

*Approved by Director: Dr. Guy Vallaro***A. PURPOSE:**

The Division of Scientific Services expects employees to be of good moral character and to represent the State, Department and Division in a professional and ethical manner. The significance and potential consequences of the work performed in the DSS laboratories places great emphasis on the analysts, and all workers, to ensure the processes and analyses performed are correct and without bias. The laboratories must strive, through ethical behavior and quality of work, to maintain operational integrity through impartiality.

B. PRINCIPAL:

Any action that calls into question the credibility of the work of an individual, laboratory section or the whole Division may have a detrimental effect on the credibility of all analysts, and analytical work of the Laboratory as a whole. All members of the Judicial, Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement and Scientific communities rely on the quality, and impartiality of the Forensic Laboratory.

Employees have a responsibility to avoid involvement in any activity or action that might be construed as compromising the forensic defensibility of the laboratory's analyses, reports, or their personnel integrity.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES:

It is the responsibility of all DSS employees, no matter what job function they perform, to work in an ethical manner.

Note: as State employees all employees of the DSS are also answerable to the Guide to the Code of Ethics for Public Officials and State Employees

All employees must adhere to the guidance set forth in the ASCLD/LAB *Guiding Principles of Professional Responsibility for Crime Laboratories and Forensic Scientists*.

Analysts are also responsible for adhering to the ethical guidelines of their respective professional organizations, such as the Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS).

D. PROCEDURE:

1. Employees of DSS must work in an ethical manner in all aspects of their job. This includes all aspects of case analysis, case reporting and testifying to work and relationships with vendors and customers. Employees are expected to resist any external commercial and financial pressures which may influence the work they perform.

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- a. The Division of Scientific Services Laboratories references the ASCLD/LAB *Guiding Principles of Professional Responsibility for Crime Laboratories and Forensic Scientists*. as part of this the Laboratories ethics policy. The ethics policies will be reviewed annually with all Division personnel. The record of this review will be maintained for a period no less than 10 years.
2. The following is guidance for ethical work behavior for all employees of DSS no matter what their title:
 - a. General Guidance:
 - i. Report any unethical behavior which may compromise the integrity of the laboratory
 - ii. Prior to taking on outside employment all employees must complete a DPS-259-C form (Request to Engage in Outside Employment) for approval. This form must be updated annually.
 - (a) When an employee of the Division performs consulting (paid or unpaid) work it must not interfere ethically with the work performed at the Division of Scientific Services.
 - iii. Assure that outside employment does not compromise the work performed for the division.
 - iv. Report conflicts of interests including those where personal or financial gains may be obtained
 - v. Maintain proprietary rights of vendors products
 - vi. Respect the work of fellow employees
 - vii. Respect the work environment of fellow employees
 - viii. Perform work in a way that supports a safe working condition for yourself and your fellow workers
 - b. Guidance for Performing Case Analysis:
 - i. Maintain impartiality when performing case analysis, minimize preconceived notions on case work. Be willing to rethink findings based on additional information presented.
 - ii. Maintain the confidentiality of cases
 - iii. Maintain the integrity of case materials
 - iv. Perform testing as set forth in SOPs
 - v. Report cases that present a conflict of interest to your Supervisor so that you are not assigned to work the case.
 - vi. Maintain accurate records of analysis

vii. Report mistakes made so they can be rectified not covered up

c. Guidance for Reporting Case Work/Testifying:

- i. Understand the limits of the methodologies performed
- ii. Understand the limits of your own expertise as pertaining to testifying on case findings and explanations
- iii. Honestly report and describe laboratory findings
- iv. Do not withhold information which could potentially be of significance in a case
- v. When opinions are given, make sure that it is clear that the statement is an opinion
- vi. Maintain impartiality when testifying

d. Guidance for Supervising or Managing other Employees:

- i. Do not use your position to unduly influence case analysis or those that report to you
- ii. Report conflicts of interest including those that could influence case analysis, hiring or purchasing
- iii. Report unethical behavior
- iv. Act on reported unethical behavior
- v. Take appropriate actions if a miscarriage of justice is discovered due to the unethical behavior, incompetent practices or other negligence

e. Purchasing:

- i. Do not make private agreements with vendors to aid them in obtaining state purchase contracts
- ii. Make purchasing decisions based on the needs of the testing/laboratory not on personal affiliations

f. Customers:

- i. Fairly and clearly communicate results of analysis
- ii. Make clear opinions vs. facts when discussing case work/findings

E. REFERENCES:

1. ASCLD/LAB Guiding Principles of Professional Responsibility for Crime Laboratories and Forensic Scientists http://www.ascl-d-lab.org/about_us/guidingprinciples.html

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2. Code of Ethics of the American Academy of Forensic Scientist www.aafs.org
3. Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientists Code of Ethics www.neafs.org
4. The Association of Firearms and Tool Mark Examiners Code of Ethics: <http://www.afte.org>
5. Guide to the Code of Ethics for Public Officials and State Employees; State of Connecticut Office of State Ethics;
http://www.ct.gov/ethics/lib/ethics/publications/public_officials_guide_09_final.pdf
6. The International Association for Identification of Ethics and Professional Conduct; theiai.org
7. CT DPS-259C Request to engage in outside employment;
www.ct.gov/cfpc/lib/cfpc/dps-259-c_request_to_engage_in_outside

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