




COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCE

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
A Nationally Accredited Laboratory

NOTICE OF DFS POLICY CHANGE

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To: All Agencies Serviced by Department of Forensic Science Laboratories
From: Linda C. Jackson, Director 
Date: June 10, 2016
RE: Revised Reporting Practices for Previously Unidentified Latent Prints with Subsequent Potential Identification through AFIS

DFS will be implementing changes to its reporting practices for previously unidentified latent prints with subsequent potential identification through AFIS. This change, which will be effective June 15, 2016, will allow DFS to better serve our customers by more efficiently allocating our resources in the Latent Prints Section.

Once entered, unidentified latent prints are continuously searched in AFIS. When a new exemplar is added to the AFIS (state or federal) database that provides a potential identification for a previously unidentified latent print through an automated search, a potential identification is presented to the examiner.

In order to provide this potential investigative information to the submitting agency as quickly as possible, DFS will issue a Certificate of Analysis (CoA) to the agency informing them that a potential identification may be possible for this previously unidentified latent print. If a confirmation examination is essential to any agency's investigation, the original latent print image will need to be resubmitted to DFS.

This policy replaces the current practice of contacting submitting agencies via phone or email requesting evidence be resubmitted for confirmation of the potential identification and subsequent result reporting.

For questions regarding this policy, please contact the Latent Print Supervisor at the DFS Laboratory that provides service to your agency:

- Central Laboratory – Sylvia Buffington-Lester (804-588-4125)
- Eastern Laboratory – Leland Kennedy (757-355-5851)
- Northern Laboratory – Jessica Davis (703-334-9752)
- Western Laboratory – Lyle Shaver (540-283-5910)

An example of the new report wording is below for your convenience:

A subsequent automated database search was conducted with latent print 1P1 in FS Lab# C12-123 (agency case# 2012-0001), and as a result, a potential identification exists. Please contact the examiner listed below for assistance in facilitating the resubmission of evidence if confirmation of this potential identification is necessary.