



GEORGIA BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

3121 Panthersville Road
P.O. Box 370808
Decatur, Georgia 30037-0808

Vernon M. Keenan
Director

GBI CRIME LAB OPERATIONS BULLETIN 2010-01 Lab Closures & Evidence Submissions February 22, 2010

Due to continued budget cuts, the GBI Crime Lab will be closing the laboratory facilities in Moultrie, Columbus, and Summerville. The Crime Lab will continue to provide the forensic services that you require at our remaining facilities.

Effective **March 15, 2010**, all agencies that submit evidence to the Moultrie, Columbus, or Summerville laboratories will need to submit their evidence to a different GBI laboratory facility. Evidence may be submitted to the suggested location in person or sent via a common courier that provides detailed tracking information (e.g. FedEx, US Certified Mail, or UPS). Legal precedent from *Anderson v. State*, 247 Ga. 397, 3992 (276 S.E.2d 603) (1981) and Georgia Rules of Evidence Section 7.1, establish that transfer of evidence via a common courier that can provide detailed tracking information and a return receipt meets all requirements for chain of custody. The recommended laboratory for each county listed below was determined in order to help balance caseloads within the laboratory and minimize travel time for scientists and law enforcement, but agencies may deliver evidence to any GBI laboratory facility as needed.

A copy of guidelines on how to ship evidence is attached to this bulletin and can also be found on the Division of Forensic Sciences website at www.dofs.gbi.georgia.gov under the *News & Updates* section. There are also several videos available on this website under the *Videos* link that provide guidance on how to best package and seal your evidence so that the laboratory can handle the evidence and perform the analysis with minimal delays.

The following counties served by the **Summerville** or **Columbus** laboratories should deliver evidence to the Headquarters laboratory.

Bartow	Catoosa	Chattooga	Chattahoochee
Dade	Floyd	Gordon	Harris
Meriwether	Murray	Muscogee	Polk
Talbot	Troup	Walker	Whitfield

The following counties served by the **Moultrie** laboratory should deliver evidence to the Coastal Laboratory in Savannah.

Atkinson	Clinch	Coffee	Echols
Lanier			

The following counties served by the **Moultrie** or **Columbus** laboratories should deliver evidence to the Central Regional Laboratory in Macon.

Baker	Ben Hill	Berrien	Brooks
Calhoun	Clay	Colquitt	Cook
Crisp	Decatur	Dooley	Dougherty

Division of Forensic Sciences
P.O. Box 370808
Decatur, Georgia 30037-0808

Investigative Division
P.O. Box 370808
Decatur, Georgia 30037-0808

Georgia Crime Information Center
P.O. Box 370748
Decatur, Georgia 30037-0748

Early
Lowndes
Mitchell
Seminole
Terrell
Webster

Grady
Macon
Quitman
Stewart
Thomas
Wilcox

Irwin
Marion
Randolph
Sumter
Tift
Worth

Lee
Miller
Schley
Taylor
Turner

Division of Forensic Sciences (Headquarters)
3121 Panthersville Road
Decatur, Georgia 30034
Phone: 404-244-2500

Coastal Regional Crime Lab (Savannah Lab)
925 Mohawk Street
Savannah, Georgia 31419
Phone: 912-921-5400

Central Regional Crime Lab (Macon Lab)
5615 Riggins Mill Road
Dry Branch, Georgia 31020
Phone: 478-751-3198

As Director of the GBI Crime Laboratory, I am committed to ensuring that the laboratory continues to provide all possible assistance to the criminal justice system within Georgia. If you have any questions or concerns regarding GBI Crime Lab services, please do not hesitate to contact me at 404-270-8072 (office), 404-502-1836 (cell), or via email at george.herrin@gbi.ga.gov.



George Herrin, Jr., Ph.D.
Deputy Director – GBI

EVIDENCE SHIPPING GUIDELINES

- Firearms must be shipped unloaded.
- Ammunition must be sent in a separate shipment from firearms and conform to the individual common carrier stipulations.
- Flammable and other hazardous chemicals must be delivered in person.
- Syringes may not be submitted to the crime lab. With prior DOFS approval, syringe contents may be accepted by the laboratory for analysis.
- All blood alcohol and toxicology cases must be submitted in an approved BA/TOX kit.
- All biohazards must be in internal leak-proof containers such as sealed plastic bags that will contain all contents and prevent leakage during handling, storage, and transport.
- Biohazards that are mailed must be in leak-proof packaging with absorbent material.
- The primary container must be placed in an outer shipping container with secondary leak-proof materials.
- The biohazard warning symbol and label must be applied to the outside of the container.
- The packaging and marking requirements for biohazard evidence are based upon the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Standard, CFR Title 29, 1910.1030 and on Postal Regulations, Domestic Mail Manual 124.383.
- Warning labeling (Hepatitis or HIV positive, Glass, Sharp objects, etc.) must be indicated on the internal package and evidence must be packaged so as to prevent loss or damage to the evidence as well as minimize potential safety hazard to employees.
- All evidence must be properly sealed and packaged.
- The laboratory must receive one DOFS submission form every time evidence is submitted to the laboratory. If evidence is resubmitted, then a new submission form is required.
- When using US Mail, it is best to use certified or registered mail and a return receipt.
- Commercial carriers (FedEx, UPS) have additional regulations and requirements and must be consulted regarding their individual requirements.
- There should be no indication on the outside packaging that the package contains evidence (i.e., Drug identification, Firearms examination, etc.). Outside packaging must include the agency name and return address.