

KERN REGIONAL CRIME LABORATORY

Laboratory Services Section, Evidence Control Unit



Policy on the Submission of Evidence for Impressions Analysis

QT41352 v19

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The purpose of this document is to provide law enforcement and criminal justice officials with guidance regarding the submission of physical evidence for impression examination by the Kern Regional Crime Laboratory Firearms and Toolmarks Unit (FTU). The Crime Scene Response Team is available to assist law enforcement agencies in proper photography and/or collection of evidence for impression examination. This includes collection of known tire test impressions.

Shoe print or tire tread impressions may be left at crime scenes on two- and three-dimensional surfaces. Almost all impressions, including partial impressions, have value for forensic comparison. The examination of detailed shoe and tire tread impressions from a crime scene may result in the positive identification to the shoes or tires associated with a subject(s).

Whenever possible, the submitting agency should provide the laboratory with the evidence bearing the original impression. If the evidence cannot be submitted, then lifting techniques and/or examination quality photographs should be used to develop the best detail of the impression.

SUBMISSION OF IMPRESSION SAMPLES TO THE LABORATORY FOR ANALYSIS

Agency Responsibilities

To submit physical evidence to the laboratory for shoe impression or tire impression analysis:

1. General or overall crime scene photographs must be taken to relate the impressions to the crime scene. Examination-quality photographs then must be taken to obtain maximum detail for forensic examination. All impressions must be photographed using both methods.
2. Photographs of unknown impressions must contain a scale, fill the frame, and be parallel to the film plane. They must be taken at the highest resolution setting possible for the camera and photographed in natural size (1:1, if possible).
 - a. Submit digital images of unknown or questioned impressions on digital media and printed natural size (1:1, if possible) as an evidence item, properly packaged and sealed.
 - b. Digital images submitted to the KRCL on digital media will not be returned to the submitting agency.

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3. Properly package and seal¹ known shoes or tire test impressions, and scene evidence with the collector's initials, dates, and other relevant information on the evidence. Every edge of a container does not need to have tape applied. There just needs to be enough tape applied to ensure that the container cannot be breached undetected:
 - a. If a breakable shoe or tire cast, air-dry and package evidence separately in bubble wrap.
 - b. If a dust print lift, use clean, high-quality paper or laminated folders, or mail tubes.
 - c. For other items, use paper bags, depending on the items being submitted for examination.
4. Provide both the unknown scene evidence and known shoe(s), tire(s) and/or tire test impressions in order to perform the examination and comparison.
 - a. If the known tire(s) are not available for submission, then the comparison shall be limited to class characteristics (tread design and dimension), and general observations of wear.
5. Enter the case information, list of evidence item(s) and analysis request into Portal.

SUBMISSION OF IMPRESSION EVIDENCE TO THE LABORATORY VIA PORTAL

Full instructions for the use of Portal are available on the laboratory's website, www.kerncounty.com/government/departments/kern-regional-crime-laboratory.

Click on "Evidence Submission/Reporting" and there you will find basic instructions for use with a link to more in-depth instructions.

Submitting Evidence in Portal

Use the following example when submitting item(s) for impression evidence analysis.

Evidence Type	Evidence Description
Bag	Sealed bag labeled as – [Agency property # or item #], [Exact description as on label or evidence bag]

¹ A proper seal is one that prevents loss, cross transfer, or contamination while ensuring that attempted entry into the container is detectable. A proper seal may include heat seal, tape seal, or a lock. The Kern Regional Crime Laboratory requires that the initials of the person creating the seal and the date that the seal was created be placed across the seal onto the container.

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Envelope (other envelope)	Sealed envelope labeled as – [Agency property # or item #], [Exact description as on label or evidence envelope]
Box (other box)	[Agency property # or item #], [Exact description as on label or evidence box]

Submitting a Request in Portal

Select the *Discipline* and *Service Type* below for submitting impression analysis request(s) in Portal.

Discipline	Service Type
Firearms & Toolmarks Unit	Tire Impression Shoe Impression

Add Request

Discipline

Service Type

Requesting Rep

Complexity

Reason

Due Date

Notes

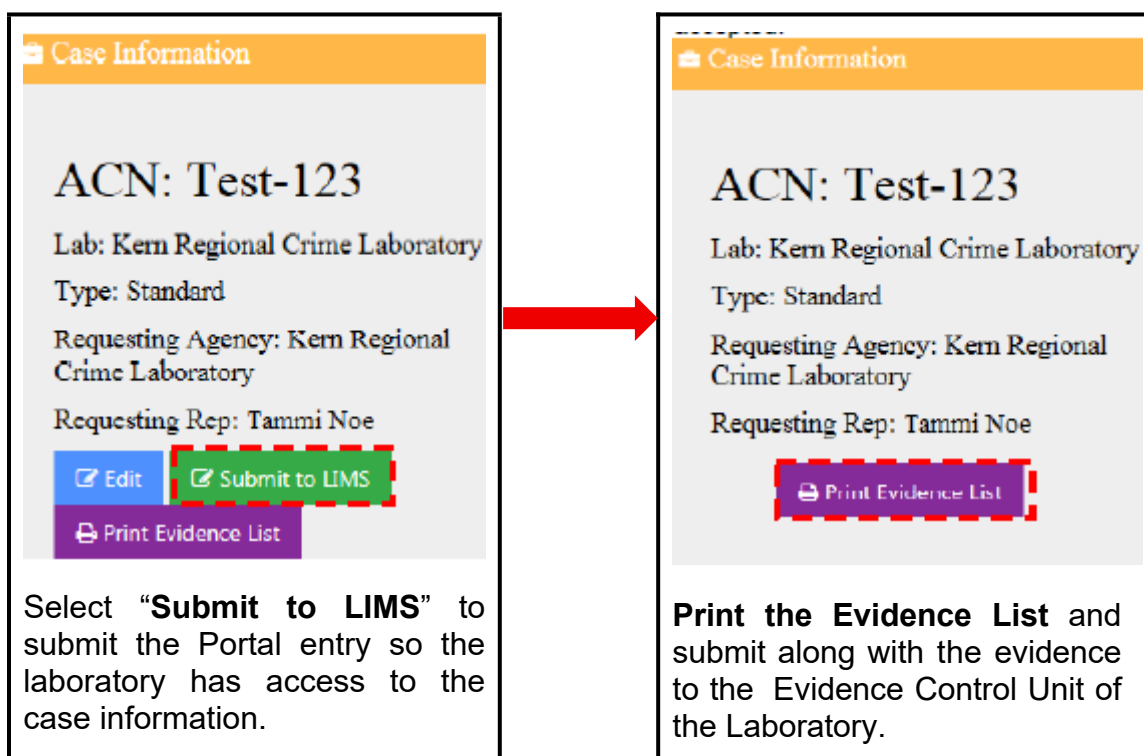
✓ Save

✓ Save & Add Another

Cancel

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Evidence submitted without a printout may not be accepted.

Laboratory Responsibilities

In order to accept evidence, a member of the Kern Regional Crime Laboratory’s Evidence Control Unit (ECU) shall:

1. Ensure that the following information is included:

Portal Request	Evidence Label (Required)
• Incident date • Subject and/or victim names (first and last) • Offense(s) • List of items submitted • Requested analysis	• Agency • Agency case number • Requesting officer • Subject and/or victim names (first and last), if any.

2. Ensure that the outer packaging of evidence items is properly sealed.
3. Record the date, time, and transferred from/transferred to for the initial step on the chain of custody.

END OF DOCUMENT

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