



Forensic & Technical Services Section Firearm and DNA Swab Submission Guidelines

Firearm Processing Protocol

- Unless otherwise directed by the submitting agency, the NJSP Crime Scene Investigation Units (CSI) will examine firearms for fingerprints, trace or biological evidence, and swab for possible DNA. The firearm will be examined for fingerprints utilizing the ForenScope Mobile Multispectral Imaging System and/or other fingerprinting methods. Any identifiable fingerprints will be captured either digitally or through manual fingerprint processing. NIBIN analysis will then follow these steps.
- See **F&TSS Crime Gun Protocol for DNA Processing of Firearms**. If an area of suspected blood is observed, the stained area will be swabbed and listed as a possible blood stain.
- **Cartridge casings will no longer be routinely processed for latent fingerprints as the surface area is not conducive to leaving identifiable prints.** Exceptions to this policy may be made on a case-by-case basis.

Requirements for DNA analysis

- DNA analysis of firearm swabs requires **pre-approval** from the DNA Laboratory. The swabs collected by CSI will be returned to the submitting agency, **without DNA analysis**, if pre-approval is not received.
- When submitting swabs directly to the laboratory for DNA testing, the same protocol as that used by NJSP CSI should be followed. See **F&TSS Crime Gun Protocol for DNA Processing of Firearms**. **Swabbing of cartridge casings will not be routinely performed.** Refer to the **NJSP Evidence Field Manual** for firearm swabbing recommendations or contact the laboratory.
- The following swabs are not routinely accepted: swabs from firearms taken directly from an individual, swabs from firearms handled by law enforcement officer(s) (LEO) without gloves* or swabs from casings/unfired ammunition.

*This scenario requires the submittal of a DNA reference sample from LEO at the time of submission.

DNA analysis is predicated on the eligibility requirements of the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS)

- **Firearm possession** related offenses or found firearms are **not** CODIS eligible and DNA analysis will be denied, without further information. If applicable, list all offenses that may affect CODIS eligibility (i.e., CDS distribution, eluding, assault, etc.)
- Qualified offender profiles in the CODIS database cannot be searched against DNA profiles developed from evidence (including firearms) that is not eligible for CODIS entry.
- A **direct comparison** to a DNA profile recovered from CODIS ineligible evidence can be conducted with the submission of a DNA reference sample from the suspect.

Brief History is required for all submission requests

- Include description of event, where the firearm was recovered, and if the firearm has been identified as stolen. Immediately contact the laboratory with **NIBIN/AFIS** hit documentation once obtained.
- **If firearm is recovered from a residence:**
 - Include the names of everyone who resides there, and the firearm recovery location. If related to CDS offenses, include proximity to CDS.
- **If firearm is recovered from a vehicle:**
 - Include the name of the registered owner/primary driver of the vehicle and firearm recovery location. If related to CDS offenses, include proximity to CDS. Indicate if the vehicle was stolen or used during the commission of another offense such as robbery, etc.