



Quality Division Use Only

Quality Tracking #:	2020-093	Classification:	Corrective Action
Non-Conformance Level:	Class III	Section:	Client Services & Case Management
Date of Discovery:	09/03/20	Date of Incident:	09/03/20

Forensic Case Number(s), if applicable:	Agency Case Number(s), if applicable:
2020-11961	Massey Law 20-209

Description of Non-conformance:
Evidence for latent print processing received via FedEx was opened and handled by a CS/CM supervisor without gloves.

Additional Information/Follow-Up:
A stakeholder contacted the Business Development Director on 9/1/2020 about submitting evidence for latent print processing. CS/CM staff was made aware that evidence from this attorney would be arriving in the afternoon of 9/3/2020 via FedEx. When a CS/CM Supervisor received a FedEx envelope from a university on 9/3/2020, he opened the contents to determine who the mail needed to be delivered to at HFSC. This package did not have the stakeholder as the sender nor any indication that the FedEx envelope contained evidence. In addition, the contents were not properly sealed, and the supervisor had to handle the papers inside to retrieve the submission form. It wasn't until the supervisor read the submission form that he realized it was the package that he had been notified about from the stakeholder as well as that the papers inside were the items being submitted for processing by the latent print section. The supervisor put on gloves to prevent any further contamination and then immediately contacted the Latent Print Manager at the time and notified him that he had handled the evidence without gloves upon initial receipt. The Latent Print Manager responded that he would make the latent print processor assigned to this case aware of the situation. It wasn't until CS/CM was preparing to return the evidence to the requestor after analysis on 11/9/2020 that the processor learned from the supervisor that the information about the previous handling had not been communicated to him. The processor was unaware when he was processing the case that the supervisor handled the items without gloves prior to analysis and therefore did not



indicate this information on his report. The Latent Print Manager is no longer employed by HFSC and therefore cannot be interviewed about this incident or his failure to properly relay this information to the processor.

Summary of Root Cause Analysis:

Note: Incidents are documented for tracking purposes and trend analysis. Root Cause Analysis is not required for incidents.

CS/CM rarely receives evidence via commercial mail carriers. However, they do have procedures for when this occurs. Typically, the CS/CM division is responsible for scheduling the receipt of the evidence, therefore they are aware when it should arrive. The CS/CM Manager is responsible for reaching out to the requestor when a contract is executed with a new stakeholder. The CS/CM Manager informs the requestor of the proper shipping procedure and requests that a submission form be submitted beforehand. In this case, the contract had not yet been executed when the requestor sent the evidence; therefore, the CS/CM Manager was not able to communicate the evidence submission processes. In addition, the sender of the package was not the same stakeholder whom was communicating with the Business Development Director about the request. The lack of these normal processes and the atypical packaging of the evidence lead to this incident.

Actions Taken:

The CS/CM Manager contacted the requestor via email about the previous handling of the evidence and that if a latent print comparison was needed in the case, the latent print section would obtain reference prints from the CS/CM Supervisor who handled the evidence. The latent print processing report was amended to add a statement about the previous handling of the evidence and referenced this quality report. While this was an isolated occurrence, the Business Development Director has been advised to inform the requestor of the importance of the proper mailing procedures for evidence when creating a contract with a new stakeholder. The Business Development Director will now provide this disclaimer to potential requestors prior to finalizing the contract. "[The Agency] may not submit/send evidence for analysis until an agreement has been signed by both parties. Once the agreement has been executed, a member of the Client Services & Case Management Division will contact you regarding next actions."



Houston Forensic Science Center
Incident/Corrective Action Report
Quality Division

Section Manager: Ashley Henry

Date: 12/15/20

Division Director: Amy Castillo

Date: 12/23/20

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

Technical Leader: N/A

Date: N/A

CODIS Administrator: N/A

Date: N/A

Quality Director: Erika Ziemak

Date Closed: 12/29/20