

TENNESSEE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Forensic Services Division

Evidence Unit Standard Operating Procedures Manual

Evidence Submission – Blood Alcohol Kits



2.0 Evidence Submission – Blood Alcohol Kits

Drop Box:

- 2.1 Each TBI Crime Lab will maintain a drop box for the hand delivered submission of Toxicology evidence collection kits. Each drop box will be clearly labeled as such. The processing of Blood Alcohol Kits is assigned to a Forensic Technician in either the Evidence Receiving Unit or the Toxicology Unit.
- 2.2 The drop box will be placed in the lobby area of each Evidence Receiving Unit, in such a way as to be accessible to individuals submitting evidence. The drop box is for the submission of Toxicology evidence collections kits during regular business hours only.
- 2.3 The drop box is designed such that Toxicology evidence collection kits may be deposited by submitting individuals and securely stored until picked up by TBI Crime Lab Personnel.
- 2.4 The appropriate supervisory personnel will assign keys to the drop box.
- 2.5 All Toxicology evidence collection kits submitted via the drop box will be entered into the chain-of-custody as “Submitted by” the Requesting Agency, “via” the “BA Kit Drop Box” at the date and time collected from the drop box.
- 2.6 When practical, Toxicology evidence collection kits should be submitted via the drop box. If, however, circumstances require submission directly to a laboratory staff member, then that laboratory staff member will be responsible for initiating the chain-of-custody for that Toxicology evidence collection kit.

Mailed Toxicology Evidence

- 2.7 Blood Alcohol Kits should be mailed from delivery services that have tracking capabilities. The processing of mailed Toxicology evidence is assigned to the Forensic Technicians in either the Evidence Receiving Unit or the Toxicology Unit. Toxicology evidence submitted by mail or other delivery service will be entered into the LIMS chain-of-custody as: “Submitted by” the Requesting Agency, “via” the delivery service. **(Specify what delivery service and the tracking number if available).** The chain of custody will begin once evidence is received by a crime lab employee. The TBI mailroom will not be part of the chain of custody.



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- 2.8 A Toxicology Forensic Technician and/or Forensic Scientist will receive the Toxicology evidence from an Evidence Receiving Forensic Technician after processing.

Toxicology Evidence Types

- 2.9 The Toxicology Unit analyzes samples submitted by law enforcement or medicolegal officials to aid in determining the absence or presence of alcohol, drugs, and/or other chemicals in samples. Typical samples submitted are biological fluids, such as blood, urine, and vitreous humor, but may also include other liquids, solids, and/or tissues. The majority of submitted samples are associated with motor vehicle offenses, but may also include death investigation cases, drug facilitated sexual assault (DFSA), and other crimes that require toxicological examination.

Toxicology Evidence Submission

- 2.10 The TBI provides user agencies with kits for sample collection. The standard kit contains the following:
- Two (2) 10 mL gray-top glass tubes for blood collection (containing 20 mg potassium oxalate and 100 mg sodium fluoride)
 - Packaging/safety material
 - Alcohol/Toxicology request form
 - Cardboard box pre-addressed to the TBI Crime Lab
- 2.11 While most evidence is submitted in the provided TBI Blood Alcohol/Toxicology Evidence Collection Kit, other evidence packaging will also be accepted.
- 2.12. It may be necessary to repackage evidence in a more appropriate container if leaking, damaged, etc. Any repackaging or damage will be documented in the case file.

Evidence Receipt

- 2.13 Evidence may be received and processed by the Evidence Receiving Unit or received unprocessed into the Toxicology Unit.



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Transfer of Processed Evidence

- 2.14 All evidence transferred into or out of the unit must be safely packaged with a proper seal. However, evidence transferred directly from unit to unit must be safely packaged, but is only required to have a convenience seal. See chapter 3.0 (Terms and Definitions) of the TBI QAM.
- 2.15 All processed evidence and/or packaging must be labeled with a bar coded laboratory case number.

Processing of Toxicology Evidence

- 2.16 Inspect for proper seal and handle one piece of evidence at a time. The evidence packaging will be opened to retrieve the evidence and request for examination form. The evidence packaging may then be discarded.
- 2.17 The request for examination form will be reviewed, ensuring that the information on the form matches any information on the submitted evidence. Minor discrepancies may be resolved by contacting the submitting agency, verifying driver's license information, etc. In the event that a discrepancy brings into question the identity of the subject/victim or the integrity of the evidence, then the submitting agency shall be contacted for resolution. Any discrepancy and/or resolution will be documented in the case file.
- 2.18 The name of the subject/victim will serve as the unique evidence identifier until the laboratory case number is generated and written or affixed. If the submitted evidence is not labeled with a subject and/or victim name, then the name will be added on a label as a unique identifier. Any label addition will be documented in the case file. For Digital Documentation, this will include taking a picture of the unlabeled evidence and then an additional photograph once the unique identifier label has been added.
- 2.19 The evidence receipt will be documented in the case file including: the initials of the laboratory employee receiving the evidence, packaging and seal (see the Evidence Description Appendix), method of receipt, date and time of receipt, and/or submitting individual and/or agency.
- 2.20 A description of the physical evidence may be documented digitally using the Mideo system. Outer packaging will still be documented by hand in the case file.

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- 2.21 Using the request form as a reference, the case information and chain of custody will be entered into LIMS and a unique laboratory/exhibit number will be created. Bar coded case folder labels and evidence labels will be printed and affixed on/in the master case folder and each piece of evidence and/or outer packaging, respectively.
- 2.21.1 When batch processing blood alcohol kits, the technician shall perform a final check of label information against the request for analysis to ensure proper labeling. This will be documented by the technician placing their initials on the bottom left hand corner of the request for analysis form.

Toxicology Evidence Storage

- 2.22 All unprocessed blood alcohol evidence will be stored in the (PEV) refrigerator.
- 2.23 Toxicology evidence while in the progress of processing may be held in an individual technician's possession per chain of custody. Evidence stored in a shared location must be sealed.
- 2.24 For alcohol/toxicology test explanation see Appendix F.