

Purpose

The goal of LSD&FC is to provide forensic services to the criminal justice system in Lagos State in particular, and Nigeria in general. This case management guideline is specifically developed to help LSD&FC provide quality and timely services to all stakeholders. Although cases will be routinely analyzed in chronological order, there are instances when certain cases must be prioritized to allow for a judicious and timely response. This guideline will help LSD&FC manage and prioritize forensic and relationship casework to better serve clients. This guideline applies to all technical personnel at LSD&FC.

General Guidelines

GUIDELINE FOR PRIORITIZING CASES

1. The Center Director and the Section Director have the authority to prioritize cases for LSD&FC.
2. The relevant laboratory and/or the analyst shall be notified as soon as possible of a priority request.
3. All cases submitted to LSD&FC will be prioritized based upon the following system:
 - a) **Priority 1:** All sexual offenses (rape, sexual assault), if the suspect is apprehended, and if physical evidence, as well as reference DNA from the survivor/victim and suspect are submitted.
 - b) **Priority 2:** Per request from a Court Official (including court dates and court orders), Governor of Lagos State and Lagos State Attorney General concerning a criminal incident.
 - c) **Priority 3:** A threat to public safety (homicides, violent crimes, property crimes, arson, etc.):
 - I. Homicide, if suspects are apprehended and in custody.
 - II. No-suspect homicide.
 - III. No-suspect rape and sexual assault.
 - IV. Property crimes.
 - V. All other crimes.
 - d) **Priority 4:** An approved request from a Law Enforcement Officer investigating a criminal case in Lagos State.
 - e) **Priority 5:** Paternity and all similar cases concerned with establishment of biological relationships.
 - f) **Priority 6:** Cases from private individuals or laboratories with little or no significant impact on public safety.



Case Management Guidelines

4. The LSD&FC Case Submission Form may be used by the evidence receiving technician to prioritize evidentiary items, based on their knowledge of the circumstances of a case and approval of the Center Director, or the Section Director in the absence of the Center Director. This will allow LSD&FC analysts to produce laboratory results in a timelier manner.
5. The extent of analysis of each evidentiary item will depend on investigative needs, as determined by the Center Director, Section Director, Technical Leader, forensic analyst and the submitting agency.
6. The fewest possible number of items and/or stains will be examined and tested to answer the investigative question(s) presented.
7. The most probative item(s) in the case will be examined first. When the most probative evidence does not yield any information of value, then other items will be considered. The analyst must discuss with the Technical Leader and document a valid reason for working additional items in the case file.
8. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis, if needed. To request an exception, the analyst must contact the section Director to discuss any such requests.
9. LSD&FC will not accept any evidence that is suspected to be composed of (or to contain) any nuclear, biological, or chemical weapon. Examples include, but are not limited to: ricin, anthrax, Sarin, or any radioactive material.
10. A local hazardous materials first responder (e.g., local fire department) should be dispatched by the agency to determine the threat level before any further handling of the items takes place.

GUIDELINE FOR SEROLOGY

1. HOMICIDE CASES
 - a. Analysis will be performed on items that are deemed most likely to have probative value, based upon discussion between the Section Director, Analyst and the Submitting Officer.
 - b. If positive findings for blood and/or semen are obtained from the top five most probative samples, then analysis may be discontinued, and samples will be submitted for DNA analysis.
 - c. If informative results are not obtained, the next five most probative samples will be examined.
2. SEXUAL ASSAULT CASES
 - a. Sexual assault cases will be analyzed in the following order:
 - i. Sexual assault kit
 - ii. Underwear
 - iii. Clothing
 - iv. Bedding



Case Management Guidelines

- b. If the sexual assault evidence collection kit is positive, then no additional testing will be conducted unless specific case circumstances dictate additional testing.
- 3. CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS
 - a. Up to five items identified by the submitting agency as priority items will be tested.
 - b. If the items tested have positive findings (e.g., blood), samples will be submitted to DNA, a report will be generated, and all further testing will be discontinued.
- 4. BREAKING AND ENTERING/BURGLARY
 - a. Up to five items identified by the submitting agency as priority will be tested.
 - b. Only items that may have a biological fluid present will be tested.
 - c. If the items tested have positive findings (e.g. blood), samples will be submitted to DNA, a report will be generated, and all further testing will be discontinued.
- 5. MISCELLANEOUS
 - a. No analysis will be performed on items that have been retrieved from a person or a person's property when the intent is to link that person to the item (e.g., a firearm recovered from suspect's person).

TOUCH DNA POLICY

- 1. The LSD&FC will not conduct "touch" or "contact" DNA analysis (e.g., DNA from fingerprints, pieces of paper, drug paraphernalia, or commonly-handled objects) on burglary and property crimes except in special circumstances, and only when victim elimination reference samples are submitted.
- 2. The LSD&FC will not routinely examine shell casings, spent bullets, or live ammunition for the presence of DNA unless it is the only evidence obtained in a homicide case.
- 3. In order to comply with international guidelines, the LSD&FC must ensure that any DNA profile obtained in property crimes (e.g., "touch" or "contact" DNA cases) is not that of the victim. The LSD&FC will not enter or search the "victim's" DNA profile in any of the LSD&FC databases.
- 4. Items that are acceptable for DNA analysis include all evidence that the officer believes was brought into the crime scene (e.g., beer can, cigarette butt, chewing gum).