

## **ISO/IEC 17025**

### **5.8 Handling of Test and Calibration Items**

#### **A. Mission Statement**

XXXX County Sheriff's Office Forensic Services Division (XXXX FSD) strives to apply the best science to the best evidence in a timely, quality and ethical manner.

#### **B. Policy**

The XXXX FSD provides forensic services for XXXX, City of XXXX Police Department (OPD), law enforcement agencies outside XXXX County, multiagency law enforcement task forces and federal law enforcement agencies. The security and records documenting the proper handling of evidence samples and recorded chain of custody is critical for the proper foundation of testimony in subsequent court proceedings. Any non conformance in the chain of custody can lead to diminished legal weight in court proceedings or inability to report significant findings from probative evidentiary analyses.

Evidence integrity begins at the crime scene with the fundamental and critical steps of recognition, collection, protection against loss and contamination, labeling, sealing, storage, analyses, reporting and ultimately concludes in a court of law and final disposition. The evidence samples are submitted to the laboratory, stored in secure locations with access limited by only authorized personnel, tested with the best scientific techniques and returned to the submitting agencies. The chain of custody is maintained from the date evidence samples are submitted and returned to XXXX FSD customer agencies. The chain of custody record consists of the recorded sequential movement of samples from designated and authorized people and storage locations within the XXXX FSD facility and is concluded when returned to submitting agencies.

#### **C. Procedure**

The following procedure demonstrates and records the necessary sequential steps required to receive, examine and return evidence from XXXX FSD customer agencies. The chain of custody is defined as the recorded dates evidence is in the control of designated and authorized XXXX FSD personnel and designated storage locations with limited and secure access. The XXXX FSD system of identifying samples with a unique sequential number begins when XXXX FSD use the Beast™ bar code system for XXXX cases and the Tracker™ bar code system for XXXX PD cases. XXXX FSD designated and authorized personnel next accept custody of evidentiary items for storage or analyses using the Evidence Log Book form XXXXXXXXXX and assign an additional unique XXXX FSD sequential number. These numbers are unique to the case submitted and can be expanded to accommodate additional case items either from the crime scene or during analyses in the XXXX FSD. All evidence samples are labelled and packaged appropriately to prevent confusion from other case items and to prevent data or material transaction errors. Designated personnel are also authorized to refuse acceptance of evidence when abnormalities and departures from normal conditions such as loss, contamination or deleterious change in the evidence casting a doubt in suitability for analyses and or court presentation. Designated personnel are authorized to contact customer and resolve any discrepancies when evidence with non conformance are detected upon receipt. If the nonconformance cannot be resolved the evidence is returned to the customer. The laboratory's storage locations are designed to provide security and prevent deleterious change through the use of refrigerators, freezers and drying cabinets. Refrigerator and freezer storage locations are monitored weekly with NIST traceable thermometers with corresponding results recorded

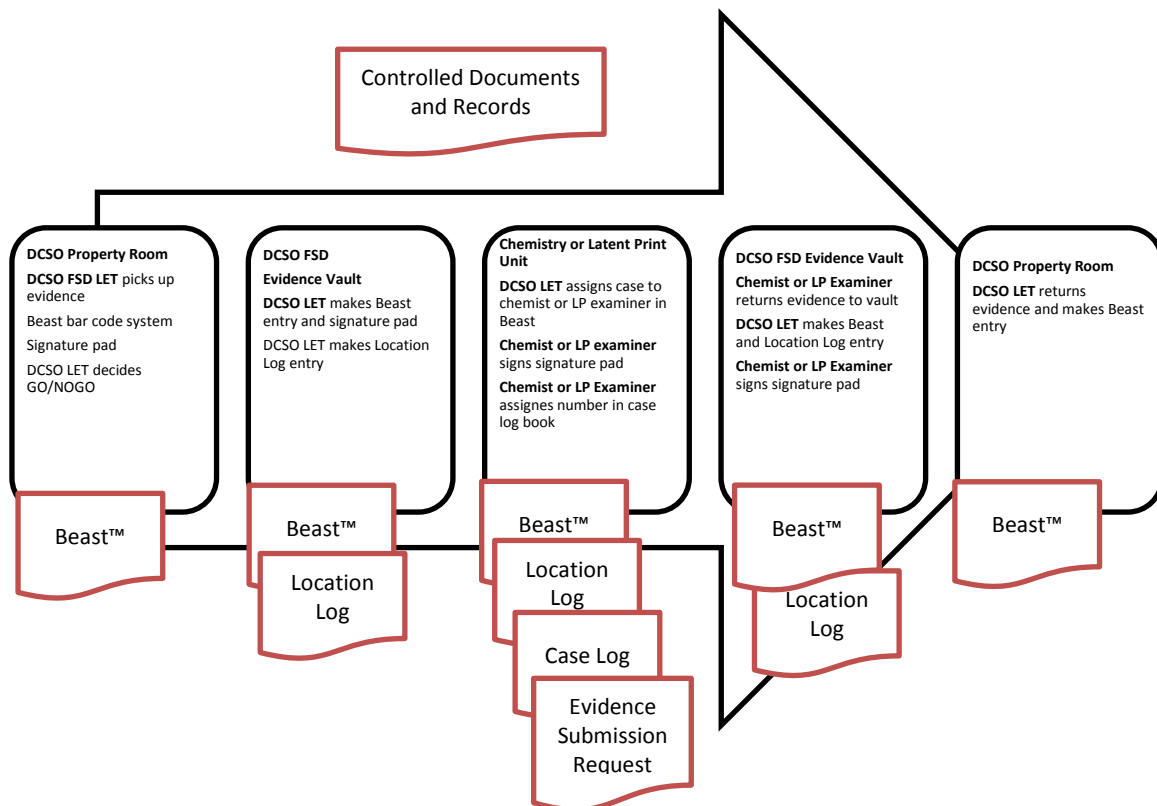
on the temperature log (doc control number and name). All evidence is stored initially in the main storage evidence vault and may be stored temporarily in locked cabinets during the process of evidence analyses located in the Chemistry, Latent Print and Crime Scene Investigation laboratory locations. Personnel temporarily secure evidence being processed by the use of individual lockers and keys.

The XXXX FSD uses four procedures to receive and return evidence:

1. Evidence received from XXXX property room.
2. Evidence received from XXXX FSD Crime Scene Investigation unit.
3. Evidence received from XXXX City Police Department.
4. Evidence received from XXXX City Police Department designated as Rush.

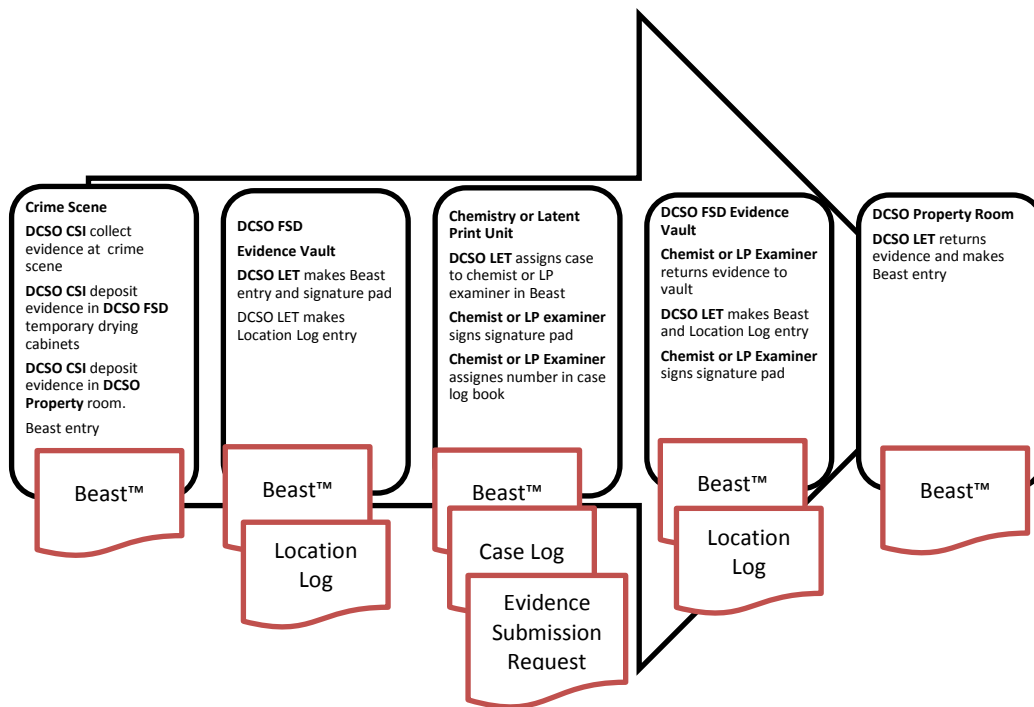
**1. Evidence received from XXXX property room.**

The XXXX Property Room Deputy notifies the XXXX FSD Law Enforcement Technician cases are ready for transport to XXXX FSD for analyses. XXXX LET decides the evidence is correctly packaged to protect against loss or deleterious change, records the evidence accepted in the Beast™ evidence bar code system and transports to the XXXX FSD. The XXXX LET deposits the evidence in the XXXX FSD evidence vault, records the transaction in the BEAST™ and the Location Log. The XXXX LET notifies Chemists or Latent Print Examiners when cases are ready to be analyzed and ready for pick up in the XXXX FSD evidence vault. The evidence is assigned to the Chemist or Latent Print Examiner and the transaction is recorded in the Beast™ and the Chemist or Latent Print Examiner signs Beast signature pad. Upon completion of the analyses, the Chemist or Latent Print Examiner notifies the XXXX LET and returns the evidence to the XXXX FSD evidence vault. The XXXX LET records the transaction in the Beast™ and Evidence Location Log. The XXXX LET periodically returns completed evidence to the XXXX Property Room and records the transaction in the Beast™.



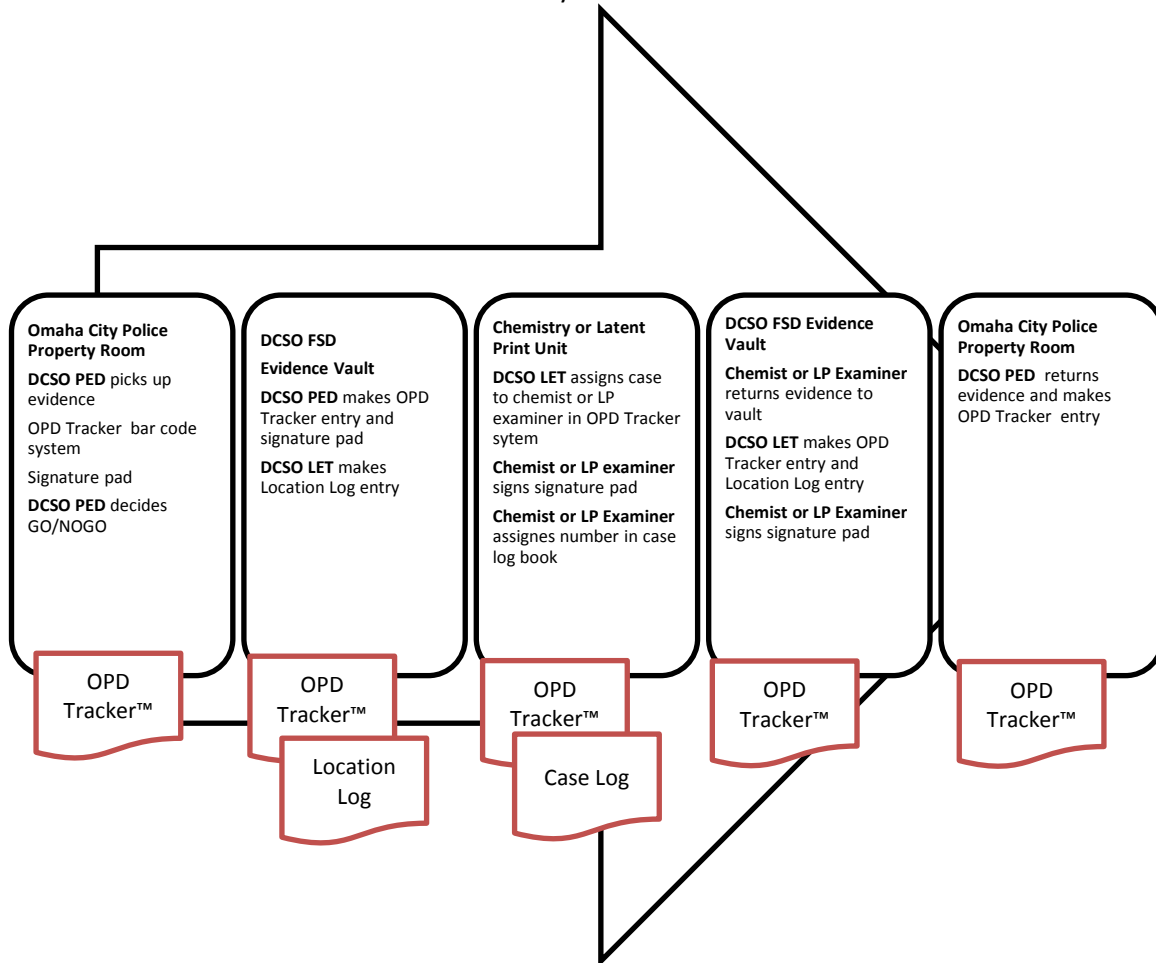
## 2. Evidence received from XXXX FSD Crime Scene Investigation Unit

The XXXX FSD CSI unit collects evidence at XXXX and other agency crime scenes. The XXXX FSD CSI then proceeds to transport the evidence either to the XXXX Property Room or XXXX FSD Evidence Drying Room. Evidence deposited in the Evidence Drying Room is removed after drying and deposited in the XXXX Property Room. Evidence deposited in the XXXX Property Room is recorded using the Beast™ bar code system. The evidence is then transported to the XXXX FSD laboratory for analyses similar to method A (Evidence received from XXXX Property Room)



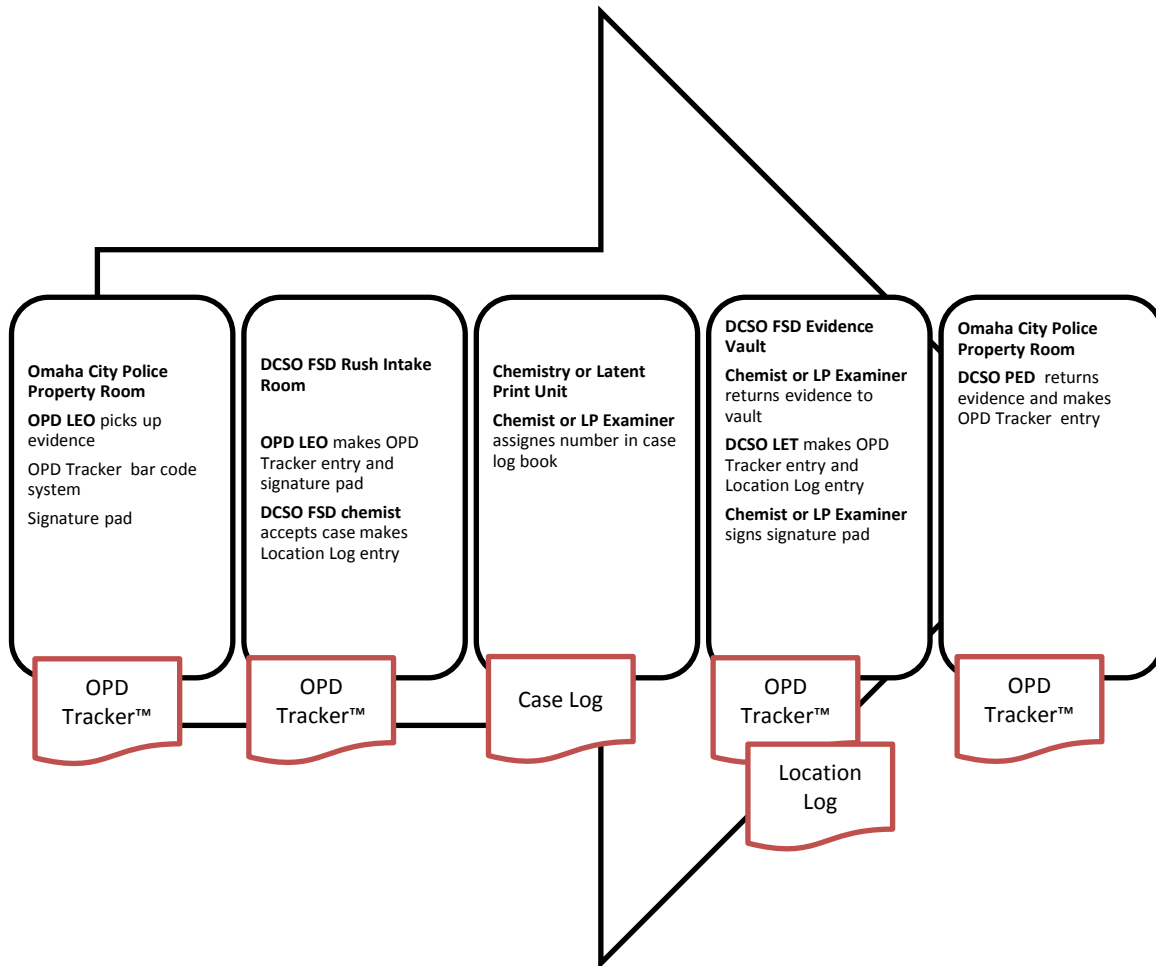
### 3. Evidence received from XXXX City Police Department

Evidence is transported from the XXXX City Police Department by the XXXX Property Evidence Deputy (XXXX PED). The XXXX PED accepts evidence and inspects for evidence nonconformance. If acceptable, the XXXX PED records the transaction in the OPD Tracker™ bar code system and transports the evidence to the XXXX FSD evidence vault. The XXXX LET accepts the evidence and records the transaction in the OPD Tracker™ bar code system and records the location in the vault using the Evidence Location Log. The evidence assigned to a XXXX FSD Chemist, analyzed and returned to the evidence vault. The XXXX LET accepts the analyzed OPD case and records the transaction in the OPD Tracker™ system and records the vault location in the Evidence Location Log. The XXXX PED accepts the completed evidence, records the transaction in the OPD Tracker™ system and returns the evidence to the OPD Property Room and records the transaction in the OPD Tracker™ system.



#### 4. XXXX City Police Rush Case

Periodically, evidence is received from the XXXX City Police Department that requires expedited analyses and is categorized as a Rush OPD Case. An XXXX City Police Department Law Enforcement Officer delivers the evidence by first signing in to the visitors log book at the XXXX FSD. The OPD Law Enforcement Officer is escorted to the XXXX FSD XXXX City Police Rush Intake room and is met by a XXXX FSD Chemist. The Chemist inspects the evidence for any nonconformance and if acceptable receives the rush case and records the transaction in the OPD Tracker™ evidence bar code system. The Chemist immediately begins analyses and proceeds similar to method 3 above.



5. The XXXX FSD Laboratory Director authorizes (see authorization memorandum) the following positions to take possession, sample, and analyze evidence samples in which they are authorized to perform their associated job duties in the XXXX FSD forensic operational units.

- a. Administration

- i. Law Enforcement Technician
    - ii. Property Evidence Division Officer
  - b. Chemistry Unit
    - i. Chemist I
    - ii. Chemist II
    - iii. Chemist III
    - iv. Chemist IV Technical Leader
  - c. Latent Print Unit
    - i. Latent Print Examiner I
    - ii. Latent Print Examiner II
    - iii. Latent Print Examiner III
    - iv. Latent Print Examiner IV Technical Leader
  - d. Crime Scene Investigation
    - i. Crime Scene Investigator I
    - ii. Crime Scene Investigator II
    - iii. Crime Scene Investigator III
    - iv. Crime Scene Investigator IV Technical Leader

**6. The XXXX FSD Laboratory Director** designates the following locations as evidence storage locations:

- a) Evidence Vault
- b) Chemistry Unit
  - a. Temporary lockers for cases in progress.
- c) Latent Print Unit
  - a. Temporary lockers for cases in progress.
- d) Evidence Drying Rooms

Access to rooms designated to contain evidence is limited through the use of electronic and mechanical keys.

**7. The XXXX FSD Laboratory Director** designates a Unit Technical Leader to annually

- a) Inventory
  - i. Mechanical keys
  - ii. Electronic key
  - iii. Evidence in main vault
  - iv. Evidence in temporary storage locations

