



INDIANAPOLIS-MARION COUNTY FORENSIC SERVICES AGENCY

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Evidence Submission Guideline #18

Biological Evidence

The Biology Section of the Indianapolis Marion County Forensic Services Agency provides forensic serological and DNA analytical services to all Indianapolis- Marion County criminal justice agencies. These guidelines are provided to set a series of standards for the routine submission of biological evidence.

A multi-tiered approach to biological evidence submission will be used. These tiers will limit the number of items of evidence submitted to the laboratory for biological analysis with the goal of more effective utilization of the Biology Unit resources.

Policy

The type and nature of the case being submitted for analysis will determine the number of evidence items accepted. Due to the varying nature of circumstances surrounding each case, additional items of evidence may be accepted at the original time of case submission after consultation with a Biology Section Supervisor, Deputy Director or Laboratory Director.

A suitably detailed scenario should be provided with the submitted evidence. This will allow the forensic scientist to determine the probative value of each submitted item of evidence.

Victim(s), suspect(s) or other elimination standards will not count towards the biological evidence item total.

An item shall be considered as one piece of evidence (i.e. swabbing from a single area, one weapon or one article of clothing). If items are packaged together then the total number of items contained within the package will be counted towards the total (i.e. shirt and pants packaged together would count as two items).

DNA testing will be considered complete when probative information is obtained from the evidence. No further evidence submissions will be accepted without the approval of a Biology Section Supervisor, the Deputy Director, or Laboratory Director. It is understood that special circumstances (e.g. multiple perpetrators) may dictate the need for additional testing.

Evidence items submitted under tier one **do not require consultation with the I-MCFSA**; however, the check off sheet must be detailed adequately in order for the forensic scientist to proceed with the analysis.

Tier One submissions (no consultation required)

1. Homicide – Up to ten probative items.
2. Sex Crimes – sexual assault evidence collection kit (if required) and one additional probative item. If no sexual assault evidence collection kit examination required then three probative items of evidence may be submitted.
3. Burglary/Property Crimes –up to two probative items.
4. Other types of Crime – up to four probative items.

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Tier Two submissions (consultation required)

1. Homicide – up to ten additional probative items.
2. Sexual Crimes – up to three additional probative items.
3. Burglary/Property Crimes – up to two additional probative items.
4. Other types of Crimes – up to four additional probative items.

If further analysis is required upon the completion of tier one and tier two, then a case conference with a Biology Section Supervisor, the Laboratory Director or Deputy Director will be required.

Touch DNA

Touch DNA evidence is evidence where there is no visible staining that contains DNA resulting from skin contact. This does not include cigarette butts, swabbing from soda cans, etc in which saliva transfer is likely. Wearer identification evidence is not considered as touch DNA evidence. A sufficiently detailed scenario should be submitted, along with the evidence, to enable the forensic scientist to adequately conduct appropriate analysis of the evidence.

Touch DNA evidence will be accepted where there is a reasonable likelihood of probative results being obtained.

Touch DNA evidence will not be processed by the Biology Section if investigative units have recovered/ processed the evidence without wearing gloves. This does not mean that an item of evidence that is covered by what appears to be blood will not be processed. Instead, in this scenario the blood would be processed; however, processing for “touch DNA” will not occur due to the fact that the item has been contaminated upon recovery.

Touch DNA evidence submissions will be counted toward the total item count under either tier one or tier two submissions.