



WISCONSIN STATE CRIME LABORATORY BUREAU

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WSCLB Latent Print Evidence Submission Guidelines

Effective 2/15/2019

The Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory Bureau (WSCLB) works to provide quality forensic results to assist agencies throughout Wisconsin. In an effort to be both as effective and efficient as possible, we have the following policies for all case submissions for latent print analysis:

PACKAGING REQUIREMENTS

Upon receipt, evidence items must be packaged to protect them from loss, cross contamination, and deleterious change.

- Potentially hazardous evidence must be packaged to ensure safe handling. Examples include:
 - Glass, knives, guns, etc. should be packaged in boxes
 - Syringes must be packaged in sharps containers.
- An item is expected to be comprised of one piece of evidence. If items are received packaged together, the number of items in the package will be considered to be the number of items submitted (i.e., three baggies packaged together will be considered three items).
- Submission of image media on CD/DVD should be separated by case. (i.e., individual case images should be submitted on separate discs with separate transmittals).
- Drugs must be separated from packaging for latent print processing and the packaging must be submitted as separate items.
- Layers of packaging from only **one** kilo/“brick” of controlled substance (i.e., layers of tape and plastic wrap from one “brick” of cocaine or one “brick” of marijuana) will be accepted per submission.
- Appropriate elimination standards (i.e., residents of the house, owners/drivers of the stolen vehicle, employees who handled items) should be submitted for all individuals with rightful access to locations and items where latent print evidence is collected. Latent Print Examiners may elect to not enter latent prints into AFIS/NGI without receipt of proper elimination standards.
- Known standards should be packaged separately from latent lifts.
- Known standards should be submitted even if the individuals have a record on file.
- All evidence packages must be sealed and initialed prior to submission to the WSCLB.

LABORATORY REQUEST DETAILS

- I. Provide a Transmittal of Criminal Evidence form.
- II. To accommodate timely results for all agencies throughout Wisconsin, WSCLB works evidence in the order of submission. Rush requests impede the process; therefore, they will be accepted on a limited basis. Consult with a WSCLB Criminalistics Supervisor or Forensic Case Manager with any rush request.

Latent print rush requests must pertain to:

- Significant public safety concerns regarding violent crimes against a person(s); or
- Approaching jury trial date (when suspect is in custody).

EVIDENCE ITEM ACCEPTANCE

The types and number of evidence items accepted are dependent on the case type. Known standards will not count against the number of items that may be submitted. If a probative association is obtained, no further analysis will be performed on remaining evidence; otherwise, additional items may be submitted.

- I. Limits on the first laboratory submission:

CASE TYPE	NUMBER OF ITEMS ALLOWED
Homicide	10
Other Crimes Against a Person (Armed Robbery, Assault, Battery etc.)	7
Burglary, Property Crimes, Possession cases	5

If no probative association is established from the first submission, a second submission is allowed with the same limit on the number of items in the table above.

For all cases, known standards from victim(s) or subject(s), latent lifts and image media (CD/DVD) are excluded from this submission guideline and have no submission limit.

Items of evidence taken directly from a defendant in a possession case (i.e., body cavity, pockets, or waistband) may not be processed for latent prints.

Based on our experience in analysis of small items of evidence measuring less than one square inch in size (see below), we typically do not obtain any usable latent prints. These items would include but are not limited to:

- Knotted baggie corners
- Miniature zip lock bags
- .22 cartridge cases
- Small syringes.

However, when there is a high degree of likelihood that the evidence submitted may provide probative results or investigative leads, these types of evidence will be examined.

Due to safety concerns, items of evidence that contain fentanyl or fentanyl analogs will not be processed for latent prints.

In addition, fired cartridge cases, heavily textured or soiled items, and improperly scaled items will not be examined. Exceptions to this guideline will be handled on a case by case basis if the submitting agency can demonstrate the probative value in examining these items.

To reduce the time it takes to obtain a laboratory report, provide known reference standards at the time of the case submission. Please notify the laboratory if analysis is no longer needed. Kindly note that additional time is necessary if multiple disciplines are requested of an item. When items are submitted for latent prints, they will not be processed for DNA.

It is best to confer with the forensic scientists and identify which items are best suited for testing. By eliminating items that are unlikely to yield probative results, the remaining items can be tested faster and will have greater evidentiary value.

Based on the circumstances of the case, the possibility of additional testing may be warranted. In such cases, the evidence items and testing requested should be discussed with the Forensic Case Manager of the WSCLB:

Kathy Mahnke
WSCLB Forensic Case Manager
(608) 609-6125
mahnkeka@doj.state.wi.us

Any questions concerning the policy should be directed to:

Nicole Roehm, M.S.
WSCLB Director
(414) 216-8769
roehmnl@doj.state.wi.us

Thank you for your cooperation in helping the WSCLB provide consistent, quality service to agencies throughout Wisconsin. We look forward to working with you.