



Janet T. Mills
Governor

STATE OF MAINE
Maine State Police Crime Laboratory
26 Hospital Street
133 State House Station
Augusta, Maine
04333-0133

A Nationally Accredited Laboratory



Lt. Michael Zabarsky
Director

February 6, 2024

To all Maine law enforcement agencies:

At the Maine State Police Crime Laboratory, our Forensic Biology unit excels at linking people, items, and crime scenes to each other, but due to staff turnover and the need to train lateral and new hires, we are extremely short-handed and need to limit what evidence is submitted for property crime DNA analysis to ensure mission critical services.

Effective immediately, all agencies submitting DNA evidence relating to PROPERTY CRIMES will be required to submit limited items. The following items are most likely to yield a useable DNA profile:

- **Swabs of items that have red/brown stains (blood) on them.**
- **Swabs of items that would have contact with the perpetrator's MOUTH (i.e. cans, bottles, cups, straws, cell phones, half-eaten food, chewing gum, pipes, and face masks). The item may also be collected after swab collection.**
- **Entire cigarette butts (do not swab them).**
- **Swabs of clothing items that would have been worn by the perpetrator. The clothing item may also be collected after swab collection.**
- **Swabs of deployed airbags.**

The decision to submit evidence for DNA testing related to property crimes should also consider:

1. How will these items help solve this property crime and successfully prosecute the perpetrator? For example, If DNA at the crime scene is matched to a suspect, does it help prove they were the person that committed the crime. Another example is if a prosecutor specifically directed your collection of these items.
2. Does your evidence have the highest chance of producing DNA profiles? Even though we might get DNA from an item the perpetrator touched, anything that has blood, semen, or saliva on it has a MUCH better chance of producing results.
3. If you have a suspect in your case, submit their known reference sample when you bring the evidence to the lab. And if the victim's or homeowner's DNA could be on an item, submit their known reference samples too. CODIS hits take longer to obtain than comparing evidence directly to someone's known reference sample.

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4. If the case is going to trial, please let us know as soon as you have the court date. We'll do everything we can to meet that deadline.
5. If for whatever reason, you no longer need the evidence tested, please advise us. If we have not processed your evidence yet, we can return it to you.
6. Reach out with questions. If you are unsure on the best practice to collect or submit DNA evidence, please reach out to the Maine State Police Crime Laboratory @624-7100 or any member of the State Police Evidence Response Team (ERT) @624-7076.

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