

3.1.8.2 When a *Laboratory Report* contains the results of multiple examiners, the report will identify each examiner's results (e.g., each examiner's initials or name in parentheses at the end of each paragraph or section, or where appropriate in tables and charts). The initials or name do not need to be electronically secure on the *Laboratory Report.* Each examiner will have their own name block in the *Laboratory Report.* Additionally, each contributing examiner will be a co-author or approver in Sentinel, acknowledging agreement with their results as reported.

3.1.8.3 When an Explosives and Hazardous Devices *Laboratory Report* is being issued and results from another examiner(s) must be included, the Explosives and Hazardous Devices examiner will identify each examiner's results (e.g., each examiner's initials or name in parentheses at the end of each paragraph or section, or where appropriate in tables and charts). The initials or name do not need to be electronically secure on the *Laboratory Report*. The Explosives and Hazardous Devices examiner will also include a statement that includes the FBI Laboratory number and Case Record number of the other examiner's report, the examiner's name, and the date of their report. Each contributing examiner will be a co-author or approver in Sentinel, acknowledging agreement with their results as reported.

3.1.9 Combined *Laboratory Report*

An examiner may prepare a *Laboratory Report* combining the information from various open Case Records submitted by the same contributor under the same Case ID number.

3.1.9.1 Different Contributors and Same Case ID Number

The examiner preparing a combined *Laboratory Report* for evidence submitted by different contributors under the same Case ID number will ensure that the Case ID numbers are the same. If they are not, the *Laboratory Report* will be handled as described below. Each listing of items received under one request will be preceded by an administrative sentence that identifies the contributor and the date of the request. The *Laboratory Report* will be addressed to the FBI office of origin, even if it was not the office contributing the evidence.

3.1.9.2 Comparison of Evidence Submitted Under Different Case ID Numbers

The examiner preparing a combined *Laboratory Report* for evidence submitted under different Case ID numbers will terminate all but one of the associated Case Records in FA. An entry will be made in each terminated Case Record and include the Laboratory number where the *Laboratory Report* will be generated. An entry will be made in the non-terminated Case Record and include the Laboratory number(s) of the terminated Case Record(s). The examiner will ensure that a *Laboratory Report* is serialized in Sentinel to each applicable Case ID when addressing a request to compare items submitted under different Case ID numbers. Each listing of items received will be preceded by an administrative sentence that identifies the Case ID and the date of each request.

3.1.9.3 Examination of Evidence Received Under Both Legacy and Forensic Advantage Submissions

A combined *Laboratory Report* can be prepared for reporting results for a case where legacy evidence is already in the FBI Laboratory or has been examined by a unit and new evidence is received and examined in FA. The examiner preparing this type of report will ensure that each listing of items received under one request is preceded by an administrative sentence that identifies the appropriate FBI Laboratory number and the date of the request.

3.1.10 Follow Up Information in *Laboratory Reports*

Follow up *Laboratory Reports* will be prepared if a change or addition must be made to the content of a previously issued *Laboratory Report* or to provide additional information pertaining to a completed request for examination. Alternatively, this information may be captured in a *Laboratory Report* for an open case record in the discipline and/or category of testing.

3.1.10.1 When generating a follow up *Laboratory Report,* the examiner will create a new Case Record using the Follow Up Case Record type with the appropriate evidence assigned to the Case Record.

3.1.10.2 The examiner who prepares a *Laboratory Report* with follow up information will reference the date of the previous *Report(s) of Examination/Laboratory Report(s)* in an introductory sentence. The introductory sentence will precede the Results of Examinations

section.

3.1.10.3 The examiner who prepares a *Laboratory Report* with follow up information will ensure that a listing and description of items in the previous *Report(s) of Examination/Laboratory Report(s)* that are affected by the follow up information are included.

3.1.10.4 The *Laboratory Report* will clearly state what information is being changed and/or what additional information is being provided.

3.1.10.5 If the follow up *Laboratory Report* is replacing the original *Laboratory Report* in its entirety, the follow up *Laboratory Report* will clearly state the Laboratory number(s) affected, the date(s) of the previous *Report of Examination/Laboratory Report*, a complete listing of the item(s) of evidence on the original *Laboratory Report*, and, if applicable, that re-examinations were conducted. The *Laboratory Report* does not need to specify the wording that is changing; however, the report will state that all information in the previous *Report(s) of Examination/Laboratory Report(s)* is superseded by the current *Laboratory Report*.

3.1.10.6 The *Laboratory Report* will be administratively and, when applicable, technically reviewed.

3.1.11 *Laboratory Report* with Results Obtained from Outside Experts

When a *Laboratory Report* contains results of tests performed by an expert outside the FBI Laboratory, those results will be clearly identified. If the examination results are not included in the *Laboratory Report*, the Unit Chief will ensure that the contributor receives a copy of the outside expert's report.

3.1.12 *Laboratory Report* for an Examiner Not Available to Testify

A court official or contributor may request a new *Laboratory Report* for trial purposes because the examiner who issued the original *Report of Examination/Laboratory Report* is not available to testify (e.g., no longer works for the FBI, on extended leave). The court official and/or contributor will submit a request in writing, according to the LOM - Practices for Processing a Submission and Evidence Breakdown. If the FBI Laboratory agrees to provide a new *Laboratory Report*, EMU personnel will assign a new Laboratory number for legacy cases, or the assigned examiner will create a new Case Record in FA for an existing FA case. The assigned examiner will generate a new *Laboratory Report* in accordance with these practices after re-examining the evidence or reviewing the previous examiner's records, as appropriate.

3.2 Reviewing a *Laboratory Report*

Each FBI *Laboratory Report* will be technically and administratively reviewed as described in this section, unless a unit, discipline, and/or category of testing has evaluated the risk as to when and/or the type of *Laboratory Reports* that will be reviewed and has recorded that evaluation. Additionally, the frequency and/or type of *Laboratory Reports* reviewed will be described in a

level 2 document. Each identification or association rendered as a result of a comparison will be verified. This will occur prior to or concurrently with the technical review.

3.2.1 General Requirements

3.2.1.1 When a *Laboratory Report* contains examination results; it will be technically reviewed prior to or concurrently with the administrative review.

3.2.1.2 Each *Laboratory Report* will be administratively reviewed.

3.2.1.3 FBI Laboratory personnel cannot verify, technically review, or administratively review their own work.

3.2.1.4 The verification, technical review, and/or administrative review may be conducted by the same person and may be conducted concurrently.

3.2.1.5 Technical and administrative reviews will be recorded in FA. If the *Laboratory Report* is classified, then the technical and administrative reviewers must be approvers in Sentinel.

3.2.2 Expedited Results

3.2.2.1 Prior to a *Laboratory Report* being issued to the contributor and a complete technical review being conducted, an examiner may disseminate expedited results or partial results of an examination(s). The appropriate level 2 document may contain requirements that specify results that do not require verification by another examiner prior to dissemination (such as negative results or presumptive results). If a unit, discipline, or category of testing chooses not to define requirements for which results do not require verification prior to dissemination, all results must be verified in accordance with these practices prior to dissemination. The verification will be recorded in the FBI Laboratory file.

3.2.2.2 When providing expedited results, the examiner will communicate the following dissemination comments to the contributor. This communication will be recorded in the Case Communication Log.

- The examinations performed on pertinent items and the results.
- The results are subject to change.
- Final results will be provided in a *Laboratory Report* that will undergo review prior to issuance.

3.2.2.3 If the examiner provides the contributor with the final results after a technical review has been conducted but prior to an administrative review, the examiner will record that communication in the Case Communication Log.

3.2.3 Verification of Identification or Association

3.2.3.1 A verification of identification or association will be conducted by a verifier who did not perform the initial examination.

3.2.3.1.1 If there is a qualified and authorized person within the FBI Laboratory to verify an identification or association for the discipline/category of testing being reviewed, but that person is unavailable (e.g., deployment, on leave) to conduct the verification, an attempt will be made to obtain an expert outside the FBI Laboratory to serve as the verifier. If an expert outside the FBI Laboratory can perform the verification, a major deviation will be requested in accordance with the LOM - Practices for Authorizing Deviations to allow the outside expert to verify the identification or association. If an expert outside the FBI Laboratory cannot perform the verification, a major deviation will be requested in accordance with the LOM - Practices for Authorizing Deviations to allow a verification of the identification or association to not occur.

3.2.3.1.2 If there is not another qualified and authorized person within the FBI Laboratory to verify an identification or association for the discipline/category of testing being reviewed, the appropriate Technical Leader will evaluate the qualifications of an expert outside the FBI Laboratory to serve as a verifier for a specified time. The affected unit(s) will maintain a list of approved external verifiers.

3.2.3.2 A verification will be performed on the following as it applies to the particular examination:

- Best relevant evidence.
- Derivative information or evidence.
- Data.
- Charts.
- Images.
- Analogous information from which the first examiner based the conclusion.

3.2.3.3 A level 2 document, will contain a definition of an identification or association and the procedures used to perform the verification.

3.2.3.4 Upon completion of the verification, the verifier will record their agreement with the examiner's results in the FBI Laboratory file or in FA. Records include the date of the verification and either the verifier's signature or name and initials.

3.2.4 Technical Review

3.2.4.1 A technical review will be conducted by a person who is authorized to conduct technical reviews in the category of testing being reviewed. The technical reviewer will have been competency tested in the task(s) that the review is encompassing. Additionally, the technical reviewer will have knowledge of the technical procedures used in that category of testing.

3.2.4.1.1 If there is an authorized person within the FBI Laboratory for the category of testing being reviewed, but that person is unavailable (e.g., deployment, on leave) to conduct the technical review, an attempt will be made to obtain an expert outside the FBI Laboratory to serve as the technical reviewer. If an expert outside the FBI Laboratory can perform the technical review, a major deviation will be requested in accordance with the LOM - Practices for Authorizing Deviations to allow the outside expert to conduct the technical review. If an expert outside the FBI Laboratory cannot conduct the technical review, a major deviation will be requested in accordance with the LOM - Practices for Authorizing Deviations to allow a technical review to not occur.

3.2.4.1.2 If there is not another authorized person within the FBI Laboratory for the category of testing being reviewed, the appropriate Technical Leader will evaluate the qualifications of an expert outside the FBI Laboratory to serve as a technical reviewer. The affected unit(s) will maintain a list of approved external technical reviewers.

3.2.4.2 Technical reviews will not be conducted by the examiner(s) who authored the examination records or the *Laboratory Report* under review.

3.2.4.3 A technical review will be performed on all *Laboratory Reports* that contain examination results and the supporting case records. This review will determine if:

- The examinations and supporting case records conform with appropriate technical procedures and applicable portions of the QAM, LOM, appropriate level 2 documents, and technical procedures;
- The appropriate examinations have been performed;
- The examiner's conclusions are consistent with the data records, are within the limitations of the discipline/category of testing, and are supported by the applicable ULTR and/or ASSTR;
- The *Laboratory Report* is accurate and there are sufficient supporting records for the results and/or conclusions of the *Laboratory Report*;
- A verification of identification or association has been completed and properly recorded, when such a conclusion has been reached;
- Associations are put into the appropriate context in the *Laboratory Report*;
- The *Laboratory Report* contains all the required information.

3.2.4.4 A level 2 document will contain procedures used to select a reviewer and conduct a technical review, to include field examination review, when applicable.

3.2.4.5 The technical reviewer will record their agreement with the examination process and the completion of the technical review in FA.

3.2.5 Administrative Review

3.2.5.1 An administrative review will not be conducted by the person(s) authoring the report being reviewed. A level 2 document may further define requirements for an administrative reviewer.

3.2.5.2 An administrative review includes at a minimum:

- Spelling and grammatical accuracy of the *Laboratory Report*;
- The final version of the *Laboratory Report* was checked into FA by the examiner assigned to the Case Record.
- Administrative and examination records are uniquely identified according to the LOM - Practices for Assigning Cases and Conducting Examinations;
- Key information is present in the *Laboratory Report*.
- Proper classification markings have been applied.
- The administrative and examination records conform to QAM - Section 7.5 and LOM - Practices for Assigning Cases and Conducting Examinations. If the records are retained in FA and will have required elements automatically applied (e.g., FBI Laboratory number, page counts) the administrative review does not need to account for this information.
- The *Laboratory Report* conforms to these practices.
- A technical review has been completed, when applicable, and properly recorded in FA.

3.2.5.3 A level 2 document will contain procedures used to select a reviewer, conduct an administrative review, and a list of what is considered administrative records and examination records.

3.2.5.4 The administrative reviewer will record their completion of the administrative review in FA. This record signifies approval for serializing the *Laboratory Report* to Sentinel.

3.2.6 Resolution of Scientific or Technical Disagreement

Personnel will follow LOM - Practices for Resolution of Scientific or Technical Disagreement to resolve any disagreement resulting from a verification, blind verification, technical review, and/or administrative review.

3.3 Issuing a *Laboratory Report*

A *Laboratory Report* is primarily issued to a contributor. In some instances, it may be issued to a person other than the contributor such as a prosecutor or a lead investigator. The *Laboratory Report* will be issued only after it has been reviewed and serialized in Sentinel.

A *Laboratory Report* will be issued to an FBI contributor in an electronic file serialized in Sentinel. For an external submission received through the FBI Laboratory Contributor Portal, a *Laboratory Report* will be issued in an electronic file through the portal. For other external submissions, a *Laboratory Report* will be emailed or physically mailed to the contributor. For TEDAC submissions, a *Laboratory Report* will be available in an electronic file in the Explosive Reference Tool (EXPeRT). A *Laboratory Report* in EXPeRT may be viewed by all partners, not just a single contributor.

3.3.1 Multiple examiners may issue one *Laboratory Report* for a major case or other cases with multiple examiners according to these practices.

3.3.2 A *Laboratory Report* that references more than one Case ID number will list the additional Case ID number(s) in the Additional Case field in Sentinel. The *Laboratory Report* will be addressed to the FBI office of origin, even if it was not the office contributing the evidence.

3.3.3 The *Laboratory Report* will be serialized in Sentinel. When someone other than the person issuing the *Laboratory Report* serves as the author of the *Laboratory Report* in Sentinel, the person issuing the *Laboratory Report* will serve as an approver in Sentinel.

3.3.3.1 If the person(s) issuing the *Laboratory Report* is not available and the *Laboratory Report* must be issued immediately, a deviation will be requested as described below.

3.3.3.1.1 If a single case requires immediate issuance of a *Laboratory Report* in the issuing person's absence (i.e., an examiner that is responsible for the examination(s)), a minor deviation will be requested according to the LOM – Practices for Authorizing Deviations to allow another person to issue the *Laboratory Report* on behalf of the issuing person (i.e., will have the issuing person's name). The minor deviation will state why the *Laboratory Report* needs to be issued immediately and why the issuing person is unavailable to be an approver in Sentinel (e.g., deployment, leave). The minor deviation will be authorized and recorded in the Case Record Communication Log. The issuing person will be listed for distribution in Sentinel and will acknowledge review of the issued report in the Case Record Communication Log upon their return.

3.3.3.1.2 If multiple cases require immediate issuance of *Laboratory Reports* in the issuing person's absence (e.g., the examiner that is responsible for the examination(s)), a major deviation will be requested according to the LOM – Practices for Authorizing Deviations to allow another person(s) to issue the *Laboratory Reports* on behalf of the issuing person (i.e., will have the issuing person's name). The major deviation will state why the *Laboratory Report*s need to be issued immediately and why the issuing person is unavailable to be an approver in Sentinel (e.g., extended deployment, extended leave). A copy of the authorized major deviation will be included in the FBI Laboratory file and referenced in the Case Communication Log. The issuing person will be listed for distribution in Sentinel and will acknowledge review of the issued report in the Case Record Communication Log upon their return.

3.3.4 Requests for a Previously Issued *Report of Examination/Laboratory Report*

3.3.4.1 If an FBI contributor requests a previously issued *Report of Examination/Laboratory Report*, the FBI contributor will be directed to retrieve the *Report of Examination/Laboratory Report* from Sentinel.

3.3.4.2 If an external contributor requests a previously issued *Report of Examination/Laboratory Report*, the *Report of Examination/Laboratory Report* will be retrieved

from Sentinel and may be sent to an external contributor, the contributing agency, and/or the prosecutor for that specific case. If the *Laboratory Report* was issued via the FBI Laboratory Contributor Portal, the *Laboratory Report* may be regenerated from the original Case Record and released to the external contributor via the FBI Laboratory Contributor Portal.

3.3.4.3 For DNA cases involving a missing person, where a comparison is conducted with either a sample from another laboratory or a sample from a CODIS index, a copy of the *Report of Examination/Laboratory Report* may be issued to the laboratory who contributed the compared sample without authorization from the contributor.

3.3.4.4 A Follow-Up Case Record will not be generated when a previously issued *Report of Examination/Laboratory Report* is provided.

3.4 Retaining Case-Related Records

Requests for examinations, administrative records, examination records, and *Laboratory Reports* are routinely received or generated by FBI Laboratory personnel. At a minimum the person managing the case will retain the Case Report, Chain-of-Custody Log, *Examination Plan* (7-262), records in the Case Object Repository, records in the Case Communication Log Object Repository, and the Case Communication Log from FA. At a minimum, the examiner will retain their Case Record Report, records in the Case Record Object Repository, examination records, and if applicable, the Case Record Communication Log from FA and records in the Case Record Communication Log Object Repository.

3.4.1 Request for Examination

The person managing the case will ensure that the request for examination is retained in Sentinel.

3.4.2 Evidence Acknowledgment

An acknowledgment email to the contributor, will be retained in Sentinel. If voicemail and/or mail was used to acknowledge receipt, the appropriate communication log (e.g., *Activity and Communication Log*, Case Communication Log) will serve as the evidence acknowledgment.

3.4.3 *Laboratory Report*

The person issuing the *Laboratory Report* will ensure it is serialized in Sentinel.

3.4.4 Supporting Records

Each person who issues a *Laboratory Report* will prepare a 1A(s)/1C(s) containing supporting records for serializing in Sentinel. A new 1A(s)/1C(s) will be prepared for follow up reports to ensure associated records support the new *Laboratory Report*. When necessary, records may be placed in the original 1A(s)/1C(s) (e.g., use of a physical record originating from the original 1A(s)/1C(s)).

3.4.4.1 Physical supporting records will be placed in a *Supporting Documentation Envelope(s)* (7-251) and serialized as a physical attachment 1A in Sentinel. Supporting records that are too bulky to fit in a physical 1A(s) may be placed in a bulky 1C(s). Physical supporting records will be delivered to the file room. A summary of the enclosures in the 1A(s) and/or 1C(s) will be noted in Sentinel.

3.4.4.2 The person managing the case will import supporting electronic records to the Case Object Repository or Case Communication Log Object Repository as appropriate. Personnel will import supporting electronic records to the appropriate Object Repository. Each electronic page should not exceed the largest allowed attachment size for FA. Files uploaded to FA should have the Laboratory number as the beginning portion of the file name (e.g., 2017-00002 Check-in Notes.pdf).

3.4.4.3 Physical 1A(s) and 1A(s) generated in FA will be serialized in Sentinel. If the file is larger than the largest allowed attachment size for Sentinel, personnel will save the files to electronic media and retain the media in the physical 1A(s) or 1C(s).

3.4.4.4 Communication(s) will be recorded in the Case Communication Log. Substantive email communication(s) will be referenced in the Case Communication Log and the email(s) will be retained in the 1A(s)/1C(s).

3.4.4.5 Redacted

Redacted

3.4.7 Retention of an FBI Laboratory File

Long-term retention and disposition of files will be coordinated by the Information Management Division.

4 Records

The following records will be generated and/or retained in the FBI Laboratory file and/or in Sentinel when completed as a result of these practices:

- Request for examination.
- FA Chain-of-Custody Log.
- Acknowledgement email.
- *Examination Plan.*
- FA Case Communication Log.
- FA Case Record Communication Log(s), if populated.
- Record(s) of verification of an identification or association.
- *Laboratory Report*.
- 1A(s) and/or 1C(s), containing administrative and examination records.
- FA Case Object Repository, if populated.
- FA Case Record Object Repository(ies), if populated.
- FA Case Communication Log Object Repository, if populated.
- FA Case Record Communication Log Object Repository, if populated.
- Record(s) of a technical review, when conducted.
- Record(s) of an administrative review, when conducted.
- Additional request records, when necessary.
- FA Case Record Report(s).
- FA Case Report.

5 References

FBI Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

ISO/IEC 17025 - General Requirements for the Competence of Testing Laboratories, International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland, 2017.

ISO/IEC 17025:2017 - Forensic Science Testing and Calibration Laboratories Accreditation Requirements (AR 3125), ANAB, Milwaukee, WI, April 29, 2019.

ISO/IEC 17020 - Conformity Assessment - Requirements for the Operation of Various Types of Bodies Performing Inspection, International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland, 2012.

Forensic Advantage User Guide, Forensic Advantage® Systems, a division of The Computer Solution Company, Inc., latest revision.

FBI Corporate Policy Directive 0423D, Preservation and Disclosure of Electronic Communications in Federal Criminal Cases, Federal Bureau of Investigation, latest revision.

Rev. #	Issue Date	History
4	06/03/19	Changed evidence management personnel to Evidence Management Unit throughout document. In section 3 added a statement that any information required by accreditation requirements which is not in a *Laboratory Report* or alternate reported results will be maintained in the FBI Laboratory. Modified section 3.1 to move details about listing and description of evidence section to section 3.1.2. Removed list of examples from section 3.1.1. In section 3.1.2, added requirement for *Laboratory Report* to include a statement regarding items not examined. Added reference to DOJ ULTR documents in sections 3.1.3.1 and 3.2.4.3. Modified and added requirements in sections 3.1.3.1 through 3.1.3.1.6 to reflect revised accreditation requirements. In sections 3.1.5 and 3.1.5.3, added requirement to also provide sites where work was conducted. Added requirement for *Laboratory Report* to reference DOJ ULTR documents and discovery requirements in section 3.1.5.4. Clarified requirements regarding exam cancellations in sections 3.1.5.7 through 3.1.5.7.2. In section 3.1.8.3, allowed contributing examiners to alternatively be co-authors in Sentinel. Clarified that supplemental *Laboratory Report* pertain to completed requests in section 3.1.10.1. Relocated requirement regarding verification to section 3.2.2.1. Revised requirements for technical reviews in section 3.2.4.1 through 3.2.4.1.2 to remove requirements for person to be qualified and have casework experience, and to add requirement to have been competency tested. In section 3.3 broadened requirements to allow emailing *Laboratory Report*. Added communication log object repositories in sections 3.4 and 3.4.4.2. Revised section 3.4.2 to accommodate acknowledgement in various formats. Generalized serialization requirements in section 3.4.4.3. Updated list of records in section 4. In section 3.4.7, updated division name. Updated list of references in section 5.
5	12/21/20	Corrected typos and made minor edits throughout for clarity. Also moved some sections for better readability. 1 – deleted reference to TEDAC Laboratory Report (7-273) 2 – added reference to i3 products and the i3 LOM Practice 3 – added i3 products 3.1.2 - updated heading from Listing and Description of Evidence to Items and changed text to FBI Laboratory Evidence Descriptors 3.1.3.1.1 - clarified for comparative examinations result in an association 3.1.5.2.1 - added option to provide email address Throughout document replaced EMU personnel with person managing the case, where appropriate

3.1.5.8.4 - added information regarding TEDAC evidence being submitted that will not be examined or requested for storage only as well as acknowledgement requirements
3.1.10 and subsections - clarified use of follow up reports and deleted information on amended, supplemental and superseded reports as they are no longer used
3.2 - Added option for units, disciplines and/or categories of testing to perform risk evaluation as to when and/or type of Laboratory Reports are reviewed. Type and frequency have to be described in level 2 document
3.4 - deleted reference to TEDAC Examination Plan (7-274)
3.4.2 - deleted reference to Acknowledgment Letter (7-3)
3.4.4 - added follow up report and deleted reference to amended, supplemental and superseded reports as they are no longer used
3.4.4.5 - added information about classified communications and substantive emails
4 – updated records removing TEDAC Examination Plan and Acknowledgment Letter. Also, added when conducted to technical and administrative reviews
5 – added LOM and ISO/IEC 17020

Redacted - Signatures on File

Approval

Laboratory Director Date: 12/18/2020

Quality Manager Date: 12/18/2020

Appendix A: *FBI Laboratory Report* (7-1 LIMS)

Redacted - Form on File