



Quality Division Use Only

Quality Tracking #:	2021-071	Classification:	Incident
Non-Conformance Level:	N/A	Section:	Client Services & Case Management
Date of Discovery:	11/30/21	Date of Incident:	11/29/21

Forensic Case Number(s), if applicable:	Agency Case Number(s), if applicable:
2021-34413	158869421

Description of Non-conformance:

While accessioning a DWI toxicology kit, a CS/CM specialist 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. The tubes are individually sealed, and each side of the kit is covered with evidence tape to seal the parent item and prevent tampering.

Additional Information/Follow-Up:

The kit was retrieved from the Houston Police Department Property Room on 11/29/21 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 another CS/CM specialist took it into her custody to accession it on 11/30/21. In accordance with CS/CM standard operating procedures, the specialist photographed the kit. Then when she was cutting through the evidence tape on one side of the kit with a box cutter, she noticed the seal was already broken. After reviewing the first photograph, 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. The CS/CM supervisor checked in the stakeholder's record management system but did not find any information about why the kit may have been opened prior to submission to HFSC.



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.

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: 12/09/21

Division Director: Amy Castillo

Date: 12/10/21

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: 12/10/21