

AUTOPSY SAMPLE PRESERVATION

6.1 PURPOSE

To preserve autopsy samples for further analysis and/or longterm storage.

6.2 RESPONSIBILITY

Personnel qualified to perform Forensic Biology duties.

6.3 SAFETY

Use appropriate measures for the proper handling of a biohazardous material according to GL-2 (Safety Manual).

6.4 DEFINITIONS

- A. LIMS: Laboratory Information Management System
- B. OCME: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

6.5 PROCEDURE

6.5.1 Review autopsy sample submissions. Typically, OCME autopsy samples will be retained without inventory. These submissions will be transferred to the appropriate freezer storage location and the 'Autopsy Sample' request in LIMS will be cancelled.

6.5.2 If the autopsy submission contains items needing to be examined or tested, proceed with itemization below. A Sexual Assault Collection Kit or other swabs collected at autopsy will generally require male screen or body fluid testing (FB SOP-02). Other examination requests may also warrant itemization (i.e. fingernail samples).

6.5.2.1 Sub-itemize submission contents using a Physical Evidence Coversheet (FBQR-01). Label each original envelope/packaging with case identifiers and initials.

6.5.2.2 Sub-itemize contents in LIMS using the below designation examples. Creating/printing subitem barcodes may be necessary when transferring subitem to another unit. If necessary, autopsy sample envelopes may be further packaged in an additional barcoded manila envelope.

Examples:

- a. Envelope labeled w/ "Known head hair sample"
- b. Envelope labeled w/ "Known pubic hair sample"
- c. Envelope labeled w/ "All known body hair samples"
- d. Envelope labeled w/ "Questioned hair or other trace samples"
- e. Envelope labeled w/ "Fingernail scrapings/clippings"
- f. Envelope labeled w/ "Other biological samples"

6.5.2.3 Sub-itemized trace envelopes (known and questioned hair) will be placed in a larger manila envelope (approximately 10" x 13"), label with the Lab ID#, item #s and examiner's initials. After verification, seal with tape, initial the seal and place in trace storage ("*Trace Storage – retained trace*"). If blood-like material or other body fluid-like material is present, place in freezer storage ("*Freezer Storage*").

6.5.2.4 Fingernail samples:

- A. If not to be examined, place in a plastic bag, heat seal and initial. Place in freezer storage ("*Freezer Storage – fingernail scrapings/ clippings*").
- B. If to be examined, handle according to FB SOP-27 (Fingernail Sample Examination). Upon completion, place in freezer storage ("*Freezer Storage*").

6.5.2.5 If a previously made known blood card is present, barcode and transfer to "*FTA Blood Storage*".

6.5.2.6 If a known blood vial is present and no card was previously made, the blood vial will be handled according to FB SOP-07 (Whole Blood Preservation).

- A. Repackage the vial in its original container, seal and initial. If no appropriate container is present, use a 50ml falcon tube from Laboratory stock, seal and initial. A barcode may be necessary if transferring subitem to another unit. Place into refrigerator storage ("*Refrigerator Storage – OCME Bloods*").
- B. If the case warrants, containerize the item # (known blood sample) into the submission # (Autopsy Samples) in LIMS. If only the OCME has submitted evidence in the case, then the known blood sample will be retained. Otherwise return the known blood sample vial and container in the original packaging to the Evidence Receiving Unit.

6.5.3 Other biological evidence (i.e. muscle, liver, bone) will be placed in a designated bin in freezer storage:

- A. If not to be examined, transfer to "*Freezer Storage*".
- B. If to be examined, transfer to "*Freezer Storage To Be Examined*".

Note: If inventoried as part of an autopsy submission, then place in a plastic bag, heat seal and initial prior to storing.

6.5.4 Complete all LIMS requests according to GL-4 (LIMS).

6.5.5 If no analysis is performed on these samples, no report is generated.

Approved by Director: Dr. Guy Vallaro

6.6 REFERENCES

- A. GL-2 (Safety Manual)
- B. GL-4 (LIMS)

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