

Evidence Submission Guideline #

COLD CASE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

The submission of evidence from “cold cases” can be more complex than the submission of evidence from ordinary cases. This is due to a variety of reasons including evidence handling and storage, development of new analytical technologies and previous analyses performed. These guidelines have been developed to allow the investigating officer(s) to determine the appropriate evidence to submit to the IMCFSA crime lab.

I. Background investigation

- A. All case files must be reviewed by the investigator to determine the probative nature of the evidence. The original investigator’s file is usually of particular use in determining suitable evidence for analysis. The results of previous analyses carried out by the IMCFSA crime lab can typically be found in the FNmount electronic file folder available from the crime lab.
- B. If there is evidence of a suspected sexual assault the investigator must make an attempt to obtain sexual history information regarding the victim prior to the assault. The evidence may not be examined if this is not carried out.
- C. After determining the evidence requiring analysis the investigator is responsible for making sure the evidence is still available. The investigator should then list the item number and the IMPD property room ACE number on the analysis request card.
- D. The investigator should list all the evidence to be analyzed on the initial request and indicate the order of probative value (from best to worst). The lab will enforce its tier policy (see Biological Evidence submission guidelines) as appropriate. The Biology Unit can be contacted to aid with this process. Submitting extra requests for analysis every few years should be avoided.
- E. Requests should be specific. Blanket requests (e.g. DNA on all items) will not be accepted.

II. Evidence not acceptable for analysis

- A. Items that have already been processed by the Latent Fingerprints or Firearms units of the IMCFSA are no longer suitable for touch DNA analysis. An exception may be made if a beverage container was examined for fingerprints but there is a possibility of DNA around the containers’ opening.

- B. Spent cartridge casings will not be processed unless they are the only items of evidence.
- C. Items that have previously been examined by the Biology unit will generally not be reexamined.
- D. If a homicide victim is found fully clothed and there is no sign of sexual assault, autopsy samples will not be examined for sexual assault evidence.
- E. Clothing saturated with blood will not be examined for touch DNA.
- F. Bedding will generally not be examined for touch DNA.

Every case is different and these guidelines should cover the majority of evidence items. If an unusual scenario is encountered, please feel free to contact the either Biology Unit Supervisor (317-327-7307), the Assistant Serology Supervisor (317-327-7308) or the DNA Technical Leader (317-327-4940).