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Governor

STATE OF MAINE
Maine State Police Crime Laboratory
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A Nationally Accredited Laboratory



Lt. Michael Zabarsky
Director

Evidence Packaging and Submission Guidelines

General Guidelines:

- Investigating officer must fully complete the required Evidence Submission Form prior to submission.
- Packaging material should protect the evidence from contamination, alteration, or tampering.
- Evidence must be air dried prior to submission (except for fire debris evidence and firearms located in water).
- All evidence being submitted must be clearly identified and inventoried prior to submission.
- If there is a safety concern regarding an item of evidence, the submitting officer may be required to repackage these items prior to submission.
- Known reference samples should be submitted for comparison to DNA and Latent Print evidence (e.g. elimination oral swabs/fingerprints from victims and homeowners). Known references are required when the submitted evidence belongs to or has been touched by the victim/homeowner.
- Submit only the comparison quality photographs of impressions you wish to be examined by Latent Prints, and not all crime scene photographs.

Packaging Material:

- Paper - used to package biological materials (e.g. paper bags and envelopes).
- Firearms and Knife boxes – tape seal all seams. All holes must also be covered with tape.
- Paint cans and Mason Jars – used to package items submitted for Fire Debris analysis.
- Plastic bags – only used for evidence that is to be frozen or cannot be dried.

Sealing Evidence:

- All evidence being submitted must be sealed and properly labeled prior to submission.
- All seals must be initialed and dated by the person sealing the evidence. These markings should cross from the tape to the packaging.
- Staples are not allowed.

Inventory of Evidence:

- All items being submitted must be inventoried on the Evidence Submission Form. The agency is responsible for the proper identification of each piece of evidence submitted.
- The item description should contain the location of where the item was found or whom the item came from (e.g. “swab-bottle from suspect”).

Separation of Items:

- The agency is responsible for ensuring that items collected from different locations and/or people are packaged in separate containers.
- Fingerprint lifts/shoe prints from the same case can be packaged together if each is clearly labeled.

Important Safety Information:

- All firearms must be unloaded and secured in a Firearms box with zip ties (unless approved by a Firearms examiner).
- All knives and sharp objects must be secured in a Knife box with zip ties.
- Do not submit items that contain drug evidence.
- Notify the ER technician when submitting the following: flammables, firearms, knives, sharps, glass, liquids, drug packaging/paraphernalia, currency, wet/damp items, decomposition, or hazardous materials.

