

MICHIGAN STATE POLICE

Forensic Science Division



Customer Notice – February 6, 2026

Changes to Submission Guidelines

The Michigan State Police (MSP) Forensic Science Division (FSD) has updated its submission guidelines, which govern the types of evidence and number of items which may be submitted to the laboratory for analysis. These guidelines also specify information required at the time of submission, as well as describe prioritization strategies employed within the laboratory.

General

- Introductory language on purpose was updated to be more neutral and for readability.

Biology

- Guidance on cases involving strangulation, collected via sexual assault kits (SAKs), was added.
- Familial searches were removed and replaced with a section on Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy (FIGG) facilitation.
- A reference to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories (QAS) was added for outsourcing and data ownership review.
- Activity level propositions are now addressed as a limitation for DNA.
- Guidance was added to specify that Biology should be given evidence before other disciplines in the laboratory.
- Post-conviction cases require notification of submission to Biology supervisors.
- A cross reference to the cold case Laboratory Operations Manual (LOM) policy was added.
- Additional guidance was provided on the acceptance of SAKs where release to law enforcement was not given.
- Additional description was given on one touch (minimally touched) vs continuous touch evidence.
- Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) eligible property crime evidence without a reference sample from the perpetrator is now acceptable for submission.
- The types of cases applicable for Y-chromosome short tandem repeat (Y-STR) testing were expanded (missing persons, FIGG, unidentified human remains (UHRs)).
- Guidance was added regarding alternate and surreptitious reference samples, as well as family reference test kits.
- Approvals by a laboratory director “or designee” have been defined as laboratory director or “biology unit supervisor” instead.
- Parentage was removed from the list of case types that require special approvals.

Firearms and Toolmarks

- Information is to be provided if evidence was previously submitted to another National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) center.
- NIBIN Lead Notification documentation must be submitted along with the items being resubmitted for a NIBIN lead confirmation.
- Clarification was added regarding which semiautomatic weapons are entered into NIBIN (pistols and rifles).
- Comparisons will only be conducted in cases with a known suspect.
- Firearms which are family heirlooms, or from a deceased member's collection, will not be examined.
- Semiautomatic shotguns were removed from the list of allowable entries into NIBIN, per changes to the January 1, 2026, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) Minimum Required Operating Standards (MROS).

Latent Prints

- The number of items accepted on a first submission will be limited:
 - Non-violent crimes: 2
 - Violent crimes: 7
- Emphasis is now placed on conversations with the laboratory to determine the best items for submission. Subsequent submissions can be discussed with the laboratory, if needed.
- Instructions were provided that printed versions of latent prints (hard copy on printer paper or photo paper) cannot be accepted for analysis.

Seized Drugs

- "Controlled Substances Unit" was updated to "Seized Drugs".
- Additional clarity was provided on how many items to submit.
- Guidelines for submitting marijuana evidence were consolidated to one section.
 - Avoid submitting suspected marijuana items when other non-cannabis items are submitted.
- References to "high" hazards were removed.
- Language was updated for general readability.

Trace Materials/ Fire Debris and Explosives/ Impressions

- Bulbs will no longer be accepted, and filament determination is no longer conducted.
- More than 5ml of possible ignitable liquids will not be accepted.
- More than 50ml of unknown liquids will not be accepted.

For additional information regarding these policy changes, please contact an FSD laboratory.