

Laboratory Reports, Reviews, and Retained Records

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Laboratory Reports, Reviews, and Retained Records

1 INTRODUCTION

This document provides discipline specific guidance for *Laboratory Reports* (LIMS 7-1, 7-1), *Reviews*, and *Retained Records* to supplement *FBI Laboratory Operations Manual* ([LAB-200](#)). Alternate reporting methods are addressed in *Investigative Lead, Intelligence, or Information Products* ([FRD-850](#)).

2 SCOPE

These procedures apply to personnel who prepare, review, or issue *FBI Laboratory Reports* and/or generate FBI Laboratory files in the friction ridge discipline.

3 LIMITATIONS

No Limitations

4 LABORATORY REPORT CONTENT AND FORMAT

4.1 Style and Format

- A. Terms, Methods, Limitations, and Interpretations will be combined into a single section with associated references immediately following.
- B. This section may be included in the body of the report or as an appendix.
 - 1. If applicable, there will be a statement in the report referring to the appendix.
- C. The Department of Justice Uniform Language for Testimony and Reports for the Forensic Latent Print Discipline will be included as a reference.

4.2 Examinations Not Conducted

- A. When a request for an examination that is conducted within the FBI Laboratory Friction Ridge Discipline is received, but the examination(s) is not conducted and examinations were completed in the case that will be reported, an examiner will include the reason in a paragraph immediately following the listing of evidence, the results of examinations section, or in the remarks section that describes why the requested examination(s) was not conducted.
- B. If no examinations are reported out, the applicable sections in the [LAB-200](#) will be followed.

4.3 Sentinel Serialization of *Laboratory Report*

Personnel will ensure that the serial number of the report appears on the physical 1A, when appropriate, prior to the 1A being placed in the appropriate storage area (e.g., FBI Laboratory file room).

5 COMMUNICATING EXPEDITED RESULTS

- A. Personnel may provide results regarding processing outcomes, analysis, exclusion, identification, and both inconclusive decisions to a contributor prior to the completion of the technical review and issuance of a *Laboratory Report*.
- B. All prints must be appropriately verified or blind verified as described in the *Verification and Blind Verification (FRD-501)*.
- C. When communicating the expedited results, the employee will follow the appropriate sections in the [LAB-200](#).

6 TECHNICAL REVIEWS

6.1 Requirements for Technical Reviewer

- A. A Technical Reviewer must have:
 - o training in conducting a technical review,
 - o casework experience following qualification, and
 - o be authorized to conduct technical reviews.
- B. The Technical Reviewer must not have processed evidence nor performed comparisons in the case being reviewed, with the exception of:
 - o verifications;
 - o blind verifications;
 - o Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation checks;
 - o processing checks; or
 - o Supervisor reviews.
- C. Technical reviewers who do not complete a proficiency test covering a tasking they review will be monitored via case audits.

6.2 Requirements for Technical Reviews

- A. With the exception of circumstances described in [Section 5](#) all examination results must be technically reviewed prior to issuance.
- B. In addition to the requirements listed in the [LAB-200](#), this review will determine if:
 - o All requests have been addressed.
 - o All reported prints meeting the requirements in the [FRD-501](#) have been appropriately verified or blind verified and recorded.

7 ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS

7.1 Requirements for Administrative Reviewer

- A. The Administrative Reviewer will have training in conducting an administrative review and be authorized to conduct administrative reviews.
- B. The Administrative Reviewer must not have processed the evidence nor performed comparisons in the case being reviewed, with the exception of:
 - o verifications;
 - o blind verifications;
 - o Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation checks;

- processing checks; or
- Supervisor reviews.

7.2 Requirements for Administrative Reviews

- A. With the exception of circumstances described in [Section 5](#), all examination results must be administratively reviewed prior to issuance.
- B. In addition to the requirements listed in the [LAB-200](#), this review will confirm the accuracy of the report content based on the supporting records.

7.3 Classification Reviews

A separate review of the classification markings may be conducted by personnel trained in classification and will be noted in the Laboratory Information Management System.

8 RETENTION OF RECORDS

- A. Disseminated results and FBI Laboratory file records, either originals or copies, will be retained in the:
 - appropriate physical storage area (e.g., FBI Laboratory file room),
 - the Multi Biometric Identification System (MBIS) server of the Next Generation Identification System,
 - Sentinel,
 - digital imaging retention system and/or
 - the Laboratory Information Management System.
- B. The term “annotated” in regard to images refers to Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation notations on or associated with an image.
 1. Any other markings are not considered annotations.
- C. Throughout the document, “1A” will refer not only to a *Supporting Documentation Envelope* (7-251), but also to 1C file (for records too large for a 1A) or an electronic 1A in Sentinel.

9 DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC RECORDS

In addition to FBI Laboratory file records, discipline hardcopy or digital records (original or copies) may include, as appropriate:

- A. Annotated and non-annotated images of friction ridge prints
- B. Object shots or any reproductions not used for an examination
- C. Negatives, including those containing friction ridge prints
- D. Next Generation Identification screenshots (required for annotated images but optional for information (e.g., search parameters) captured elsewhere)
- E. Photocopies of evidence when the photocopy is used for examination (e.g., intentionally recorded friction ridge prints)
- F. Photographic requests (e.g., database screen printout), when retained by Friction Ridge Discipline.
- G. Hazardous Evidence Analysis Team Latent Print Photography Checklist

- H. Records from discussions or consultations of examinations (e.g., enlargements, narrative)

10 INTENTIONALLY RECORDED PRINTS RECEIVED IN THE LABORATORY

- A. Intentionally recorded friction ridge records (either standard or non-standard) can be received directly from an outside contributor or can be obtained through the Intelligence Unit or the Criminal Justice Information Services Division (to include the Next Generation Identification System).
- B. Intentionally recorded friction ridge records are treated as evidence if submitted directly to the FBI Laboratory from an entity other than the Intelligence Unit or Criminal Justice Information Services Division.
 - 1. Any copies (hardcopy or digital) of these evidentiary records will be treated as FBI Laboratory File records.
 - 2. Electronic agency database records received from Executive Branch agencies, such as Department of Homeland Security and Department of Defense, may be treated as part of the FBI Laboratory file rather than evidence.
- C. Any intentionally recorded friction ridge records that are obtained through the Criminal Justice Information Services Division or the Intelligence Unit are treated as FBI Laboratory file records.

10.1 Retention of Submitted Intentionally Recorded Prints

- A. Any submitted hardcopy intentionally recorded prints received in the Latent Print Operations Unit, Latent Print Support Unit or Scientific and Biometrics Analysis Unit may be retained.
- B. The individual will record the consent from the appropriate entity (e.g., contributor, Evidence Management Unit, Intelligence Unit) in the Communication Log when necessary.
- C. The FBI Laboratory file will include a notation that the item is no longer evidence, and the prints will become examination records.

10.2 Forwarding of Submitted Intentionally Recorded Prints to the Criminal Justice Information Services Division

- A. Any submitted hardcopy intentionally recorded prints received in the Latent Print Operations Unit, Latent Print Support Unit or Scientific and Biometrics Analysis Unit may be submitted to the Criminal Justice Information Services Division.
- B. The individual will record the consent from the appropriate entity (e.g., contributor, Evidence Management Unit, Intelligence Unit) in the Communication Log when necessary.
- C. The Universal Control Number will be provided to the contributor for submitted records, as appropriate.

11 RETENTION OF ELECTRONIC EVIDENCE RECEIVED IN THE LABORATORY

- A. Electronic evidence will not be returned to the contributor.

1. Copies of the images will be retained as appropriate and are not considered evidence.
- B. Media containing digital images of friction ridge prints submitted to the Laboratory is considered physical evidence, except as noted in [Section 12.1](#).

12 TERRORIST EXPLOSIVE DEVICE ANALYTICAL CENTER RESPONSE SUBMITTED COMPACT DISKS

Compact disks containing images of prints captured during examination of Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center evidence item(s) in the field are submitted to the FBI Laboratory intended for examination in conjunction with the original evidence.

12.1 Legacy Compact Disks

- A. Depending on the time frame, many legacy cases processed by the forward-deployed Department of Defense Laboratories contained disks that were intended to be tracked either on the chain of custody or in the Explosives Reference Tool database.
- B. The disks were retained in FBI space; however, the tracking of the disks is often unreliable, as they were often treated as part of the case documentation rather than as evidence.
- C. As these disks contain images associated with a specific incident, if the examiner wishes to use the images in casework, the examiner will first verify that the images are associated with the case in question.
- D. The disks will not be considered evidence but will be designated as a part of the FBI Laboratory file when in a 1A.

12.2 Non-Legacy Compact Disks

Any disks contained within current cases (non-legacy) will be tracked as an item of evidence through the Laboratory Information Management System chain of custody.

13 PHYSICAL RECORDS

- A. Physical supporting records are not individually serialized
 1. The compiled records are retained in a serialized 1A in the appropriate physical storage area (e.g., FBI Laboratory file room).
- B. Physical case notes, with the exception of images of friction ridge prints and digital media, will be numbered consecutively (i.e., page __).
 1. Only the first page of the case notes must be numbered to account for the totality of the pages (i.e., page __ of __).
 2. Case-related notations on the reverse side of photographs of friction ridge prints do not need to be page numbered
- C. All physically retained FBI Laboratory file records will be accounted for on the 1A.
- D. Electronic records are accounted for in Sentinel, as appropriate.

13.1 Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center Response Legacy Physical Records

13.1.1 FBI Laboratory File Records

- A. Prior to issuing a Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center response to an official request or investigation which involved casework performed prior to accreditation, an examiner may be unable to locate portions of the FBI Laboratory file (e.g., case notes) due to factors such as migration of files and examinations of large numbers of records.
- B. If the examiner is able to locate a copy or duplicate version of the record, the record will be added to the file with clear indication that it is a copy and the action taken noted in the case notes.
- C. If the record is unable to be recreated, the examiner will note specifically in the current record what is missing.
- D. In situations where a record item is missing, and it does not impede the requested technical examination, the examiner may still conduct examinations and issue a report or expedited result(s).
- E. When, or if, the record(s) are found at a later date, they will be added to the FBI Laboratory file and a notation will be placed in the record addressing their return.

13.1.2 Acknowledgements in Physical Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center Records

- A. If an FBI Laboratory file record is missing an examiner or technician acknowledgement of work (as required by the existing documents at the time), the absence will be recorded in the case notes and nothing further done.
 - 1. The record will be specific to what is missing and where it is missing from.
- B. This allowance applies only to FBI Laboratory file records that were created prior to accreditation (accreditation date August 31, 2018) and/or were created at the Quantico Laboratory site or Lorton Site.
 - 1. All other instances will be addressed according to current document requirements.

14 NEXT GENERATION IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM AND/OR DIGITAL IMAGING RECORDS

- A. Electronic supporting records generated within the Next Generation Identification System or an appropriate digital image retention system will be retained within those systems and are considered part of the FBI Laboratory file.
- B. For the Next Generation Identification System, only those records contained on the MBIS server and the biographic search transaction history are considered part of the FBI Laboratory file.
- C. The systems track the actions of individuals based on password protected electronic access.
- D. Records for all systems will be easily associated with a case or will have a notation in the FBI Laboratory file providing direction to the records.
- E. Digital records retained on media (e.g., disk) will be retained in the physical 1A.

15 LABORATORY INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND SENTINEL

- A. Electronic supporting records generated within the Laboratory Information Management System will be retained in that system and will be uploaded to Sentinel, as appropriate.

16 REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Issued	Changes
06	2/22/2022	Updated Format and document references and reorganized sections. Section 4.2 – update to only when examinations are not done and other examinations are reported and not all situations. Section 9 – List combined and specific to discipline. Section 12 B 2 – Remove requirement to page number backs of photographs.
07	10/17/2022	Section 10-B-2 – Added database records exception. Section 13.1.2 – Added allowance for acknowledgements.