

INDIANA STATE POLICE FORENSIC SERVICES

SUBJECT: CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

PURPOSE

This Code of Professional Conduct provides guidance for the performance of professional duties of all Forensic Services Division (FSD) personnel.

POLICY

It is the responsibility of each member of the FSD to conduct themselves in a manner that is above reproach even if a particular situation is not covered by this Policy, and to have an understanding that no code of professional conduct can be all encompassing to cover every possible scenario.

PROCEDURE

1. The Code of Professional Conduct:

- a. Treat all case related information with the confidentiality required;
- b. Avoid conflict of interest situations including involvement in activities that would diminish confidence in competence, impartiality, judgment, or operational integrity;
- c. Strive to identify and have an awareness of risks to independence and impartiality;
- d. Treat all items of evidence with the care and control necessary to ensure its integrity to prevent tampering, adulteration, loss, or nonessential consumption of evidentiary materials;
- e. Approach all examinations and analyses impartially and objectively, with due diligence and an open and unbiased mind, and with minimum anticipation as to what the results might be;
- f. Remain immune to suggestions, pressures, and coercions inconsistent with the examination and analytical results and only be interested in the ascertaining of facts. The case investigative information may be used only when necessary to determine the most probative evidence to be examined;
- g. Avoid extraneous information from other sources so as to not affect opinions or conclusions;
- h. Avoid confusing scientific fact with investigative theory in interpretations;
- i. Utilize only accurate, reliable, and appropriate technical methods to conduct complete and fair examinations and analyses, applying only those tests necessary.

Unwarranted and superfluous tests shall not be used to give apparent greater weight to the results;

- j. Utilize appropriate controls and standards of required quality during examinations and analyses;
 - k. Generate and retain clear, complete, and accurate case notes on all examinations and analyses contemporaneous to the time the actions are performed (i.e., nearest to the action as reasonably possible and without unnecessary delay);
 - l. Make a full, complete, and clear disclosure of the interpretations, opinions, results, and conclusions in the written reports and testimony as required by approved Management System Documents, and avoid extending beyond area(s) of expertise;
 - m. State opinions and conclusions, both in written reports and testimony, in accordance with the examination and analytical results in the case and only to the extent justified by the results;
 - n. Communicate honestly with members of the criminal justice community regarding examinations and analyses conducted;
 - o. Do not exaggerate, embellish, or otherwise misrepresent education, training, experience, or other qualifications;
 - p. Pursue professional competency through such activities as training, proficiency testing, certification, and a commitment to continuous learning in relevant forensic discipline(s);
 - q. Carry out all duties in such a manner to inspire the confidence of the public;
 - r. Treat co-workers, client agencies, and general public with courtesy, respect, and professionalism; and
 - s. Perform work in such manner to ensure personal safety and the safety of others following the requirements in the FSD's safety program.
- 2. No member of the FSD shall use their position to impose undue pressure on an employee to take technical shortcuts or arrive at a conclusion not supported by examination and analytical results.
 - 3. If at any time a member of the FSD perceives pressure to conduct any examination, analysis, or other duties in a manner that is not independent, impartial, or objective, the situation shall be brought to the attention of a first line supervisor or the Division management staff.
 - 4. Each member of the FSD is responsible for bringing to the attention of a first line supervisor or Division management staff any risks to independence and impartiality, and any unethical, illegal, or scientifically questionable activities. It is unacceptable conduct

to knowingly conceal or not report risks to independence and impartiality, or knowledge of unethical, illegal, or scientifically questionable activities.

5. First line supervisors or Division management staff shall take appropriate action(s) if there is potential for, or there has been, any unethical, illegal, or scientifically questionable activity and to resolve risks to independence and impartiality.
6. This Code of Professional Conduct is a supplement to the Ethics Rules from the Indiana Code of Ethics and Indiana State Police Regulation 1: Code of Professional Ethics. FSD personnel shall comply with all rules for ethical conduct.