



Department of Public Safety
MISSOURI STATE HIGHWAY PATROL
Colonel Eric T. Olson, Superintendent



An
Internationally
Accredited
Agency

Michael L. Parson
Governor

Sandra K. Karsten
Director

August 3, 2020

Dear Submitting Agency:

To provide more timely analysis of DNA evidence and more efficiently manage laboratory resources, effective October 1, 2020, the Missouri State Highway Patrol's Crime Laboratory Division will no longer accept touch DNA requests on items of evidence from property crimes.

"Touch DNA" is broadly defined as DNA obtained from shed skin cells transferred from a donor to an object during physical contact. The success rate of touch DNA cases is roughly 8%. Presently, the Crime Laboratory Division DNA backlog is nearly 3,800 cases, of which approximately 2,500 cases are property crimes. Nearly 1,400 of the backlogged property crime cases are touch DNA requests. Pursuant to this policy implementation, evidence submitted from property crimes will now require biological fluid (blood, semen, saliva) to be present on the questioned evidence for it to be processed for DNA. The Crime Laboratory Division will continue to attempt examination of touch DNA on homicide, sexual assault, and other crimes-against-persons cases, but those cases will be prioritized for best evidence.

The Crime Laboratory Division remains available to provide on-site training upon request. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Director Brian Hoey at (573) 526-6134.

Thank you in advance for working with the Patrol as we implement this new policy.

Sincerely,

ERIC T. OLSON, Colonel
Superintendent

Missouri State Highway Patrol - Crime Laboratory Division General Guidelines for Submission of DNA Evidence

To provide more timely analysis of DNA evidence and to more efficiently manage laboratory resources, the following policies will be implemented effective October 1, 2020.

- 1) Evidence submitted from property crimes requires biological fluid stains (blood, semen, saliva). Touch DNA evidence will not be accepted on items from property crimes.

- 2) The number of evidence items the laboratory will accept on property crimes will be limited to **two (2)** items. Reference standards are not counted as an evidence item. Each round of exams must be completed prior to additional submissions being accepted. Multiple items in a container will not be allowed for the purpose of circumventing this policy.

- 3) The following will not be routinely accepted for DNA analysis:
 - cases resulting in misdemeanor level charges
 - cases where a crime has not been identified
 - shooting investigation cases involving only expended cartridge casings
 - cases involving criminal paternity.

- 4) Possession cases (drug and weapon) will not be processed for touch DNA. If a biological fluid is present the case may be accepted. However, due to CODIS eligibility requirements, evidence with biological fluid from possession cases WILL NOT be accepted for DNA analysis without associated reference DNA standards.

- 5) All available reference DNA standards must be submitted with the evidence before the evidence will be examined. This includes suspect, victim, and elimination standards.

- 6) All associated submission forms (Laboratory Analysis Request form or equivalent) must be filled out completely, giving a detailed scenario of the case. To meet CODIS eligibility, information must be provided as to why it is reasonable to assume that the profile developed from this item can only belong to the person that committed the crime.

It must be noted that touch evidence may contain fingerprints and will be accepted for examinations by the Latent Print Evidence Section.

Any case not meeting these guidelines will not be subjected to DNA analysis at the MSHP Crime Laboratory unless specifically authorized by the laboratory management. Additional information may be found in the Forensic Evidence Handbook available on the MSHP website.