

**SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURE**

DATE: June 3, 2016

NUMBER: 6.07 – PATROL

SUBJECT: LATENT PRINT DOCUMENTATION AND
TRANSMITTAL PROCEDURES

RELATED POLICY: N/A

ORIGINATING DIVISION: LABORATORY

NEW PROCEDURE:

PROCEDURAL CHANGE:

SUPERSEDES: DP 6.07 – JULY 24, 2013

I. PURPOSE

This Department procedure establishes guidelines to ensure the proper handling, processing and chain of custody of latent print evidence.

II. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all members of the Department.

III. BACKGROUND

- A. Judicial opinions tend to direct that ANY physical evidence obtained during a police investigation must be retained for court examination, regardless of whether the agency feels it has any material value in subsequent prosecution.
- B. During a latent print search, and prior to any lifts being taken, an examination of the developed area should be made, using discretion by the officer to determine if there is any friction ridge detail that may be of some evidentiary value. If an area is questionable, consider it of value. All lifts collected after this examination must be retained.

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IV. **DEFINITIONS**

A. Latent Print Lift

A latent print lift is a developed friction ridge impression found at a crime scene or on items of evidence that have been processed and recovered, or photographed. (Shoe, tire, cloth or glove prints are not included and should NOT be included with latent print evidence). Refer to Departmental Procedure 3.02, Impound, Release, and Disposal of Property, Evidence and Articles Missing Identification Marks, for direction in impounding this type of evidence into the Property Room.

B. Known Print Exemplars

A known print exemplar is a standard fingerprint or palm print exemplar that represents the friction ridge detail of the fingers and hands collected from a known individual. This includes inked or Livescan fingerprint cards that are recorded at the time of arrest or booking.

C. Elimination Prints

Elimination prints are rolled, inked impressions of all persons not involved in the offense, who have legitimate access to the premises because of employment, residence, or any other reason.

D. Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS)

The Automated Fingerprint Identification System is used to store and retrieve known finger and palm prints, using minutiae (fingerprint ridge characteristics) matching technology, an image system, and a network capability for law enforcement agency access to local, state and national databases.

E. Automated Latent Print System (ALPS)

The Automated Latent Print System is a component of the AFIS System and is used to conduct a latent print search when "no suspect" has been identified through other means.

V. **PROCEDURES**

A. Department-issued latent print cards (PD-136 and /or PD-866) will be used with ALL latent lifts utilizing the pre-printed data format to thoroughly document the latent print lift. Use the pre-printed Elimination Print forms (PD-1043) for obtaining inked fingerprints.

B. Obtain an SDPD incident number and/or case number, and a barcode label.

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C. All latent print lift cards will be fully documented at the crime scene and maintained by the officer having collected them until they are impounded. **There must be only one** valid SDPD case number or incident number on each lift card submitted. The barcode number that contains the latent print evidence must be noted in the Crime/Incident Report (ARJIS-2) and/or the Officer's Report Narrative (ARJIS-9).

1. The latent print cards will be placed in a latent print envelope (PD-887) with any elimination print forms that have been collected.
2. The submitting officer will complete the front of the envelope, which must include an SDPD incident number and/or crime case number and barcode label.
3. The envelope will be sealed with a Department approved evidence seal. The seal will be signed, initialed, and dated by the impounding officer. Initials must be placed across the border of the seal and the envelope.
4. The envelope (PD-887) will then be deposited in the locked drop box located at each area station.

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D. Officers may deposit latent print lift cards in the same manner as detailed above in the locked drop box located in the Headquarters Property Room.

E. The body of the crime report shall include the fact that a latent print search was conducted, the identity of the officer involved, the number of lifts obtained, the number of elimination print card items and surfaces and their disposition.

1. Personnel from the Latent Print Unit of the Forensic Science Section will retrieve the latent print envelope from the Headquarters Property Room and verify all latent print envelopes as well as enclosed latent print evidence has been correctly documented. All latent print envelopes will be scanned and received into the Latent Print Unit.
2. Each area station will have personnel assigned to transport the sealed PD-887 envelope to the Headquarters Property Room.
3. When received latent print evidence that does not have an SDPD case number (e.g., barcode label or incident number), has another agency number or has no number at all, the Latent Print Unit shall immediately notify the appropriate lifting officer. This can be accomplished via the Feedback Form, by returning the latent print evidence to the lifting officer via the Laboratory's property and evidence clerk, or by arranging for the officer to come to the Latent Print Unit to make corrections. If the lifting officer obtains an SDPD case number for the latent print evidence, the officer shall immediately contact the Latent Print Unit with the correct number and return the latent print evidence to the Latent Print Unit

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through appropriate channels (by transporting the evidence to the Headquarters Property Room or to the Latent Print Unit at Headquarters). The lifting officer cannot return latent print evidence via interoffice mail.

Note: If the impounding officer is on an extended leave (such as a vacation), that officer's supervisor or designated officer may correct the problem.

- F. Investigative personnel shall adhere to the same documentation and transmittal process contained in this procedure.
- G. Detectives who wish to have latent prints compared to any individuals shall submit a completed Request for Latent Print Examination form (PD-299) to the Latent Print Unit.
 - 1. Latent print requests not accompanied by a known exemplar shall list a BKG, AFIS, CII or FBI number.
 - 2. Manual comparison requests will include items/surfaces to be compared.
- H. Detectives who wish to request an ALPS search on latent print cases that do not contain elimination prints, must submit a completed Request for Latent Print Examination form (PD-299). The "ALPS Computer Search" box at the top of the form must be checked.