

## Procedure for Reporting Results

**1.0 Purpose** – To define the process for preparing and issuing Laboratory Reports.

**2.0 Scope** – This procedure applies to all employees who issue Laboratory Reports.

### 3.0 Definitions

- **Amended Report** – A Laboratory Report which has been revised, corrected, or remediated after the original Laboratory Report has been issued.
- **Original Report** – The Laboratory Report resulting from the initial forensic analysis conducted on evidence.

### 4.0 Procedure

#### 4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1** The Laboratory Report is the official document used to report results of analysis, the termination of analysis, or the transfer of evidence to another agency for analysis.
- 4.1.2** Forensic Scientists shall ensure that the results of analysis are reported accurately, clearly, unambiguously and objectively in accordance with the analysis methods used. The significance of an association shall be clearly communicated and qualified in the Laboratory Report. When a conclusion cannot be reached, the reason shall be stated in case documentation.
- 4.1.3** Forensic Advantage (FA) shall be used to generate all Laboratory Reports.
- 4.1.4** The Laboratory Report shall be titled as such.
- 4.1.5** The Laboratory Report shall identify the author of the Report.
- 4.1.6** The Laboratory Report shall be identified by the unique Laboratory number assigned to the evidence for which it contains results.
- 4.1.7** As provided by statute, the format of DWI case reports shall be regulated by the NC Department of Health and Human Services.

#### 4.2 Administrative Information

- 4.2.1** Each Laboratory Report shall reflect the date generated and the Laboratory case number. When multiple original Laboratory Reports are issued for the same case by the same Forensic Scientist, the subsequent Report number shall be included in the Report header, as appropriate (e.g., REPORT #2, etc.).
- 4.2.2** The Laboratory Report shall contain the name and address of the submitting agency. Additional information supplied by the submitting agency shall be included as appropriate (county, type of case, SBI file number, agency file number, date of offense, and subject).
- 4.2.3** Each page of the Laboratory Report shall be numbered beginning with page 2.

**4.2.4** Cross referenced case numbers shall appear on the first page of the report.

**4.2.5** Authorized recipients of Reports (other than the submitting officer) shall be listed on the Report. In addition, the following statement shall be included: "This Report contains the opinions/interpretations of the examiner(s) who issued the Report."

**4.2.6** Each Laboratory Report shall contain one of the following statements:

**4.2.6.1** For Drug offenses:

*I, (name), Attorney General of the State of North Carolina, hereby certify that the form identified as: North Carolina State Crime Laboratory, Department of Justice, Laboratory Report is a form approved by me for the purpose stated in G.S. 90-95(g) and approved by me in compliance with the said statute.*

**4.2.6.2** For other forensic examinations:

*I, (name), Attorney General of the State of North Carolina, hereby certify that the form identified as: North Carolina State Crime Laboratory, Department of Justice, Laboratory Report is a form approved by me for the purpose stated in G.S.8-58.20 and approved by me in compliance with the said statute.*

### **4.3 Listing and Description of Evidence**

**4.3.1** The Laboratory Report shall include a description of the evidence received and/or analyzed by the Forensic Scientist or Laboratory employee and any items sub-divided during analysis. If additional pieces of evidence requiring examination, other than those described on the submission form, are noted upon opening the evidence packaging, the analyst shall describe in the report additional evidence that was analyzed.

**4.3.2** The Laboratory Report shall reflect the date the evidence was submitted and the method by which submitted.

**4.3.3** When two or more Forensic Scientists analyze evidence from a submission, each Forensic Scientist shall list only those items analyzed, used for comparison, or received into his/her custody.

**4.4 Type of Analysis** - The Laboratory Report shall identify the type of analysis performed.

### **4.5 Results and Conclusions of Analysis**

**4.5.1** The evidence to which the results, opinions, interpretations and /or conclusions apply shall be stated in the Laboratory Report.

**4.5.2** If any items are not examined, the Forensic Scientist or Laboratory employee shall state that they were not examined in the Laboratory Report.

**4.5.3** The wording of the results and conclusions shall be consistent with that approved by the Forensic Scientist Manager or Section Supervisor.

**4.5.4** A quantitative numerical measurement result for barrel length, overall firearm length, drug weight (net only), alcohol/acetone quantitation, and reported drug quantitation shall be included in a Laboratory Report and the uncertainty of measurement (when established) shall be reported clearly.

**4.5.4.1** All quantitative results shall be reported in accordance with Section technical procedures.

**4.5.4.2** If the final quantitative result will be rounded, it shall be reported in accordance with Section technical procedures.

**4.5.5** The following supporting information regarding sampling shall be included in the case record and noted in the Laboratory Report, as necessary:

- Identification of any item sampled.
- Date of sampling.
- Reference to the sampling plan and procedures used.
- Location of sampling, including any diagrams, sketches or photographs.
- Details of any environmental conditions during sampling that may affect the interpretation of the test.
- Any standard or other specification for the sampling method or procedure, and deviations, additions to or exclusions from the specification concerned.

**4.6 Disposition** - The disposition of each item received for analysis shall be described. Instructions for special evidence handling and storage may be included.

#### **4.7 Approval and Release**

**4.7.1** Once the Report and case file have undergone the appropriate reviews, the Report may be released. The signature of the Forensic Scientist or Laboratory employee shall be attached to the Laboratory Report. Reports shall be released within 20 business days after all reviews have been completed. The Forensic Scientist Manager or Section Supervisor may grant a time extension for the release of reports for extenuating circumstances.

**4.7.2** Official Laboratory Reports shall be issued to the submitting officer, or published electronically to the officer, District Attorneys, and other authorized officials.

**4.7.3** A duplicate copy of the Laboratory Report may be issued with authorization from the submitting agency, District Attorney and/or U.S. Attorney. Written documentation of the authorization shall be placed into each Case Record. If written authorization is not available, an entry shall be made in the communication log.

#### **4.8 Stop Work Orders**

**4.8.1** When a request for termination of analysis is received and work on that case has started, all technical analysis conducted on evidence shall end and a Report shall be generated. If the Forensic Scientist has not completed his/her Report at the time of the request for termination of a case, a statement to this effect shall be included in the Report for each Section with outstanding examinations. The following statement shall be included in the Report:

**4.8.1.1** The Laboratory received notification that this case has been disposed. The analysis of this case has been terminated. The evidence is being returned to the submitting agency with no results or conclusions reported.

**4.8.2** If all analytical work has been completed, but no report was generated at the time the termination request was received, the following statement shall be included in the Report:

**4.8.2.1** The Laboratory received notification that this case has been disposed. The analysis of this case was completed prior to that notification; however, the Laboratory Report was not generated. No results and conclusions are being reported.

**4.8.3** If all analytical work has been completed and a report has been generated, but the review(s) is/are not complete at the time the termination request is received, the Forensic Scientist shall report the results. The following statement shall be included in the Report:

**4.8.3.1** The Laboratory received notification that this case has been disposed. The analysis of this case was completed prior to that notification; therefore, the results and conclusions are included below.

#### **4.9 Amended Reports**

**4.9.1** The term ‘amended’ shall be applied to Reports that are issued to make a change in a previously issued Report. The words ‘**Amended Report**’ in bold type shall appear automatically through the report-writing function in FA. A statement describing the amendment shall be noted by the Forensic Scientist or Laboratory employee after the ‘Disposition of Evidence’ section. This statement shall be written using complete sentences and shall detail the change(s).

**4.9.2** If a report needs to be amended and the analyst is no longer employed by the North Carolina State Crime Laboratory, the Forensic Scientist Manager (FSM) or Section Supervisor shall prepare a memo detailing the change(s). The memo shall be attached to the original report, scanned into the case record object repository, and mailed to the submitting agency. The case record shall be republished.

**4.9.3** Administrative and technical reviews shall be conducted prior to issuing an amended Report in FA.

**4.10 Notarized Copies** - Cases that may be charged as impaired driving shall be written on revocation report forms which require notarization.

**4.11 Technical Field Assistance Reports** - Technical Field Assistance (TFA) Reports shall follow the procedures found in **4.1**, **4.2** and **4.7**. The following categories shall be included:

- Scene examined.
- Date.
- Time.
- Procedure.

Additionally, activities shall be documented.

**4.12 CODIS Hit Notification Report** - Reports shall follow the procedures found in **4.1**, **4.2** and **4.7**. The body of the report shall adhere to the Forensic Biology Section Procedure for CODIS.

## 5.0 Records

- Laboratory Reports
- Communication logs
- Amended Reports

## 6.0 Attachments – N/A

Revision History		
Effective Date	Version Number	Reason
09/17/2012	1	Original Document
12/07/2012	2	4.2.3 - changed page format X of Y to beginning with page 2
02/01/2013	3	4.7.1 - time frame for release of laboratory reports was added; added 4.12; added 4.8.1.1, 4.8.1.2 and 4.8.2.1 for stop work orders; added 4.9.2
02/15/2013	4	4.3.1, 4.5.2, 4.7.1, and 4.9.1 added Lab employee, 4.5.3, 4.7.1, and 4.9.2 added Section Supervisor, reworded 4.8.1 and added 4.8.2
05/10/2013	5	Added 4.5.4.1 and 4.5.4.2 to establish rounding format
08/16/2013	6	Deleted original 4.8.1, 4.8.1.1, 4.8.1.2, and 4.8.4. Removed written documentation shall be included in each case record from 4.8.1. Added 4.8.1.1, 4.8.2, and 4.8.2.1. Edited 4.8.3 to include report generated but review(s) not complete. Removed North Carolina State Crime Lab from 4.8.3.1
10/31/2013	7	Added issuing authority to header; 4.7.1 – removed SBI Director
08/29/2014	8	4.2.6.1, 4.2.6.2 - replaced State Bureau of Investigation with State Crime Laboratory; 4.3.1 - added clarifying sentence for additional pieces of evidence not described on the submission form