



**Latent Print Section**  
**Reporting Results and Interpretations**  
Comparative and Analytical Division



## 1. Reporting Results and Interpretations

### 1.1. Scope

1.1.1. This procedure details reporting examination results in the Latent Print Section of the Houston Forensic Science Center (HFSC).

### 1.2. Procedure

#### 1.2.1. Case Records

- 1.2.1.1. Case records must be accurate, complete, and in accordance with all of HFSC's policies, procedures, and standards.
- 1.2.1.2. Case record documentation shall be of sufficient detail that in the absence of the original case examiner, another qualified examiner could evaluate what was done and interpret the data. A chain of custody shall be maintained for any evidence that moves through the Latent Print Section.
- 1.2.1.3. When referencing a previously released/published document (e.g. Latent Print Report, Examiner Case Records) the date the document was released/published shall be included.
- 1.2.1.4. At a minimum, the case record shall contain the following information:
  - Forensic Case Number.
  - Date case records were generated.
  - Examiner/Technician writing the case records.
  - Items of Evidence.
    - Items of Evidence listed in the case records and final report shall be the same.
  - Examinations & processing techniques performed.
    - This shall include the date(s) performed and results.
  - Results of Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation.
  - Name of the verifying examiner and date.
  - Results of any required Automated Fingerprint Identification System searches completed prior to writing the report.

#### 1.2.2. Reports

- 1.2.2.1. All examination results shall be reported in the laboratory report.
- 1.2.2.2. All reports shall be simple, accurate, and complete.
- 1.2.2.3. Reports should stand alone without the need to refer to other documents, with the exception of previous reports issued in the same or associated cases.
- 1.2.2.4. The following information should be addressed in all Latent Print Processing or Comparison Reports (if applicable).
  - Statement that processing or analysis was conducted.
  - Unique identifiers for all latent prints present or developed on evidence.
  - Number of latent prints found on items of evidence.
  - Request for additional record finger and/or palm prints.



- Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) search results and whether unidentified friction ridge impression(s) were registered in the unsolved latent file (ULF).

1.2.2.5. There are four possible latent print results which are used in reports generated by the HFSC Latent Print Section for comparison and AFIS searches.

- **Identification** - An identification is the determination by a qualified examiner that two friction ridge impressions originated from the same source due to sufficient quality and quantity of corresponding information such that the examiner would not expect to see that same arrangement of features repeated in a print from another source.
- **Exclusion** – The decision by the examiner that the impressions compared had sufficient features in disagreement to conclude that the impressions did not originate from the same source.
- **Inconclusive** - Inconclusive can be used under two (2) circumstances based on observations from the examiner:
  - A result of incomplete or unclear record finger, palm, or foot prints (lack of area of detail needed in the records to compare to the latent print or record prints are of poor quality such as over inking, distortion, etc.)
  - Result reached when the latent print has corresponding features, in sequence, but lacks sufficiency to identify. Can also apply in conjunction with the previous having dissimilar features but not enough to exclude as being from the same source.
  - Reasons for reaching Inconclusive Results must be documented in the case record and the final report.
- **Preliminary Association** – This conclusion is used only as a result of a Preliminary AFIS Association.
  - A Preliminary Association is the result of searching an image of a latent print impression in AFIS and the conclusion is reached, based on comparing the returned candidate records onscreen, that the two friction ridge impressions have corresponding characteristics contained within that are sufficient to conclude they **MAY** have originated from the same source.
  - Official identifications are **NEVER** reported from Preliminary AFIS Association results alone.

### 1.2.3. Standardized Report Phrasing

1.2.3.1. In an effort to standardize report writing in the Latent Print Section, standardized phrasing is provided below. Although the standardized report phrasing will effectively convey the results of most analysis, it is recognized that these phrases will not fit every reporting situation. Therefore, this list is not limiting.

#### 1.2.3.2. Latent Analysis/Latent to Records/Physical Processing

- The above listed items were visually analyzed for the presence of latent prints.



## Latent Print Section

### Reporting Results and Interpretations

Comparative and Analytical Division

- The above listed item(s) was/were previously analyzed for the presence of latent prints.
- Item(s) \_\_\_\_\_ was/were physically and chemically processed for the development of latent prints.
- A total of \_\_\_\_\_ possible suitable latent prints was/ were found or developed on Item(s)\_\_\_\_\_.
- No latent prints of value for comparison purposes was/were found on Item(s) \_\_\_\_\_ .
- No possible suitable latents were found and/or developed on Item(s)\_\_\_\_\_.
- Item(s) \_\_\_\_\_ was/were not processed for latent prints.
- (# of Latents) latent prints of value for comparison purposes was/were found on Item(s)\_\_\_\_\_ (Image name of each digital image of value for DVD evidence).
- Ridge detail of value for comparison was noted on Item(s) \_\_\_\_\_. Due to its location, it was determined that the ridge detail found on the lift most likely belongs to that of the individual processing the item. Therefore, no further examinations will be conducted unless inked record finger/ palm prints of \_\_\_\_\_ are submitted for elimination purposes.
- The latent print(s) labeled L-\_\_\_\_\_ was/were not of sufficient quality for an Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) search.
- Any latent impressions not listed were analyzed and determined to be of no value for comparison purposes.
- Any latent impressions or photographic images not listed were analyzed and determined to be duplicate images and/or of no value for comparison purposes.
- Upon further analysis, the latent print(s) labeled L-\_\_\_ was/were determined to be of no value for comparison purposes.



- Upon further analysis, the latent prints labeled L-\_\_\_ was/were determined to be of value for comparison purposes.
- All possible suitable latents found and/or developed will be forwarded for further analysis.
- The latent prints labeled L- \_\_\_were compared to the inked/database fingerprint/palm prints bearing the name(s) \_\_\_ .
- The latent print(s) labeled L- \_\_\_\_\_ found on Item(s) \_\_\_\_\_ was/were identified with the prints of \_\_\_\_\_.
- The latent print(s) labeled L-\_\_\_ found on Item(s) \_\_\_ was/were excluded with the prints of \_\_\_\_\_.
- The latent print(s) labeled L- \_\_\_\_\_ found on Item(s) \_\_\_ was/were inconclusive with the prints of \_\_\_\_\_ due to the quantity and quality of information in the latent/ due to the incomplete or insufficient recording of the friction ridge detail in the database record prints.
- The latent print(s) labeled L-\_\_\_ found on Item(s) \_\_\_ was/were not compared with the prints of \_\_\_\_\_ (add reason).
- The latent print(s) labeled L- \_\_\_\_\_ found on Item(s) \_\_\_\_\_ was/were unable to be compared. (Add reason).

#### 1.2.3.3. Record to Record Comparisons

- As a result of comparisons of Item \_\_\_\_\_ with the database fingerprint/palm prints bearing the name(s) \_\_\_\_, it was concluded both originated from the same source.

#### 1.2.3.4. AFIS Searches

- As a result of (a) search(es) through the Harris County Sheriff's Office, the Texas Department of Public Safety's and/or the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Automated Fingerprint Identification System(s) (AFIS), the latent prints were



compared to the database record fingerprint/palm prints bearing the name(s) \_\_\_\_ (DOB, HCSO#/SID#/FBI#).

- The latent print(s) of value labeled L-\_\_\_\_\_ was/were searched in the Automated Fingerprint Identification System(s) of the Harris County Sheriff's Office, the Texas Department of Public Safety's and/or the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Automated Fingerprint Identification System(s) (AFIS), with negative results.
- The latent print(s) was/were not registered to the respective AFIS system(s) Unsolved Latent File(s) (ULF).
- The unidentified latent print(s) was/were not registered to the Unsolved Latent File (ULF) of the respective AFIS system(s).

1.2.3.5. Preliminary AFIS Association Reporting/ AFIS Reverse PAA

- **An official identification HAS NOT been effected at this time and this report is being provided as an investigative lead only.**

**Under no circumstances does the association contained in this report indicate an official identification has been effected. FULL COMPARISONS HAVE NOT BEEN conducted to any of the listed individual(s).**

The latent print(s) of value labeled L-\_\_\_\_ was/were searched through the Harris County Sheriff's Office, the Texas Department of Public Safety's and/or the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Automated Fingerprint Identification System(s) (AFIS). As a result, it has been concluded there **MAY** be a preliminary association between the latent prints submitted with the below listed person(s):

**Last Name, First Name, Middle Name (Item # Latent is from if known)**

**Only the latent print locations with preliminary associations through AFIS are listed above. There may be latent prints that were searched and were not preliminarily associated in AFIS that are identifiable to the above individuals.**

If the submitting agency desires that an official confirmatory comparison be made by a Latent Print Examiner between the latent print(s) and the individuals listed above, please submit a new request to the Latent Print Section for a full confirmatory examination. If requesting through the Laboratory Information



Management System (LIMS), add in the comments section that this is a request for a full confirmatory comparison. If you do not have access to LIMS or for assistance in submitting the request, you can contact HFSC at: 1-844-473-6742 or via email at [triage@houstonforensicscience.org](mailto:triage@houstonforensicscience.org).

Once a full, confirmatory comparison has been conducted by a Latent Print Examiner, it will result in one of the following conclusions:

Identification  
Exclusion  
Inconclusive

For additional clarification regarding conclusion statements, please contact the Latent Print Section or go to [www.houstonforensicscience.org](http://www.houstonforensicscience.org) and navigate to the Latent Prints SOP website.

Any latent prints not preliminarily associated above, were/ were not registered to the Unsolved Latent File of the respective AFIS system.

#### 1.2.3.6. Need Records

- For a complete examination, please submit major case prints, including the fingers, extreme tips, sides and 1st, 2nd and 3rd joints of the fingers and complete palms, to the Latent Print Section of the Houston Forensic Science Center.

#### 1.2.3.7. Registering to the Unsolved Latent File

- If the unidentified latent prints require registering to the Unsolved Latent File (ULF) for future possible matches, please submit a fully rolled set of quality finger and palm prints from the complainant for elimination purposes. After the complainant has been eliminated as being the source, the latent prints will be registered to the ULF.

#### 1.2.3.8. Court Testimony Record Prints

- Please submit fully rolled inked finger and palm prints of the above listed individual(s) at least thirty (30) days in advance if courtroom testimony is required for the conclusions in this report. A comparison will be conducted between the



database prints and the submitted prints to determine if both originated from the same source. A supplemental report will be generated with the results.

1.2.3.9. Disposition of Evidence

- All Items of evidence will be returned to the submitting agency upon completion of all requests.
- Digital images of the possible suitable latents in this case will be retained digitally at this laboratory.

1.2.3.10. Rejection/ Lack of Required Information

- Item(s) \_\_\_ was/were not processed for the development of latent prints due to improper or no packaging. Please ensure that items are properly packaged to avoid potential damage to latent prints on the surface of the evidence and to also prevent any unintentional latent prints from being deposited on the evidence through handling.

If you have any questions regarding the Houston Forensic Science Center Latent Print Section's submission guidelines, please contact (713) 308-3050 or you can visit the HFSC website at <http://www.houstonforensicscience.org/pdf/Evidence-Handbook.pdf>.

1.2.3.11. Latent to Latent Comparisons

- 1.2.3.11.1. Latent to latent comparisons of friction ridge skin impressions are not conducted on a routine basis. Any request received for a latent to latent impression comparison must be approved by the Section Manager.
- 1.2.3.11.2. If a latent to latent comparison is authorized, only positive results will be reported.
- 1.2.3.11.3. No conclusions of exclusions will be reported.

1.2.3.11.3.1. Latent to Latent Standardized Phrasing

- The latent prints in this case are of no value for comparison purposes.





- The latent prints, labeled L-\_\_\_ and L-\_\_\_ originated from the same source.
- No result can be made regarding the remaining latent prints on Item \_\_\_\_\_ and Item\_\_\_\_\_.

### **1.3. Records**

1.3.1. Case records and reports will be maintained within the HFSC LIMS, digital image management system, and/or case record folders.

### **1.4. References**

*SWGFAST, Document #8 Standard for the Documentation of Analysis, Comparison, Evaluation, and Verification (ACE-V) 9/11/12 Ver 2.0*

*SWGFAST, Document #10 Standards for Examining Friction Ridge Impressions and Resulting Conclusions (Latent/Tenprint) 3/13/13 Ver. 2.0*

*SWGFAST, Document #5 Standards for Reporting Friction Ridge Examinations (Latent/Tenprint) 9/14/12 Ver. 2.0*

*Defense Forensic Science Center, CILA LP 5.10 Reporting the Results 05 August 2014*