



ATF-LS-LP3 Latent Print Case Documentation	Published Online: March 2018
Authority: Technical Leader	
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I. **Purpose:** This policy and procedure notes specific requirements for latent print examination documentation. These guidelines will ensure that Laboratory Services case records contain examination documentation that support the reported findings in a way that in the absence of the primary examiner, another qualified examiner in the discipline or supervisor could evaluate what was done and interpret the data.

II. **Scope:** This policy and procedure is applicable to all case records generated by Laboratory Services fingerprint specialists.

III. **References:**

ATF-LS-4.13.2 Case Records

ATF-LS-5.8 Evidence Handling

ATF-LS-LP-F-A Latent Print Worksheet

ATF-LS-LP-F-B Latent Print Summary Worksheet

ATF-LS-LP23 Glossary of Symbols and Terms

SWGFAST Standard for Friction Ridge Digital Imaging (current version)

SWGFAST Standard for Reporting Friction Ridge Examinations (Latent/Tenprint) (current version)

ASCLD/LAB International Supplemental Requirements for the Accreditation of Forensic Science Testing Laboratories, Appendix C – Latent Print Examination Records (current version)

IV. **Apparatus/Reagents:** None

V. **Safety Precautions:** None specific to this procedure - Standard Laboratory Safety Practices

VI. **Procedures:**

In addition to the requirements of Laboratory Services **ATF-LS-4.3.2 Case Records**, latent print examination documentation will include: photographs, sketches, diagrams, video, photocopies, and/or other visual aides used to document the latent print examination. Observations will also include specific information on the sequence of developmental processes. When an identifiable latent print is developed and captured, recorded observations will indicate, by sequence number, which procedure resulted in the developed print. All latent prints of value will be photographically captured. In addition to being used for examination documentation, latent print images are considered evidence and will be maintained in the ATF Laboratory Latent Print File.

When multiple identifiable latent prints are developed on an item of evidence, all of the developed identifiable latent prints will be compared to any submitted known prints. In cases that involve an exceptionally high number of identifiable latent prints, the fingerprint specialist may work with the first line supervisor to determine when a sufficient number of comparisons have been completed. The case record will clearly document this decision. **All** latent prints of value will be captured and labeled according to Laboratory Services **ATF-LS-5.8 Evidence Handling** and maintained in the ATF Laboratory Latent Print File.

Captures of latent prints of value will be marked according to the ATF Latent Print Examination Glossary (i.e., fingerprint, palm print, latent print). These markings are considered preliminary

markings and are subject to change as the examiner moves through the analysis, comparison and evaluation processes. In addition, information about the orientation and position of the latent print on the item of evidence will be included in the case record. This information may be recorded through a narrative description, photographs and/or diagram(s) that clearly indicate the latent print's orientation and location on the item of evidence. When the evidence is not suitable for recording the orientation and position of the latent to the item of evidence, a note stating such will be made on the Latent Print Summary Worksheet.

Captured latent prints determined to be of no value for comparison purposes will be marked as such and maintained in the ATF Laboratory Latent Print File. A latent print is considered "captured" at the point the image is uniquely identified according to ATF LS 5.8 Evidence Handling. If a latent print of no value is captured with a latent print of value, the latent print of no value will be marked as such and will be retained in the ATF Laboratory Latent Print File. When multiple latent prints of no value for comparison are captured along with latent(s) of value, i.e., a sheet of paper with two latents of value and multiple latent prints of no value, a note that prints not marked of value are considered of no value will be made in the case notes.

Photographic Latent Print Images:

Original images of latent prints generated during examination are considered evidence and should not be physically stored in the case jacket, but will be stored in the laboratory according to **ATF-LS-5.8 Evidence Handling**. Copies of these images or a reference to where the original images are stored will be included in the case jacket for examination documentation purposes.

Worksheets:

All Laboratory Services latent print case records will include completed Latent Print Worksheet (s), and the Latent Print Summary Worksheet(s) – (**LP-F-A and LP-F-B** respectively).

VII. Controls:

Section Chief or Designee:

An administrative review of all case records will be made by the appropriate section chief or his/her designee. This review will be documented on the appropriate case review form.

Technical Reviewer:

A technical peer review is performed by an expert proficient in the analysis being performed for each report of analysis. In addition, an administrative review of the case record is performed by the appropriate section chief. These reviews are documented on the appropriate Case Record Review Form according to procedure **ATF-LS-5.9.4 Case Record Review**.

- VIII. Quality Programs:** A sampling of case records for each case examiner will be reviewed for compliance to the above mentioned requirements during the annual Internal Quality Reviews. Internal Reviews will also include a review of how the records and latent print captures are physically handled.