



**Quality Division Use Only**

Quality Tracking #:	2021-016	Classification:	Incident
Non-Conformance Level:	N/A	Section:	Client Services & Case Management
Date of Discovery:	03/10/21	Date of Incident:	03/08/21

Forensic Case Number(s), if applicable:	Agency Case Number(s), if applicable:
2021-21303	029448321

**Description of Non-conformance:**  
While accessioning a DWI toxicology kit, the CS/CM supervisor discovered that both seals on the kit had been broken. Typically, three tubes of blood are placed into a DWI kit which is considered to be the parent item. Each side of the kit is covered with evidence tape to seal the item and prevent tampering.

**Additional Information/Follow-Up:**  
The kit was retrieved from the Houston Police Department Property Room on 3/8/21 by a CS/SM specialist, then transferred to HFSC and placed into the refrigerator within the Toxicology laboratory on that same day. The kit remained in the refrigerator until the CS/CM supervisor took it into her custody to accession/inventory it on 3/10/21. When interviewed the CS/CM supervisor told the Quality Specialist that she noticed the seal was already broken when cutting through the evidence tape on one side of the kit with a box cutter because she could tell there was no resistance. She then discovered the tape on both sides of the kit was torn and the kit appeared to have been previously opened. The seals from the specimen ID form that are placed over the top of each blood tube were intact and the tubes appeared to be in good condition. It is normal CS/CM practice to check for proper seals prior to transfer to or from HFSC, however, it was not visibly obvious that the seals had been broken. HFSC cannot account for why the seals on the kit had been broken prior to accessioning.



**Actions Taken:**

The original condition of the kit was documented in a photograph and added to the case record. A comment about the condition of the evidence was added to the accessioning report. The evidence will proceed to the Toxicology section for blood alcohol analysis. During the section meeting on 3/23/21, CS/CM management discussed this nonconformance and emphasized the importance of thoroughly checking the seals on DWI kits at the property room prior to bringing them to HFSC as a proper seal on these kits is not readily visible.

**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

**Section Manager:** Ashley Henry

**Date:** 04/06/21

**Division Director:** Amy Castillo

**Date:** 04/12/21

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:** 04/14/21