

Approved by Director: Dr. Guy Vallaro

- A. Purpose: Administrative**
- B. Responsibility: Assigned section staff**
- C. Procedure:**

2 Preliminary Considerations

A General

1 Originals to be considered “best evidence”

2 No definite (positive) opinion to be rendered in cases where photocopy, microfiche and/or facsimile copies are the only documents submitted for examination. If the suitability of the evidence is in question;

- a Contact submitting agency and advise person requesting the examination of the situation.**
- b If the evidence is the best available, inform individual requesting the examination of the problems associated.**
- c Make note for file, including date, time, individual(s) spoken to, etc. concerning the suitability of the evidence.**

3 Standards/Specimens/Samples to be examined

- a Originals to be considered “best evidence”**
- b No definite (positive) opinion to be rendered in cases where microfiche and/or facsimile copies are the only documents submitted for examination.**

4 Types

- a “Natural” [non-requested] Known writing samples - standards which contain Known handwriting of an individual which were prepared [without being specifically solicited] in the normal, routine course of business or personal occurrence or activity.**
- b “Requested” writing specimens - standards which are obtained from (prepared by) a subject in the presence of an investigator or examiner for the specific purpose of comparison with writing(s).**

5 Obtaining writing specimens

- a “Natural” [non-requested] writing/signatures - See “Possible Sources” list contained in Attachment A of this Section.**
- b “Requested” writing specimens.**
 - Dictate specific text to subject.**
 - Include any misspelled words which appear in writing.**
 - Include words or sentences which appear in writing**
 - Obtain a sufficient number of standards to determine the natural variation of**

the handwriting and/or signature of the subject.

Unaccustomed (awkward hand) handwriting samples should be taken whenever possible.

6 Examination Reports

- a** An examination report will be completed for each case examined by the Document Section. The report will be completed on the standard "Connecticut Department of Public Safety-Division of Scientific Services" computerized "Examination Report" form and will be prepared as soon as possible after completion of the examination process. The report shall be accurate, clear, unambiguous and objective.
- b** The conclusions of the examination must be conveyed in clear, concise and accurate manner. Opinions rendered in the report will be qualified so as to express the proper weight that can be assigned to the evidence submitted for examination. Only those opinions outlined in the "Opinion Terminology" section
- c** The completion of the examination report shall include an administrative and technical reviews by separate, independent competent and proficiency tested examiners.
- d** In the event of an additional submission of evidence by submitting agency, a supplemental examination report will be generated and clearly labeled as such.
- e** In the event of an administrative error in a completed examination report, an amended examination report will be generated and clearly labeled as such.

B Opinion Terminology

- 1** *Positive Identification* - This is a definite conclusion of identity and is an expression of the highest degree of confidence. There are no reservations what-so-ever. This opinion means that there is excellent agreement in all of the important aspects of the comparison and the absence of any significant differences.
- 2** *Highly Probable Identification* -The evidence is very persuasive, but there is some critical feature or quality which creates a small amount of doubt, thereby making identification impossible
- 3** *Probable Identification* -The evidence is very persuasive, but there is some critical feature or quality which creates a small amount of doubt, thereby making identification impossible -The evidence points rather strongly; there are several significant similarities when comparing the Questioned and the Known documents. However, there are also a number of irreconcilable and/or unexplainable differences.
- 4** *Non-Conclusive* -Unable to identify or eliminate, totally inconclusive. This terminology is used when there are significantly limited factors such as lack of individual characteristics, limited amount of and/or known characters, disguise, lack of comparable exemplars, etc.
- 5** *Highly Probable Elimination* -The evidence is very persuasive, however there is some

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critical feature or quality which creates a small amount of doubt, thereby making elimination impossible.

6 *Probable Elimination* -The evidence points rather strongly; there are several significant differences when comparing the Questioned and the Known documents. However, there are also a number of similarities.

7 *Elimination* - There is no doubt that the questioned and known documents do not share a common source.

NOTE: Probability, as used in rendering document opinions, is not a statistical measurement but a measure of the examiner's confidence, based on scientific principles and training, education and experience.

C Distribution of Report

1 Original to be file in case file at Evidence Receiving Unit

2 First photocopy with original initials to be provided to Requesting Agency.

3 Second photocopy with original initials to be maintained in case file at Document Unit.

4 With the exception of the following, additional copies of the examination report will not be provided without the expressed approval of the Agency who originally requested the examination.

a A lawful subpoena.

b Request of the appropriate prosecutor or States Attorney's office. Except those cases involving examinations which were conducted at the request of the Public Defenders Office.

5 The examination report shall be generated in the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS).

D Retention/Storage

1 In addition to the photocopy maintained in the case file in the Document Unit, the report will also be stored on Document Unit's computer hard drive

2 Examination case files will be stored in appropriate storage containers. These containers will be maintained and secured at the "Connecticut Department of Public Safety-Division of Scientific Services" facilities.

3 All files will be retained for periods of time as established by appropriate State and Federal statutes.

4 No examination case file(s) and/or related material(s) will be removed from the facility without the approval and knowledge of appropriate supervision.

D. Sources of Error: Not applicable

E. References: See Bibliography/Reference Materials.

State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection
Division of Scientific Services

Documents outside of Qualtrax are considered uncontrolled.