

EVC: Evidence Handling Safety

Introduction Evidence staff, analysts, and other laboratory personnel handle potentially hazardous evidence including biological fluids and firearms.

Biological fluids If evidence packages are visibly contaminated with biological fluids, laboratory staff must follow the universal precautions:

- **All human blood and body fluids are treated as if they are known to contain hepatitis B, human immunodeficiency virus, or other bloodborne pathogens.**

See the *Safety Manual, Bloodborne Pathogen Program* for further information on the safe handling of biological fluid evidence and the proper use of personal protective equipment.

Evidence with wet or damp packaging should not be accepted into the Evidence Section. An appropriate supervisor should be contacted for assistance.

Evidence packaging with dried stains should be sealed in plastic or other appropriate protective material by those submitting or returning the evidence.

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EVC: Evidence Handling Safety, Continued

Firearms

Because of the potential for serious injury or death, safety must be of paramount concern for all laboratory personnel handling firearms.

The following firearms policies will be followed in the Evidence Section.

- Evidence staff will be trained in the safe handling of firearms.
- All firearms will be checked to ascertain that they are unloaded upon submission to the laboratory. Firearms packaging will receive a gun-check sticker after the weapon is checked.
- If evidence staff are unfamiliar with a firearm, they will obtain the assistance of a knowledgeable supervisor or analyst.
- All firearms will be stored in a secured condition. Plastic zip-ties may be used for this purpose.

See the *Comparative Evidence Manual* for further information on firearms safety requirements.

Explosive or incendiary devices

Explosive or incendiary devices will not be accepted into the laboratory until they have been rendered safe by the submitting agency. Evidence staff must obtain assistance from a knowledgeable supervisor or analyst before accepting such devices.
