



BCI Missing Person and Unidentified Human Remains Evidence Submission Policy
Effective 3/20/2020

As part of BCI’s on-going effort to effectively and efficiently offer assistance to law enforcement agencies, coroners and residents in Ohio, the following submission policies for Missing Person and Unidentified Human Remains submissions have been adopted:

PACKAGING REQUIREMENTS FOR DNA EVIDENCE

Upon receipt, evidence items must be packaged to protect them from loss, cross transfer, cross contamination, and/or deleterious change.

- Small evidence items must be submitted in a minimum of an approximately 5 x 7 in. package(s).
- Potentially hazardous evidence must be packaged to ensure safe handling.
- Biological evidence should be packaged in paper to prevent deterioration of evidence.
 - Exceptions include remains which are not dry or may still have tissue attached. These items should be packaged in plastic and stored frozen.
- Reference standards must be clearly labeled with the name of the donor.
- All evidence packages must be sealed and initialed prior to BCI submission.

PROJECT LINK (Linking Individuals Not Known) REQUEST DETAILS

A law enforcement agency searching for a person who has been missing for more than 30 days or a Coroners’ Office who has been unable to provide an identity for human remains for 30 days, may submit items to BCI as part of Project LINK. To seek services available with Project LINK or for more information, call 855-BCI-OHIO or send an email to LINK@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov.

Before submitting evidence from Missing Person or Unidentified Human Remains cases, BCI strongly recommends contacting Project LINK analysts to assist investigating the case without DNA submissions or to help identifying which items are best suited for testing. Based on the circumstances of the case, different approaches may be warranted.

A free DNA collection kit will be provided upon request; instructions on how to take and submit swabs, a supplemental Missing Person Reporting Form and necessary paperwork are included.

LABORATORY REQUEST DETAILS

- I. With the submission of a **Missing Person** case, a summary narrative of the case facts must be provided, along with consent forms for each relative collected must be filled out and submitted with the DNA standard. The synopsis should provide the following information:
 - How the evidence relates to the missing individual; and
 - Where the evidence was located
- II. Preferred first-degree relatives’ DNA standards:
 - Missing individual’s biological parents, the biological children (please obtain a sample from the children’s other biological parent when available), full siblings, followed by other distant relatives.



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- DNA samples from the missing individual’s personal effects (i.e. Direct Reference Samples) may be submitted. Examples include: medical samples, dentures, toothbrush, razor, reading glasses, etc.

The following evidence items will not be accepted for analysis:

- Direct Reference Samples without an attempt to obtain family reference samples for concurrent submission
- Self-collected family reference samples

III. With the submission of an **Unidentified Human Remains** case, an anthropology or autopsy report must be submitted stating that the remains are human.

- Every means of identification must be exhausted prior to remains being submitted to the laboratory, including:
 - i. Facial recognition;
 - ii. Tattoos or scars;
 - iii. Fingerprints;
 - iv. Dental records;
 - v. Medical implants;
 - vi. X-ray comparison;
 - vii. Eyeglasses; and
 - viii. Jewelry
- A minimum of two skeletal remains must be submitted, if available. Order of preference for skeletal remains are as follows:
 - i. Teeth
 - ii. Metacarpals, metatarsals, phalanges
 - iii. Long bones
 - iv. Ribs, vertebrae, pelvis, and skull
 - v. All other skeletal remains available
- If the state of decomposition will allow the collection of a blood card or an oral swab during autopsy, these items should also be submitted.

We invite you to direct your questions concerning this policy to:

Bobbie-Jo Kennedy, **BCI Forensic Scientist**
(740) 845-2516

Thank you for your cooperation in helping BCI to provide consistent, quality service to law enforcement agencies, coroner’s offices and the residents of Ohio.

BCI Laboratory Contacts

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Submission of Unidentified Human Remains Checklist

Every means of identification must be exhausted prior to samples being submitted to the BCI laboratory.

Have the following means of identification been attempted?

- Facial recognition
- Tattoos and or scars
- Fingerprints
- Dental Records (Including dentures)
- Medical Implants (Pace Maker, pins and bone screws, joints)
- X-ray comparison (Previous bone breaks and skeletal structure)
- Eyeglasses (Prescription and frame)
- Jewelry (Wedding ring/band, other items that were always worn)

If remains need submitted, please obtain at a minimum 2 skeletal remains, if available.

Order of preference for skeletal remains:

1. Teeth (Order: molars, premolars, canines, incisors, prefer unrestored 1st)
2. Metacarpals, Metatarsals, Phalanges
3. Long bones (femur, humerus, tibia, fibula, ulna or radius)
4. Ribs, Vertebrae, Pelvis, and Skull

Additional Requirements:

- If the state of decomposition will allow the collection of a blood card or oral swab during the autopsy, these items should also be submitted, if available.
- An anthropology or autopsy report must be submitted with the samples stating that the remains are human.
- If the agency believes the remains belong to a specific individual, reference standards from first-degree relatives should be obtained, if a direct reference sample from the individual is not available (i.e. convicted offender sample or medical specimen).
- Please obtain as many first-degree relatives' DNA samples as possible.

Order of preference for DNA standards:

1. Biological parents
2. Biological children (obtain a sample from other biological parent of individual's children)
3. Full siblings of the individual

Questions? Please e-mail LINK@ohioattorneygeneral.gov