A. **PURPOSE**:

The Division of Scientific Services encourages employees to stay current in their respective fields as part of the professional development program. DSS encourages the participation in professional organizations and outside training opportunities. The goal of Professional Development is to improve the Division as a whole through the advancement of the employees.

B. **RESPONSIBILITY**:

Director and Deputy Directors: support the professional development of employees.

Assistant Directors: support the professional development of employees.

Scientific Services Administrative Manager: support the professional development of employees.

Quality Section: aids in encouraging the Professional Development Program.

FSE III, II, I, (and other analysts however titled): are responsible to stay current in their discipline. Additionally analysts are responsible for supplying the Quality Section with documentation of professional development (i.e. course certificates, updated CVs, records of involvement in professional organizations).

C. **PROCEDURE**:

1. Professional Development Files:

   Professional Development files are maintained for all analytical personnel by the Quality Section. These files are transitioning to an electronic file cabinet maintained in Qualtrax. The Qualtrax document tree contains a file labeled “Personnel – Electronic Filing Cabinet”. Employees are required to update their files in this “cabinet” as required to keep it accurate. This file cabinet is broken down by section (Chemical Analysis, FB/DNA, Identification, Support Services and Management). For guidance on maintaining this file see ‘Qualtrax” below. Each personnel file contains the following folders:

   - Competency/Authorization
   - Education
   - External Training
   - Internal Training
   - Other
   - SOQ/CV (note SOQ’s are no longer used so analysts only having SOQs on file should transition to a CV.)

   a. Curriculum vitae: Analysts need to keep updated CVs as these are often required for discoveries. Analysts should attach updated CVs to the “SOQ/CV” folder.

   b. Documentation of Educational Background Training: all analysts must supply a copy of their diploma(s) and for DNA a copy of their transcripts. The documentation must be such that it meets the minimum educational requirement of the analyst’s title or for those in DNA to meet the FBI QAS requirements. Transcripts that clearly document the issuance of the stated degree can be used in place of a copy of a diploma. Documentation of education should be attached under the "Education" file.

c. Training Records. Full records of the training and competency testing are maintained by the Section Deputy Director or designee. The Section Deputy Director (or designee) is responsible to maintain the supporting training documentation (or TL in DNA).

d. Competency Records: Deputy Directors or Assistant Directors (TL in DNA) are responsible to document competency as outlined within section specific training procedures. The technical Lead or Supervisor of the specific unit will be involved in the documentation of competency. When a "competency" memo is written it will be attached to the "Personnel Authorization" workflow in Qualtrax. . A copy of the competency memo should be supplied to the analyst for their training binder. For guidance on initiating a "Personnel Authorization" workflow see "Qualtrax" below.

e. Authorization: Authorizations are required for all analysts (however titled) performing testing. Tasks that can influence results require authorization. Task requiring authorization include (but may not be limited to):

   i. Development, Modification, Verification & Validation of Methods
   ii. Performance of laboratory activities such as:
      (a) Performing testing
      (b) Sampling
      (c) Use of instrumentation
   iii. Analysis of results
   iv. Review of results - relating to review for trends or issues
   v. Authorizing results
   vi. Verifying results
   vii. Expressing Opinions or Interpretations (such as written through case reports or verbal such as for testimony)
   viii. Reporting results or Authorizing reports (such as part of an administrative review)

   Requests for authorizations should be specific to document what authorization is requested.

f. Authorization Letters:

   As analysts complete training and competency testing, Deputy Directors or Assistant Directors (or their designee) is responsible to obtain an Authorization certificate from the Director for the analyst to be authorized in the task(s). This is done using the "Personnel Authorization" workflow in Qualtrax (see below for guidance).

   Prior to 2019 Authorizations where documented as a letter or memo signed or initialed by the Director, currently this will be a certificate generated through Qualtrax (or a combination of both). Note that as transition to electronic authorization occurred a certificate would be issued after a signed authorization letter. The analyst was considered authorized based on the dated signed by the Director.

2. Professional Organizations:
    a. All employees are encouraged to join professional organizations pertinent to their field. The following is a partial list of appropriate organizations available:
        i. American Academy of Forensic Scientists
        ii. American Board of Criminalities
        iii. American Society of Question Document Examiners
        iv. American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors
        v. Association of Forensic DNA Analysts and Administrators
        vi. Association of Forensic Quality Assurance Managers
        vii. Canadian Association of Forensic Science
        viii. International Association for Identification
        ix. Northeastern Association of Forensic Scientists
        x. International Association for Chemical Testing
        xi. International Association for Property and Evidence
        xii. Society of Forensic Toxicologists
        xiii. The Association of Firearm and Toolmark Examiners
    b. When funding is available, DSS will pay for the annual membership in one organization per employee (maximum amount for each employee will be decided based on available funds). Employees joining professional organizations are asked to attach a copy of their membership certificate to the "other" folder in the "Personnel-Electronic Filing Cabinet".
3. Training Opportunities:
    a. Training is available from multiple sources. When training opportunities are known to a particular section, management will work to disseminate the information as appropriate. Any employee finding possible sources of training are encouraged to bring them to their Supervisor or Manager or the Quality Section.
    b. Training Opportunities may include:
        i. FBI Courses: when available a list is released annually of courses scheduled to be offered. These cover a variety of disciplines from DNA to Auditing to Crime Scene and instrumentation. The cost of these courses are usually covered by the FBI.
        ii. Markle Symposium: Presented through the University of New Haven; this symposium offers different topics related to the forensic sciences each year.
        iii. The Borkenstein Alcohol Course: Effects of Alcohol on Driving seminar and the Effects of Drugs on Driving seminar. These are week long courses.

iv. RTI: offers on-line courses in topics ranging from Toxicology to Ethics to Court Testimony. These courses range in time and many are free through the NIJ.

v. Vendors: Many vendors offer training in their specific instrumentation. These courses vary per company.

vi. Courses offered through Professional Organizations may include:

(a) NEAFS; offers short courses through Cedar Crest College. The courses offered vary each year. Partial cost of these course are usually covered through NEAFS.

(b) NEAFS; offers short courses during their annual meeting

(c) AAFS: offers short courses during their annual meeting

(d) AFQAM: offers short courses during their annual meeting

(e) IAI: offers short courses during the year

vii. Funding sources for training may include grant and union funds. Employees interested in attending a course should discuss with their Supervisor to determine if funding is available. Supervisors, Assistant Directors, Deputy Directors, the Director and the Quality Section may suggest training to individuals as appropriate opportunities arise.

viii. Analysts taking 'outside' training should attach copies of the training certificate to their personnel file in Qualtrax, in the "External Training" folder.

4. Scientific Articles and References:

a. Employees that are members in professional organization may receive Journals or have access to articles (free of charge) through the various organizations. Journals obtained as part of the membership to organizations that are funded by the DSS (through re-imbursement of annual dues) will be made available to the DSS. Journals and References are available on the shared drive, online and/or in the Laboratory Library. Supervisors will distribute copies of pertinent articles as appropriate. The Quality Section may suggest articles to sections through the Assistant or Deputy Director.

b. All employees are encouraged to share Scientific Articles that pertain to the Laboratory.

c. On-line Journals/articles are also available, these include:

i. Microgram – distributed by the DEA for drug chemistry

ii. Forensic Science Communications (archived publications) https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/about-us/lab/forensic-science-communications/aboutfsc.html

iii. The Internet Journal of Forensic Science http://ispub.com/IJFS

5. Presentations/Publications:
Analysts (however titled) may have the opportunity to give presentations at organized meetings. Analysts (however named) may have the opportunity to author or coauthor publications. These

presentations and publications will be pre-approved by the Director and documented on form: "Presentation/Publication Approval" found in the "General Laboratory Forms" folder in Qualtrax. The completed form will be maintained by the Quality Section.

6. Travel Authorizations:

   When an employee has approval to submit the training request, the employee must complete the Travel Authorization Worksheet and attach the supporting documentation on the training information. This documentation will be forwarded to administration and then forwarded to DESPP for final approval and funding allocation.

   If an employee is requesting time only, which may occur when traveling as part of DSS representative to an OSAC or SWGDAM meeting, the Travel Authorization Worksheet must be completed along with a copy of the invitation email/letter.

   A copy of the DSS Travel Authorization Worksheet can be found in Qualtrax under General Laboratory Forms. When possible travel authorizations should be completed and forwarded a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the date of travel.

7. Qualtrax: The following is guidance on the use of Qualtrax specific to use of the "Personnel – Electronic Filing Cabinet" and obtaining Personnel Authorizations.

   a. Personnel – Electronic Filing cabinet: This is replacing the Professional Development File previously maintained in the Quality Section. This is part of the document tree in Qualtrax. Employees have view and edit rites for their Personnel File only. The Director may grant view writes to others as needed. There is a folder for each section and within each section a file for each person in the section.
      Employees are responsible to keep these files up to date. To add documents in your Personnel File:
      i. Save the document on the LAN with the name appropriate to the document.
         (a) Example Doe, J CV Sept 2019. By adding the date the most recent CV can be determined if needed for a Discovery.
      ii. Log into Qualtrax
      iii. Click on "Documents" in the top blue control bar. This opens the document tree.
      iv. Click on "Personnel – Electronic Filing Cabinet". A folder for each section will open.
      v. Click on the appropriate section.
      vi. Click on the name the file with you name.
      vii. Click on the sub-folder in which to add the document. (Competency/Authorization, Education, External Training, Internal Training, Other, or SOQ/CV.
      viii. In the grey bar just below the blue Qualtrax control bar click on "create document here". A new window will appear.
         (a) Click on "Chose file". A screen will appear, this will allow you to search for the document (as saved in step 1) on your computer.
         (b) Click on the document then "open".

(c) Click the blue "Upload" button. If the document being added is not a PDF click the "Generate PDF" box under options.
(d) Click the blue "Create" button. This will save the document to the file chosen.

b. Personnel Authorization Workflows: Technical Leads and Managers have the ability to initiate this workflow.
  i. Log into Qualtrax
  ii. In the blue Qualtrax tool bar pick "Workflows".
  iii. From the drop down menu pick "Personnel Authorization". This will open a blank personnel authorization workflow. There are several sections that need to be completed to initiate this.
    (a) Employee Name: (choose appropriate person from the drop down menu).
    (b) Discipline: (choose the discipline from the drop down menu).
    (c) Category of Testing: (choose the categories that the authorization covers). To pick multiple categories hold the control button as a category is selected. The categories selected will show above the pick list.
    (d) Type of training: (chose from the list).
      (i) New Hire
      (ii) Current Analyst trained on new method
      (iii) Remedial training completed
      (iv) Reauthorized – non-remedial
    (e) Description of Methods – this is exactly what will show up on the certificate.
      (i) Example: NIBIN: Acquisition and Correlation of Firearms Evidence
      (ii) Example: Perform Validations and Verifications
      (iii) Consult with the Section Deputy Director for appropriate wording.
    (f) Level of Participation: (choose the level(s) form the list provided). Use the control button to select multiple levels. The level of participation will be dependent on the level of training and competency. Contact the Section Deputy Director or the Quality Section for guidance as to the appropriate levels based on the training.

      The list contains the following levels:
      (i) Utilize applicable equipment in methods described in SOPs
      (ii) Report, review and authorization or results
      (iii) Provide Testimony
      (iv) Perform technical reviews of cases and testimony
      (v) Perform Administrative Reviews
      (vi) Perform Validations in the Discipline
      (vii) Development of New Methods
      (viii) Modification of methods
      (ix) Verification in methods

(g) Attach Competency Memo: the competency memo is attached here. Click on the "Chose file" button. A pop up screen will appear that allows the competency letter to be chosen from the appropriate LAN system file. Once the file is chosen click "open" and then "upload". This attaches the memo to the workflow.
(h) Comments: Any extra information needed to clarify the authorization information can be typed in here. This is an optional field.
(i) Assistant Director/Supervisor Name: (choose from the drop down menu).
(j) Deputy Director Name: (choose from the drop down menu).
(k) TL of Unit: (choose from the drop down menu).
(l) Director Name: (chose from the drop down menu).
(m) Once all fields are complete click the "Send to TL" button.

If all of the fields are completed satisfactorily the workflow will go to the Technical Leader to the Assistant Director or Supervisor, then to the Deputy Director and then Director. If there are any issues a pink error box will appear on the right side of the screen stating what is needed. This simply means a required field was not completed.

Once each step is completed and the Director approves the authorization a certificate is created in Qualtrax and an email notification is sent to the analyst. The Quality Section will email a copy of the authorization certificate to the analyst for their records.