




COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCE

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
A Nationally Accredited Laboratory

700 NORTH 5TH ST.
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23219
(804) 786-2281 FAX (804) 786-6857

NOTICE OF DFS POLICY CHANGE

To: All Agencies Serviced by Department of Forensic Science (DFS) Laboratories
From: Linda C. Jackson, Director 
Date: December 1, 2017
RE: **Revised Controlled Substances Submission and Weighing Policies**

The Department of Forensic Science (DFS) has implemented changes to its controlled substances submission and weighing policies after consultation with the Forensic Science Board and a focus group of user agency representatives. These changes, which are effective immediately, are necessary to best manage DFS' limited resources and better serve our customers by attempting to reduce turnaround times for controlled substances analyses. In addition, the weighing practice changes will minimize laboratory staff's exposure to hazardous opioids. These revised policies will be applied to evidence previously submitted to the laboratory and awaiting analysis as of December 1, 2017.

Net Weights: DFS will no longer provide net weights for substances unless the substance satisfies a weight threshold specified in the Code of Virginia. If the weight of the substance with the innermost packaging is at or above a statutory weight threshold, a net weight will be provided. Substances that do not meet or exceed established statutory weight thresholds will be reported using the gross weight, which includes innermost packaging.

Marijuana Food Products: Submissions will be limited to one specimen for simple possession cases and up to five specimens (e.g., five brownies) for distribution cases. If additional testing is required, a request must be made by the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney to a Supervisor in the respective laboratory's Controlled Substances Section prior to submitting the evidence.

Search Warrant Cases: Only evidence supporting the indicated charge should be submitted. If it is subsequently determined that more testing is required, additional items can be submitted, following consultation with DFS, and the analyses will be expedited.

For questions regarding controlled substances submission and analysis criteria, please contact the Chemistry Program Manager, Scott Maye, at (804) 588-4168. For case specific inquiries, please contact the Controlled Substances Section Supervisor at the DFS laboratory that provides services to your agency:

- Central Laboratory – John Przybylski (804) 588-4154
- Eastern Laboratory – Brian Meinweiser (757) 355-5958
- Northern Laboratory – Jeana Rodenas (703) 334-9736
- Western Laboratory – Chris Bryant (540) 283-5927