

A. PURPOSE:

Court monitoring is a tool used to aid employees so that they can improve how they present themselves and the case facts when they testify, and to ensure that laboratory personnel are appropriately representing the laboratory in the legal environment. The DSS uses direct observation (technical review of testimony) of a sample of employees annually to monitor the quality and appropriateness of the testimony provided. Additional methods to gain review and to identify needs for improvement can include telephone interviews, court monitoring and review of transcripts.

Individuals testifying within the DNA Unit will be monitored at least one time annually for each year testimony is provided. This review may be through direct observation, review of transcripts or review from the courts (as documented on form GL 17.1 Court Monitoring).

B. RESPONSIBILITY:

Analysts (however titled): supply courts with court monitoring forms when they testify.

Unit Supervisor or Leads (however titled): review completed court monitoring forms and address issues revealed in forms. When possible and appropriate attend court to observe employees as they testify.

Quality Manager/Assistant Quality Manager: review completed Witness Evaluation and Direct Observation forms, and maintain a log of testimony reviews. The Quality Section will use Qualtrax for the purpose of tracking testimony review requirements.

Director Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors: support the court monitoring process and provide guidance as required.

C. PROCEDURE:

1. Direct Observation: The DSS will periodically monitor the testimony of its employees through direct observation. The goal will be to monitor at least 1 analyst per discipline each year in which testimony is provided for that discipline.
 - a. Direct observation (or technical review of testimony) will be performed by someone that is competent in that discipline and is authorized to review testimony.
 - i. A member of the Quality Section or the Assistant Director or Deputy Director of a Section may perform a review by direct observation. This may occur as required for the needs of the DSS.
 - b. The first time an employee testifies as a representative of the DSS, a representative from the laboratory will be assigned to observe the testimony. Preferably this will be the Unit Supervisor or Lead but it can be another individual competent in the field.
 - c. Direct observation will be used for moot court testimonies.
 - d. Direct observation will be used in cases where there is a significant complaint about an individual's testimony.

- e. When direct observation is used, the monitor will complete a 'Testimony Review Direct Observation' form (GL-17.3). If the monitor is not the Unit Supervisor, the monitor will review the information with the Unit Supervisor. The form will be forwarded to the Quality Section.
 - i. The Quality Section will review the form and initiate a Qualtrax workflow.
- f. When performing a review of testimony the reviewer will consider all the topics as listed on form GL 17.3 including:
 - i. The analyst's ability to clearly and accurately communicate within the bounds of their area of expertise.
 - ii. Whether the analyst's testimony was consistent with the results as documented in the DSS report.
- 2. Review of Testimony Transcripts: In the event that there is not a 2nd person available or competent in a discipline transcripts can be obtained for the purpose of technical review of testimony.
 - a. The Section Manager will be responsible to obtain the transcripts from the court. These will be provided to the individual designated to review to records.
 - i. In the case of disciplines having only 1 competent analyst the Deputy Director will arrange for an external reviewer and will additionally assign either the section Supervisor or other appropriate individual to review the transcripts for appropriateness.
 - ii. The reviewer will write a memo stating that the testimony was reviewed adding any notes or suggestions and identifying any problem areas. This will be provided to the Deputy Director and the Quality Section.
 - iii. The documentation/notification of the review will be done electronically either by email or through Qualtrax.
- 3. Witness Evaluation form: These forms are used as a method of obtaining feedback from the customers of the DSS. These are supplemental to direct observation and will not replace that action.
 - i. The individual testifying is required to provide the courts with witness evaluation forms each time they testify. These may be provided to the court inspector/investigator to be distributed to the judge, prosecutor and defense attorney.
 - (a) It is suggested that the testifying analyst complete the date, court, witness name, lab case number, type of case and defendant on the form prior to submission to the court – this is to make the process easier for DSS customers.
 - ii. Completed forms are submitted to the Quality Section. These are scanned into Qualtrax and the analyst and analyst's Supervisor/Leads (however titled) are notified to review the evaluation form. This is documentation that the analyst was provided feedback on their testimony.
 - (a) If the analyst has questions concerning the evaluation they should direct the questions to their Supervisor or Leads.

Approved by Director: Dr. Guy Vallaro

- iii. It is recognized that a witness evaluation may be affected by the reviewer's opinion of the factual content of the testimony and/or the outcome of the case. If a poor review is given and it appears that this has occurred a note may be placed with the review by the Deputy Director, Assistant Director, Supervisor or Lead, and/or Quality Manager/Assistant Quality Manager.
 - iv. The Deputy Director, Assistant Director, Supervisor/lead, Quality Section or Director can require remedial training (e.g. moot court or other instruction) based on the review of the court monitoring documents.
 - b. Telephone Contact with attorneys: this approach will be infrequently used due the inconvenience it may cause the reviewers. When used, contact will generally be made by the Unit Supervisor/Lead or Deputy Director. Feedback regarding the quality of the testimony, specifically asking where improvements are needed will be requested.
 - i. The person contacting the attorney may use the witness evaluation form (GL-17.1) to document the review.
4. Review and Feedback:
- a. All reviews, whether obtained through direct monitoring, review of transcripts, feedback from the courts or interview with the courts, will be directed through the Quality Section. All such monitoring documents will be scanned into Qualtrax and the appropriate workflow will be initiated.
 - i. Notification will be sent through Qualtrax to the Supervisor/Lead, Deputy or Assistant Director and the testifying analyst to review the form.
 - ii. Upon receipt of a notification the analyst and Supervisor/Leads, Deputy or Assistant Director are responsible to review the form and document their review within the workflow.
 - b. Reviews which are not favorable may require further training; this will be assessed by the Supervisor/Lead with the Quality Section and Deputy and Assistant Directors for appropriate follow-up.
 - c. Witness Evaluation forms or notes of direct observations will be maintained with the Quality Section for a period of no less than 10 years. Employees need not officially maintain their copies of the Witness Evaluation forms.
 - d. Section Supervisors/Leads may choose to hold post testimony interviews with Unit employees to evaluate/address any concerns the employee or the Supervisor/Leads may have concerning specific case testimony.
 - e. The Quality Section will run a report no less than once annually (usually as part of the internal audit) to determine if all the monitoring guidance has been met for the year. This includes:
 - i. Testimony review of all DNA analysts that have testified within the calendar year.
 - (a) The QS will maintain a list of all DNA analysts, if they testified in the year or not and if they did testify if a review was obtained of at least one testimony. Generally this will be through a

review of court activity in JusticeTrax but may also include an email query to all Unit analysts to determine if they have testified in the calendar year.

- ii. Testimony review of a minimum of 1 analysts per discipline within the calendar year.
- iii. Testimony review of all new analysts providing their first testimony.
- f. Qualtrax workflows will minimally capture:
 - i. Analyst's name
 - ii. Discipline in which testimony was given.
 - iii. Date of testimony
 - iv. Court
 - v. Case number
 - vi. Copy of the completed review form
 - vii. Documentation of review by the analyst, Unit Lead or Supervisor and Unit Manager.
- 5. Subpoenas and Court Appearances:
 - a. All subpoenas need to be logged in to JusticeTrax. Any employee receiving a subpoena that has not come in through administration must supply a copy to administration. The analyst or a member of administration will log the subpoena into JusticeTrax under the specific case.
 - i. Note there are times where no case number will be associated with a subpoena such as within the Breath Alcohol area where testimony may be related to breath alcohol testing performed by a police agency. The Unit will still provide a copy of the subpoena to administration.
- 6. Analysts shall ensure that the subpoena and court appearance information is updated in JusticeTrax as appropriate.
 - a. Information of the date of appearance, court, docket number and other information can be added as known.
 - b. Information on the time for preparation and testimony must also be updated upon completion of the testimony.
 - c. If the subpoena is canceled this information is to be added to JusticeTrax.
 - d. See GL-17.2 for guidance in using JusticeTrax to log in and updating subpoena information.