An unpackage rifle was handled by a NIBIN Technician prior to latent print processing. This occurred because both the multidisciplinary request (MDR) team and buddy check process missed the latent print request. The buddy check involves two NIBIN technicians checking JusticeTrax (JT) LIMS and the portal for MDRs. HFSC’s Lean Six Sigma Development Group conducted an improvement project focused on the deficiencies within the multidisciplinary request (MDR) process, including the buddy check process. As part of this project, an MDR team was created. The team meets regularly to review cases that have MDR requests. Prior to meetings, team members run request reports in JusticeTrax (JT) and check the portal for MDRs. If an MDR exists, a banner is added to the request in JT to alert analysts that there are multiple requests on the item. When an analyst sees the banner, it is an indication that an MDR exists and care is taken to ensure that the evidence item is processed by multiple disciplines in the agreed upon order. In addition, case managers have been instructed to check the request portal prior to case assignment to ensure that MDR’s are identified and the appropriate workflow is followed. Finally, analysts have been instructed to also check the request portal prior to analysis. In this case, a latent print request was made on 7/11/2019 and the subsequent NIBIN request was not made until 7/17/19 (six days later). Both control methods (the MDR team review and the buddy check) failed to identify this request as an MDR. A latent print processor discovered this MDR on 7/18/19 and immediately informed the Firearms Manager. The manager relayed the information to the NIBIN Technician, but the technician had already started preparing the rifle for test firing and had handled it without gloves.
Summary of Root Cause Analysis:
Note: Incidents are documented for tracking purposes and trend analysis. Root Cause Analysis is not required for incidents.

N/A

Actions Taken:
The MDR team implemented a firearms collection and submission process on August 15, 2019 that eliminates the need for the firearms buddy check on items received after this date. The MDR team improved the submission process by requiring a handgun’s magazine to be separated and properly packaged. By limiting the handling of the weapon’s magazine, the magazine remains preserved for future analysis. Therefore, buddy checks are no longer necessary because firearms that require NIBIN processing are no longer MDRs. Buddy checks were required for evidence received by the Firearms section prior to August 15, 2019 (including case 2019-11964) and all these cases were entered into NIBIN as of August 27, 2019. In addition, with this process improvement, properly packaged long guns are now sent directly to the Latent Print section prior to NIBIN processing, whether or not the stakeholder has requested latent print processing. Submission of unpackaged evidence is outside HFSC’s control. Therefore, only appropriately packaged and sealed long guns will be evaluated and processed by the Latent Prints section prior to firearms analysis. The rifle in this case was not properly packaged. Only the magazine from the rifle will be processed for latent prints because an unpackaged firearm is unlikely to develop probative latent prints from the body of such an item. The sectional SOP was revised July 25, 2019 to address the upcoming changes necessary for the MDR process to be effectively implemented.

Section Manager: Donna Eudaley
Date: 11/05/19

Division Director: Amy Castillo
Date: 11/05/19

Technical Leader: N/A
Date: N/A

CODIS Administrator: N/A
Date: N/A

Incidents or Corrective Actions that involve the Biology/DNA section are reviewed by the Technical Leader and CODIS Administrator.

Quality Director: Erika Ziemak
Date Closed: 11/20/19