

Solano County District Attorney  
Bureau of Forensic Services

# EV-1.01



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Approval: Lab Director

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***Physical Evidence Bulletin:  
Controlled Substances***

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## INTRODUCTION

Controlled substances appear in a greater variety of forms than any other type of physical evidence. The investigator should routinely expect to encounter liquids, tablets, capsules, powders, irregular masses, and nearly invisible deposits on blotter and other paper.

### 1. SAMPLING, COLLECTING, PRESERVING, AND MARKING

- 1.1. Only those items which are being used to file charges should be submitted for analysis.
- 1.2. Where items include large quantities of material (e.g., over fifty kilograms of marijuana), representative samples should be repackaged and submitted to the laboratory. Representative sample size should be sufficient to meet the requirements for the charges and any enhancements, if applicable.
- 1.3. Where the evidence consists of large quantities of marijuana plants, the plants should be photographed, leaf material stripped from plants, and dried before submission.
- 1.4. Paraphernalia (syringes, pipes, scales, etc.) should not be submitted except:
  - 1.4.1. Where this is the ONLY evidence in the case and,
  - 1.4.2. The prosecuting attorney has requested the analysis.

### 2. PACKAGING

- 2.1. All evidence must be submitted in a properly packaged, labeled, and sealed container. Proper seals will contain, at a minimum, an acceptable physical seal across the entire opening of the container and include an identifying mark (e.g. initials/signature).
- 2.2. Evidence should be packaged in a standard Suspected Controlled Substance Evidence submission envelope. Where use of the standard submission envelope is not feasible, a suitable container (e.g. envelopes, plastic bags, etc.) should be submitted with a Suspected Controlled Substance Evidence submission envelope securely attached.
- 2.3. Plant or other organic material shall be dried before placing in suitable containers. Containers made of paper should be used. Plastic bags encourage the formation of mold or in many cases cause decomposition in wet exhibits such as marijuana, mushrooms, peyote plants, or other materials with high moisture content. Items should be thoroughly dried prior to packaging.
- 2.4. Used syringes with needles will not be accepted for controlled substance analysis. These are potential sources for transmission of infectious diseases such as hepatitis and HIV.
- 2.5. Do not submit clothing. Remove suspected material from pockets and place in separate marked containers.
- 2.6. Guns, money, or personal property should not be submitted unless they are to be examined.
- 2.7. Evidence items should be appropriately packaged to prevent cross contamination.

### 3. QUANTITATION

Quantitative analysis (% purity) is specialized testing and is not performed by the laboratory.

### 4. EXAMINATION

The laboratory will determine the best methods to employ in the analysis of submitted evidence items. Methods used will be approved and validated by the laboratory. Sampling of submitted evidence may be performed in the interest of efficiency and will be clearly stated in the laboratory case record.

### 5. RE-EXAMINATION

The laboratory does not routinely examine materials that have been previously examined by another laboratory. Re-examination requests must be made in writing by the submitting agency with an endorsement by the prosecuting attorney having jurisdiction in the case.

### 6. EVIDENCE DISPOSITION

Controlled substances submitted for analysis will be retained by the laboratory during analysis only. When the analysis is complete the evidence will be returned to the submitting agency as soon as possible.

The laboratory generally does not collect or create evidence items for future testing without a specific request. If retention of evidence is required, this request needs to be conveyed as soon as practicable.

**For further information on handling of controlled substances contact the laboratory directly:**

Office of the District Attorney

Bureau of Forensic Services

2201 Courage Dr., Ste. 2119

Fairfield, CA 94533

PH: (707) 784-4400

FAX: (707) 784-6205