

SANTA BARBARA SHERIFF'S OFFICE
FORENSICS UNIT
FINGERPRINT SECTION

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 Scope

The Fingerprint Unit provides services for Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office, but also assists other law enforcement agencies in the county. The services provided include:

- Processing evidence for fingerprints,
- Comparing evidence prints to suspect prints,
- Entering latent prints into the fingerprint database,
- Question of identity,
- Post mortem printing of deceased persons for identification purposes,
- Comparison of subjects to fingerprint records on file.

2.0 Related Documents

Safety Manual
Illness and Injury Prevention Plan
Chemical Hygiene Plan
Material Safety Data Sheets

3.0 Definitions

- *Friction ridge print* refers to all prints made by the raised portion of the epidermis on the palmar or plantar skin.

4.1 Requests for Analysis and Interaction with other Units in the Laboratory

4.2 Sequence of Processing

If the request for analysis from the requesting agency is unclear, the examiner will contact the requestor to determine what processes will be appropriate. If the request seems irrelevant to the case, the examiner can alert the Forensic Supervisor or contact the requestor to clarify the request for analysis.

Requests for fingerprint analysis are routinely requested in combination with requests for other laboratory services such as physical evidence examination, casting, latent search/comparisons, and photo-documentation. The order in which the examinations are conducted is crucial to the preservation of other types of evidence that may be present on an item.

Examiners in the Forensics Unit are encouraged to speak with each other when there are additional Laboratory Requests for service to coordinate the processing of the item(s). If the examiner thinks an item may need a request for service from the California Department of Justice Crime Laboratory, the examiner should bring that request to the attention of the Forensic Supervisor. The examiner may also speak to the requestor to advise them on additional requests that may be necessary for that item.

4.2 Requests for Fingerprint Comparisons to Previous Records

These requests typically come from the Court, the District Attorney's Office, the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) or the Santa Barbara County Sheriffs Records Bureau or the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Coroner Bureau. These requests are also typically time sensitive.

In the interest of providing timely service, the following items are required to complete the comparison:

1. A completed Bureau Criminalistics (BOC) Request.
 - a. Including the requesting agency, SBSO case number, and the person who will receive the report.
 - b. The request form can be filled out by the examiner if the request is made over the phone and the requestor does not have access to the SBSO BOC form.
2. The fingerprint records of interest from the requestor.
 - a. For the Court, D.A.'s Office, and Records, the fingerprints are usually the certified copies from the Sheriffs Records Bureau.
 - b. For DMV, these are the fingerprints on the Dossiers provided.
 - c. The items are not the originals and are not required to be logged in through Property. The receipt and return (if returned) of the certified records will be noted in the case file. If annotations are made, the records must be copied for retention in the case file.

A written report with the conclusions will be issued.

5.0 Safety

Prior to handling, preparing, applying, storing, or disposing of chemicals or biological hazardous materials, personnel should be familiar with laboratory safety procedures as outlined in the Safety Manual, Chemical Hygiene Plan, Illness and Injury Prevention Plan, and pertinent Material Safety Data Sheets.

5.1 General Safe Work Practices

A. Positive Safety Attitude

1. Laboratory access during laboratory operations is restricted to Forensics personnel.
2. All persons will conduct themselves in a safe manner while in the laboratory.
3. Handling, preparing, or applying chemicals and reagents known to be a respiratory hazard will be done in a chemical fume hood.

4. Spills will be immediately absorbed, neutralized, decontaminated, or disinfected prior to clean up as appropriate.
 5. Chemical and biological waste will be placed in appropriate waste containers.
- B. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
1. Appropriate level of personal protective equipment shall be worn to prevent exposure.
 2. Lab coats shall be worn while preparing reagents or processing in the laboratory.
 3. Gloves should periodically be visually inspected for defects before use, changed when damaged or contaminated, and disposed of in the appropriate waste container. There are instances where gloves should be changed between items.
 4. Goggles shall be worn when there is a splash hazard.
- C. Personal Safety Practices
1. Eating, drinking, or applying cosmetics is not permitted in the processing area.
 2. Hands should be washed before leaving the laboratory whenever laboratory activities required wearing gloves.
- D. Examination of Processed Fingerprints
- Lifts taken from items of evidence that may be biologically or chemically contaminated should be enclosed in a plastic sleeve or bag.
- E. Safety Supplies
1. Personal Protective Equipment may include the following:
 2. Protective Clothing
 - a. Lab Coat
 - b. Tyvek or chemical resistant suits
 3. Gloves
 - a. Latex or nitrile gloves
 - b. Chemical resistance appropriate for activity
 - c. Puncture and cut resistant
 4. Eye Protection
 - a. Goggles
 - b. Safety glasses
 - c. Laser and Ultra-Violet (UV) goggles
 - d. Face shield
 5. Dust or particle mask
 2. General laboratory safety equipment include the following:
 1. Fumehood
 2. Eye wash station
 3. Shower
 3. Decontamination supplies include the following:
 1. Biohazard waste bags
 2. Disinfectant
 3. Sharp bio-hazard waste container (red)

5.2 Safety Requirements

- A. Personnel shall know the potential health and safety hazards of the chemicals used within the laboratory and take necessary precautions to avoid any possible exposure or hazard. Refer to the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for exposure or hazard information.

- B. Reagents will be prepared in the chemical fume hood while wearing appropriate personal protective equipment:
1. Lab Coat
 2. Chemical resistant gloves
 3. Goggles or face shields
- C. During examinations with a laser or an ultraviolet or forensic light source use appropriate eye protection and avoid close skin exposure.

6.0 References

Masters, N.E., Safety for the Forensic Identification Specialist, Lightning Powder Company, 1995.

Revision Year	Prepared by/date	Approved by/date	Effective date
2012	Sgt. R.Cintron / 11/13/12		11/13/12