

**ER SOP-01 General Guidelines for Accepting Evidence
Submissions**

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Page 1 of 3

Approved by Director: Dr. Guy Vallaro

A. Purpose: A listing of general considerations when accepting physical evidence submissions at the Division of Scientific Services.

B. Responsibility: Evidence Control Officers (however titled) or designees.

C. Procedure:

1. Physical Evidence submitted to the Division of Scientific Services (DSS) may be accepted from any of the following sources: CT State Police, Local law enforcement agencies, Federal agencies, State's Attorney's Offices, Public Defender's Offices, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, other authorized State agencies (Refer to General Statute 29-7b), or out-of-state agencies with *prior* authorization by the Director of the Division of Scientific Services. No evidence will be accepted from private citizens. All evidence received into the DSS should be collected and/or processed according to procedures listed in the most current version of the CT Division of Scientific Services Evidence Submission Guidelines.

If for any reason (such as a court order) evidence is to be accepted from a private attorney, the Director must give written approval to do so.

2. All representatives from an agency submitting or picking up physical evidence will sign into the Evidence Receiving Log Book.
3. The Division of Scientific Services will not examine evidence previously examined by other agencies or experts, except in instances as approved by the appropriate Deputy Director or the Director of the Division of Scientific Services. If an Evidence Control Officer (ECO) finds that a case has been previously analyzed by a laboratory outside of the Division they must contact the appropriate Deputy Director. The Deputy Director is responsible for obtaining permission from the Director to accept such a case.
4. Physical evidence submitted to the Division of Scientific Services must be accompanied by a completed "Request for Analysis" form (SOP-ER-02:1), with exceptions being autopsy samples received from the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner and DUI kits that are mailed in. All DUI kits should be accompanied by a completed "Request for Examination of Specimens for Alcohol/Drugs" form (DPS 9-C).

Note: If the submitting agency representative has used a previous version of the above listed forms, the ECO may accept this or ask them to transfer the information onto the current version.

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Page 2 of 3

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5. If priority handling or special examinations are required for a case, the submitting agency should make such requests through the Director of the Division of Scientific Services.
6. In order to prevent sample loss, sample contamination, and deleterious change to a sample, physical evidence submitted to the Division of Scientific Services must be properly packaged and sealed with evidence tape, labels, or by some other tamper-evident method. The seal must be initialed. Evidence not properly packaged or sealed may be returned to the submitting agency for appropriate packaging prior to being accepted at the Division of Scientific Services.
7. All evidence will be handled in a manner that ensures the integrity of the evidence and guards against loss, deterioration or degradation. A refrigerator/freezer is provided for human remains and autopsy specimens, urines, sexual assault kits, bloods and other physical evidence that may need to be kept at a constant temperature until such time as these materials can be transferred to the appropriate section.
8. Evidence is typically submitted through the Evidence Receiving Unit (ERU). With prior approval from the Director of the DSS, some exceptions will be allowed. These exceptions include, but are not limited to, Latent Prints, Computer Crimes, Imprints and Multimedia evidence. Refer to unit specific SOP's regarding evidence submission, when applicable.
9. When agencies submit electronic evidence to the ERU, a checklist (QR-CC-1) must be provided along with any other required paperwork. This checklist is provided by the Computer Crime and Electronic Evidence Unit and filled out by the submitting agency. This paperwork is provided a case generated barcode.
10. When firearms submitted to the Division of Scientific Services are to be examined by a unit other than Firearms first (Fingerprints, Forensic Biology, and Trace for example), these firearms will be checked for safety. Personnel from the Firearms unit are called by the ERU to verify that these weapons are considered safe. They will be permitted into the Evidence Receiving Unit and will verify the firearm is unloaded. They will then apply a "safety check" red stamp (located in ERU) on the outside of the package containing the firearm.

During the entire "safety check" process, the chain of custody of the firearm is maintained in JusticeTrax.

11. If it is communicated or stated that the submitted material may be a chemical weapon (weapons of mass destruction), may represent a biological threat (suspicious unknown materials), and/or may be a nexus for possible terrorism, the Director or designee must be consulted. The Director or designee should instruct the submitting agency to submit the items to the CT Department of Public Health, Biological Sciences Laboratory. Upon completion of their analysis, the evidence may be

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Page **3** of **3**

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submitted to the Division of Scientific Services for further examination. A CT Department of Public Health report stating that the evidence is **not** a threat must be submitted along with the appropriate submission paperwork required by the Division of Scientific Services.

References:

2. CT General Statute 29-7b
3. CT Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection A & O Manual, 18.02.05
4. CT Division of Scientific Services Evidence Submission Guidelines

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