



ATF-LS-5.9.4A Review of Case Records, Reports, and Notifications	Published Online: March 2018
Authority: Technical Leader	
Unofficial Copy; May Not Be Most Current Version	Page: 1 of 3

1. General

1.1. Technical and administrative reviews shall be conducted and documented for all case records, reports and notifications.

1.2. In general the technical and administrative reviews are done by individual persons. However these reviews may be performed as one process but this should be rare.

1.3. The administrative and technical reviews may not be performed by the person who performed the work or authored the report or notification. The examiner who performed any required verifications may perform the technical review.

2. Scope of review

2.1. The review forms detail the requirements of the respective reviews.

2.1.1. The scope of the technical review shall ensure the following, at a minimum:

- results, opinions and interpretations are accurate, properly qualified and supported by the test record
- conformance with the test method(s) and applicable policies and procedures
- test report or notification contains all required information
- results are scientifically valid

2.1.1.1. The Forensic Biology technical reviews shall include the elements required by the FBI's Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories.

2.1.2. The scope of the administrative review shall include the following, at a minimum:

- review of the test report or notification for spelling and grammar
- review of all administrative and examination records to ensure that the records are uniquely identified
- review of the test report or notification to ensure that all key information is included

3. Reviewer qualifications

3.1. Technical reviewer

3.1.1. A qualified technical reviewer is an examiner or technician that has been authorized by the Laboratory Chief to conduct technical reviews in the area being

reviewed. The authorization to work for ATF Laboratory Services employees, also implicitly includes the authorization to conduct technical reviews in that area and no separate record is required.

3.1.2. A technical reviewer need not be currently proficiency testing, however they must have been competency tested in the area being reviewed.

3.1.3. Qualification records for reviewers external to the system may take a variety of forms. Based on a review of these records, the Laboratory Chief can grant an authorization to conduct technical reviews.

3.1.3.1. Formal competency test records may not exist for external subject matter experts based on their position and the infrastructure and/or quality system of their current organization.

3.1.4. Technical reviewers of Forensic Biology analyses must meet the qualifications of the FBI's *Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories*.

3.2. Administrative reviewer

3.2.1. The administrative reviewer shall be a Section Chief or an employee authorized by laboratory management.

4. Review process

4.1. Author review

4.1.1. Prior to submission for technical review, the author of the report or notification shall document their review of the case record and report or notification by signing or initialing, and dating the case record review form.

4.2. Technical review

4.2.1. A technical review of each case record and the related test report or notification shall be conducted and documented by a qualified reviewer prior to the distribution of the report or notification. However, if the report is time sensitive and a qualified reviewer is unavailable, the technical review may be conducted and documented as soon as practical after distribution. The technical reviewer shall document their review of the case record and report or notification by signing or initialing, and dating the case record review form.

4.2.1.1. If a nonconformance or technical error is discovered after a report is issued, then based on the nature of the issue, an appropriate plan of action shall be developed.

4.2.2. The Section Chief shall attempt to resolve a discrepancy between the report author and the technical reviewer. If needed, they may consult a qualified third party. The Lab Chief shall be consulted as appropriate and necessary. Discrepancy resolutions must be documented in the case record.

4.3. Administrative review

4.3.1. An administrative review of each case record and the related test report or notification shall be conducted and documented prior to the distribution of the report or notification. The administrative reviewer shall document their review of the case record and report or notification by signing or initialing, and dating the case record review form.

5. Records

5.1. Records of authorized technical and administrative reviewers shall be maintained.

5.2. The appropriate review form shall be used to document the reviews.

5.2.1. Forensic Science Laboratories- General

ATF-LS-F-5.9.4 A Case record review form

5.2.2. Forensic Science Laboratories- Forensic Biology

ATF-LS-F-5.9.4 B DNA Case record review form

ATF-LS-F-5.9.4 C DNA Collection notification review form

5.2.3. Fire Research Laboratory

ATF-LS-F-101 Review Form – Engineering Analysis

ATF-LS-F-102 Review Form – Memo to File

ATF-LS-F-103 Review Form – Experiments

ATF-LS-F-122 Review Form – Scene

5.3. The signatures or initials of the report author and reviewers with dates on the review form shall signify the completion of the reviews.

5.3.1. Forensic Science Laboratories- The technical reviewer will initial and date all pages of the draft report. Edit recommendations by the reviewer may be recorded on the draft report.

5.3.2. Fire Research Laboratory- The technical reviewer for the Fire Research Laboratory shall sign the final report.

5.4. Review forms shall be maintained in accordance with ATF-LS-4.13 Control of records.