

**A. Purpose:**

To establish guidelines for the processing 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. All equipment which will be handled during the examination process including: writing instruments, cameras, tweezers and magnifying glasses will be wiped down with an appropriate decontamination solution (as determined by the DNA section) prior to latent print analysis of items that will later be swabbed for DNA. The examiner will be mindful of contamination issues.
5. The examination process will be documented on the appropriate worksheet (i.e. QR-LP1a, QR-LP1b, QR-LP1c, QR-LP1d, 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. A thorough visual examination of submitted evidence will be conducted. Visible friction ridge skin impressions of value will be documented (see SOP-LP-01).
7. The examiner will determine the appropriate method of processing to be utilized. Developed friction ridge skin impressions of value will be documented on the processing worksheet (i.e. QR-LP1c or QR-LP-13). The examiner will determine the next appropriate step(s) when utilizing sequential processing techniques. Each processing step will be documented, including the use of alternate light sources and lasers.
8. The determination to obtain lifts after processing are at the option of the examiner. The lifting of a latent print will only be executed after adequate photographs have been taken. All generated lifts shall contain the laboratory case #, Item#, and the examiner's initials. Laboratory generated lifts will be itemized in LIMS. Laboratory generated lifts will be treated as evidence and tracked in LIMS.

- 8.1 In processing cases, if latent prints of value are identified and not lifted or not recoverable, these impressions shall be documented through digital imaging. The digital images captured on the camera card are normally located in a folder on that card. This folder will be forensically imaged and transferred to a disc media which shall be finalized (write protected). A printout (index sheet) of the digital files located on the camera card will be included in the case jacket.

In the event that the digital image is captured using a scanner, the folder in which the images reside will be forensically imaged and transferred to a disc media which shall be finalized (write protected). A printout (index sheet) of the files digital located in the original scanner folder will be included in the case jacket.

The disc will be labeled with the case number, item number and the initials of the examiner preparing the disc. The disc shall be itemized in Justice Trax and treated as evidence. The Justice Trax description of the disc should indicate the source of the images containing the latent impressions. This disc will be turned over to the submitting agency for safekeeping after it is no longer needed for examiner review. Exact copies of the original captured digital images of latent prints may be stored in a virtual folder as examination records.

During technical review, the disc shall be transferred to the technical reviewer and the contents will be checked against the printed index sheet of the original listed files on the camera card or scanner folder. This check is indicated on the Case Review Form (QR-LP4). Upon completion of the technical review, the disc is transferred to the original examiner and later returned to the submitting agency. Refer to LP SOP-12 for further guidance on digital image management.

- 8.2 Laboratory generated lifts will be itemized in Justice Trax and turned over to the submitting agency for safekeeping after they are no longer needed for examiner review.
9. In cases in which the submitting agency submits lifts, 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.