Controlled Substances Submission Guidelines

General Submission Guidelines

The Colorado Bureau of Investigation Forensic Services (CBIFS) recognizes that each case is distinctive. These submission guidelines will address typical situations encountered by your agency but cannot speak to all of the unique circumstances that are often exclusive to a particular case. With this understanding, the CBIFS provides the following information to assist you in the submission of your evidence.

Evidence Suitable for Analysis

- Items commonly submitted to the laboratory are powders, crystals, plants, tablets, liquids, edibles, sublingual film, and paper (used as blotter or as concealment). To increase efficiency and effectiveness, items with the most probative value will be analyzed.
- Weighable material may be chosen for analysis over residual material.
- Weighable material may be chosen for analysis over paraphernalia.
- Representative samples from bulk seizures or grows are sufficient for laboratory analysis and preferred. However, if a total weight of the items is necessary, please contact us prior to arriving at the laboratory so we can be prepared to accommodate your request.
- Items may only be analyzed to weight thresholds as stated in the Colorado Revised Statutes. Analysis of other items may cease if it is apparent that the next applicable weight threshold will not be met or if the maximum weight threshold has already been exceeded.
  - Example: Potential Marijuana packaged in various containers was seized from a vehicle. It is estimated there are 100 pounds. Please submit approximately 51 pounds (net weight) to the laboratory. The maximum weight threshold is 50 pounds.
  - Please contact the laboratory if you are unsure of weight thresholds.
- Many times representative samples from plants are submitted because of cultivation charges. Analysis may cease if it is apparent the next applicable plant number threshold will not be met or if the maximum plant number threshold has been exceeded.
  - Example: You have a cultivation case that involves 300 potential Marijuana plants. Take a representative sample (buds and/or leaves) from 31 plants, package them individually, and submit them to the laboratory. The maximum plant threshold for cultivation is 30 plants.
  - Please contact the laboratory if you are unsure of plant number thresholds.
- Colorado law does not require quantitative analysis/purity identification; however there are instances where it may be beneficial for plant material (THC).
  - Quantitative analysis may be done on plant samples if the samples need to be distinguished from hemp for trial. All THC quant requests must have a pre-submission meeting prior to submission of evidence to help determine items and quantity needed for analysis. Please contact your local CBIFS if you are considering this type of testing.
  - Currently CBI is not performing quantitative analysis on Methamphetamine as it has been done so in the past. If you are in need of quantitative analysis on Methamphetamine, contact us for assistance in finding the resources that you need.
Additional Considerations

- Wet material (not in liquid state) must first be dried in a suitable, safe environment where no contamination can occur and then packaged in a breathable container (i.e. paper bag) prior to submitting to the laboratory.
  - Examples of material that will need to be dried:
    - Live Marijuana plants
    - Cultivated mushrooms
    - Recently manufactured wet crystals
  - Mold will grow on material if not thoroughly dry. This can be hazardous to a person’s respiratory system. Mold can also destroy evidence identification. Drying the material prior to submission is very important.

- To ensure that all necessary items are properly tested please indicate on the cover letter probable cause exhibits, which items belong to which suspect if there are multiple suspects, and/or if fingerprint analysis is needed.
- Syringes must be packaged in a rigid, plastic syringe tube. Multiple syringes should not be stuffed into one tube. Syringes must also be visible through the outermost packaging (i.e. plastic bag). Syringes will not be accepted if there is tape around the cap, barrel, or plunger. Due to the inherent risk of working with syringes, they may not be analyzed.
- Liquid submissions should be limited to 60 mL or less. These items must be in a sealed container with a lid. The container should then be placed in a plastic bag as a second leak barrier.
- Biohazard items of evidence should be labeled appropriately. Biohazard items include anything that may contain bodily fluids or have been removed from a body orifice.
- Hazardous items of evidence should also be labeled appropriately. These are risk items that may include things such as broken glass, mold, or potential Fentanyl related products.

Summary

These controlled substance guidelines are recommendations of what should be included in the initial evidence submission to the CBIFS. In support of your agency and upon request, the CBIFS will provide training on the proper collection and submission of controlled substances. Please see our General Submission Guidelines for an overview of the submission process.

Please feel free to contact us at any time regarding your controlled substance submissions. It is our goal to ensure your understanding, educate you on situations that may be unfamiliar to your agency and to work collaboratively to ensure the citizens of Colorado are served at the highest possible level.