

**A. Purpose:**

To establish guidelines for the examination of latent print evidence.

**B. Responsibility:**

Latent Print Examiners

**C. Procedure:**

1. When processing latent print evidence, lab coats, masks and gloves will be worn. Other items such as sleeves or splash protectors will be worn as needed based on case and/or personal protection requirements.
2. Eye protection will be worn whenever there is a possibility of injury to the eyes.
3. Fume Hoods and Down Flow Workstations will be utilized whenever possible during the application of various chemical and powdering techniques.
4. For evidence that has both Latent Print and DNA requests, all equipment which will be handled during the examination process will be wiped down with an appropriate decontamination solution (refer to GL-2). This equipment includes writing instruments, cameras, tweezers and magnifying glasses. The examiner will be mindful of contamination.
5. The examination process will be documented on the appropriate worksheet (i.e. QR-LP1a, QR-LP1c, QR-LP1d, QR-LP-10, QR-LP11, QR-LP12, QR-LP-13, QR-LP-14). Worksheets will be completed on every case which involves an examination. In instances where a submission is received and not examined, the acronym "NEATT" may be written on a photocopy or photograph containing the evidence labeling of such item to indicate "No Examination At This Time". The NEATT document will be kept in the case file.
6. All examinations will start with a thorough visual examination of the submitted evidence. After the initial visual examination, the examiner will determine the appropriate sequential method(s) of processing to be utilized. Each processing step will be documented on the appropriate worksheet (i.e. QR-LP1c or QR-LP-13), including the use of alternate light sources and lasers. Friction ridge skin impressions of value will also be documented on the worksheet.
7. Any friction ridge skin impressions of value must be captured in a method that makes them recoverable, meaning they must be captured in a way that protects the impression from being compromised. Developed impressions may fade or be otherwise compromised from other testing techniques (i.e. DNA). Impressions of value may be lifted, digitally photographed, or scanned.
- 7.1 The determination to obtain lifts after processing is at the option of the examiner. The lifting of a latent impression will only be executed after adequate photographs have been taken. All generated lifts shall contain the laboratory case number, item number and the examiner's initials. Laboratory generated lifts will be itemized in LIMS and will be treated as evidence, including tracking all

transfers in LIMS. Laboratory generated lifts should be transferred to the submitting agency after they are no longer needed for examiner review. If the lifts are being retained in-house, they will be treated as evidence and transferred into a secure storage location.

- 7.2. Latent impressions of value may be captured using digital imaging, which may include scanning. Images of the latent impressions of value will be copied to disc media which will be finalized (write protected). It is recommended that the images be both in JPEG and RAW format when using a digital camera. If using a scanner, RAW format might not be available, refer to LP SOP-12 for other available formats. The disc(s) will be itemized in LIMS and all transfers shall be documented in LIMS. The disc(s) containing the images of the latent impressions of value will be labeled with the case number, item number and the initials of the examiner preparing the disc(s). The LIMS description of the disc(s) should indicate the source of the images. An index sheet of the digital files located on the disc(s) will be printed and placed into the case jacket. Any disc(s) created with non-recoverable latent impressions of value shall be transferred to the technical reviewer and the contents of the disc(s) will be checked against the printed index sheet. This check is indicated on the Case Review Form (QR-LP4). Upon completion of the technical review, the disc(s) will be transferred back to the original examiner. The disc(s) will then be transferred to the submitting agency with a copy of the report. Refer to LP SOP-12 for further guidance on digital image management.
8. A virtual case folder will be created by the examiner that will incorporate the laboratory case number. This folder will be used to hold image files and other electronic documents. After the case has been technically and administratively reviewed, the virtual folder shall be copied to a secure server. If there are latent impressions of value in the case, the folder will also be written to a write protected digital media disc(s). If there are no latent impressions of value the examiner has the option of not making the write protected disc. If write protected disc(s) were made or not will be indicated on the Case Review Form (QR-LP4). If disc(s) are made, the examiner will print out a list of the files on the disc(s). The print out will document the pathway of the disc to verify the files were written to the disc(s). The print out will be attached to Case Review Form (QR-LP4). The examiner will itemize the disc(s) in LIMS and any transfers of the disc(s) shall be documented in LIMS. The disc(s) should be transferred to Latent Print File Storage at the completion of the case. At a future time, the disc(s) may be transferred to an archive storage area of the laboratory.
9. In cases in which the submitting agency submits lifts and the examiner documents the lifts with a digital image, these images are considered as working/examination files/records. Refer to LP SOP-12 for further guidance on digital image management.
10. When the examination is completed, all evidence should be marked by the examiner for identification at a later time. There will be times when marking evidence is neither realistic or appropriate. This may be more common with some types of evidence than others. When evidence is not marked the examiner will make every effort to assure that it is properly documented for

identification at a later time. The examiner will also mark the outer packaging that the evidence is contained in with his/her initials.

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