

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/ABBREVIATIONS

- 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 a designated freezer storage location. The 'Autopsy Sample' request in LIMS will be cancelled.

6.5.2 If the autopsy submission contains items requiring examination and/or testing, proceed with itemization below. A Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit or other swabs collected at autopsy will generally be prepped for Direct-to-DNA analysis according to case information. See FB SOP-02 (Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit Examination) for additional information. Other examination requests may also warrant itemization (i.e. fingernail samples).

6.5.2.1 Sub-itemize submission contents using a Physical Evidence Coversheet (FB QR-01) and label each original envelope/packaging with case identifiers and examiner's initials.

6.5.2.2 Sub-itemize contents in LIMS using the below designation examples. Creating/printing subitem barcodes may be necessary when transferring a subitem to another unit. 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 Known hair/other trace samples:

- A. Sub-itemized trace envelopes (known and questioned hair) will be placed in a larger manila envelope (approximately 10" x 13") and labeled with the case identifiers and examiner's initials.
- B. After verification, seal with tape, initial the seal and place in trace storage (*"Trace Storage – retained trace"*).
- C. 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 Known blood samples:

- A. If a previously made known blood card is present, barcode and transfer to *"FTA Blood Storage"*.
- B. 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).
 - 1. 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"*).
 - 2. If the case warrants, containerize the item # (known blood sample) into the submission # (Autopsy Samples) in LIMS.
 - a. If only the OCME has submitted evidence in the case, then the known blood sample will be retained.
 - b. Otherwise return the known blood sample vial and container in the original packaging to the Evidence Receiving Unit.
- C. If both a known blood card and blood vial are present, it is not necessary to make a stain from the blood vial.

6.5.3 Other biological evidence (including, but not limited to, muscle, liver, bone):

6.5.3.1 This evidence will be placed in a designated secure freezer storage location.

A. If not to be examined, transfer to “*Freezer Storage*”.

B. If to be examined, transfer to “*Freezer Storage To Be Examined*”.

6.5.3.2 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 testing is performed on these samples, then no Forensic Biology report is required. See FB SOP-05 (Case Records and Reports) for additional information.

6.6 REFERENCES

A. GL-2 (Safety Manual)

B. GL-4 (LIMS)