

Sexual Assault Evidence Packaging Handbook

WASHINGTON STATE GUIDELINES • 2018

Reference

Recommended Guidelines Sexual Assault Emergency Medical Evaluation Adult and Adolescent 2010.

Full explanation and description of medical — forensic care and evidence collection

Available at www.hcsats.org

TriTech Inc.

Manufactures the kit used in this handbook

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Key Principles



Clean glove technique

- Use non-powder gloves when collecting and packaging all evidence
- Change gloves frequently

Chain of custody for evidence

- One staff member must be responsible for maintaining chain of evidence. That staff member at all times:
- Maintains continuous physical possession of specimens and items of evidence
 - OR** Designates another staff member to maintain possession of evidence
 - OR** Locks specimens in closed area (room, cabinet, refrigerator or freezer)

All evidence must be thoroughly dried before packaging

- Wet items must be dried
 - ▶ **OR** Transfer to police within 3 hours

Evidence Kit

- Cut open seals on new Evidence Kit
- Place patient ID label on top and short side of Kit top
- Place one patient ID label on each envelope in kit

Forensic Toxicology for Washington State Patrol Toxicology Lab

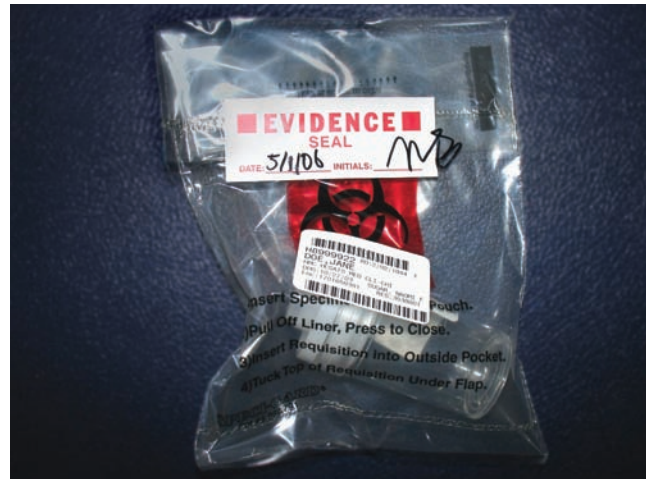


Forensic urine toxicology

- May remove part of specimen for other tests (e.g. urine pregnancy , STD)
 - ▶ Leave at least 30 ml of urine for State Toxicology lab
 - ▶ Pour 30 — 100 cc urine from specimen container into State Tox lab urine container
 - ▶ Place lid on container — by using mallet OR by stepping on lid
 - ▶ Place patient ID label on container
- Then place State Tox lab container in biohazard bag
 - ▶ Place 2 folded paper towels in biohazard bag along with container to absorb possible spill
- Place patient ID label on biohazard bag
 - ▶ Seal biohazard bag with tear off seal
- Place Evidence Seal over folded edge
 - ▶ Sign over Evidence Seal onto bag, and date (use indelible marker “Sharpie”)

Do NOT place urine in kit

- Place in cabinet, freezer, or refrigerator until transfer to police or submission to State Patrol Toxicology lab



Forensic blood toxicology

- Bedside test may be completed according to hospital protocol
- If State Toxicology Lab test indicated:
 - ▶ Obtain 10cc blood in 2 gray top tubes
 - ▶ Place patient ID label on each tube
 - ▶ Place tubes in biohazard bag
- Place 2 folded paper towels in biohazard bag along with container to absorb possible spill
- Place patient ID label on biohazard bag
 - ▶ Seal biohazard bag with tear off seal
 - ▶ Place Evidence Seal over folded edge
- Sign over Evidence Seal onto bag, and date (use indelible marker “Sharpie”)

Do NOT place blood tubes in kit

- Place in cabinet or refrigerator (do not freeze) until transfer to police or State Tox Lab

Clothing



- Place each item in separate paper bag

NOTE: Underwear is placed in paper bag from kit—see below

- Write contents on outside of bag, e.g. “jeans”

Do NOT over-fill bags — torn bags will result in lost or contaminated evidence

- Complete check boxes, name and date on labels

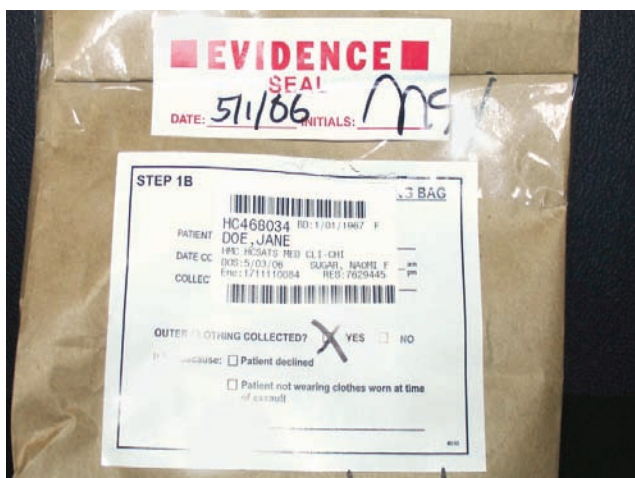


Closing the clothing bags

Do NOT over-fill bags — torn bags will result in lost or contaminated evidence

- Place Clothing label from kit on bag (if all Clothing labels have been used, omit)
- Place patient ID label on Clothing label
- Fold edge over twice, press out extra air

The flap has to lay flat or you won't get a seal



Sealing and Taping Clothing Bags

- Place Evidence Seal over folded edge
- Sign over Evidence Seal onto bag and date
- Tape each bag closed with clear packing tape — tape should extend over sides and onto back side of bag

Transport Bag



- Place smaller bags in one larger paper bag — this is the “Transport bag”

Do NOT over-fill bag — torn bags will contaminate evidence

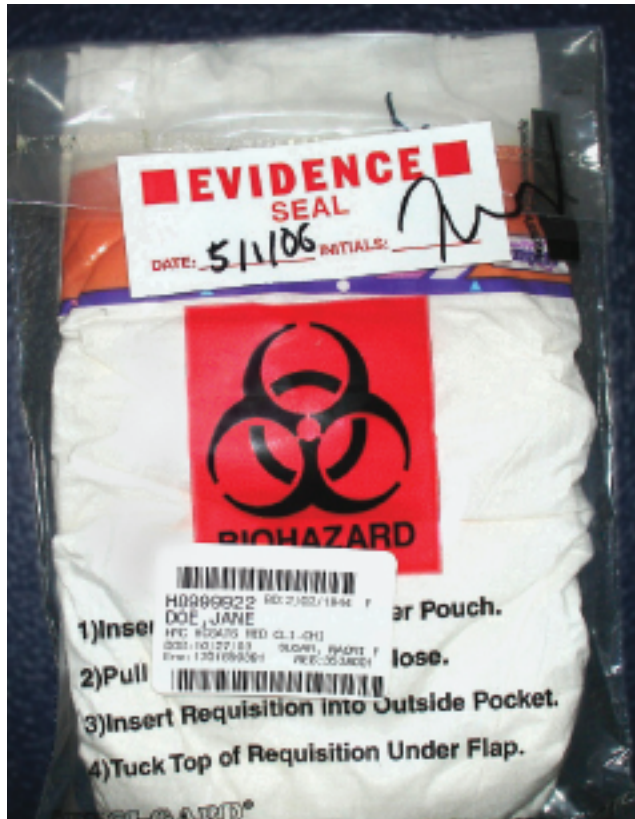


- Complete “Transport” label from kit
- Place “Transport” label from kit on bag.
- Place patient ID label on “Transport” label
- Fold edge over twice, press out extra air.

The flap has to lay flat or you won't get a seal

- Place Evidence Seal over folded edge
- Sign over Evidence Seal onto bag, and date
- Tape bag closed with clear packing tape — tape should extend over sides and onto back

Wet items



Wet clothing

- Place each item in separate double paper bags
- Label and seal as as above
- Write "WET" on paper bag with marker
- Place in open plastic bag
- Either freeze in locked freezer, or transfer to police within 3 hours

Other items

such as diapers, wet underpants, tampons or foreign bodies

Do NOT place wet items in kit

- Place in plastic biohazard bag
 - ▶ **ALT:** place in sterile urine cup, place patient label on container, then place container in biohazard bag
- Seal biohazard bag with tear off seal
- Write "WET" on outside of biohazard bag (use indelible marker, "Sharpie")
- Place patient ID label on biohazard bag
- Complete Evidence seal, date and time
- Tear off seal: Place Evidence seal over fold
- Sign over Evidence seal onto bag
- Transfer to police within 3 hours, or lock in refrigerator or freezer until transfer

Underpants

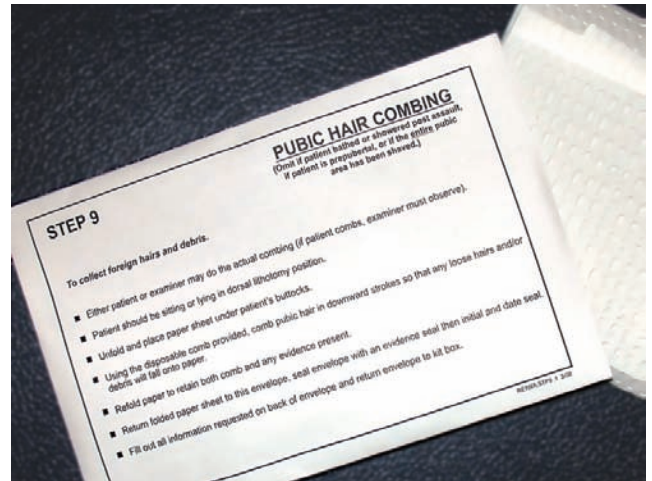


Collect underpants, even if changed after assault

- Place in Underpants bag from Kit
- Place patient ID label on bag check box "Collected"
- Complete Evidence seal, date and time
- Fold over top, place Evidence seal over fold
- Sign over seal onto bag

Underpants bag will later be sealed in the kit

Trace Evidence



Head and Pubic Hair, Trace Evidence and Debris Envelopes

- Use gloves while collecting hair or debris.
- For hair, may place hairs on a "post it note" This can then be packaged in paper
- Fold paper inward neatly to retain hair or debris
- For debris, indicate site of collection and write suspected debris e.g. "gravel", "straw", etc. on envelope
- Place patient label on envelope: check box "Collected"

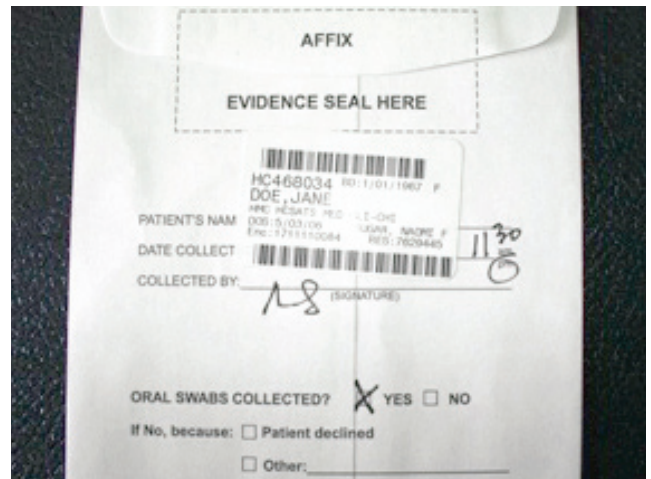
ER HSA DRYER BOX LOG

| Date | HMC # | Lock # | Lock on Time | Initial | Verify Lock off # | Lock off Time | Initial |
|--------|--------|--------|--------------|---------|-------------------|---------------|---------|
| 5/1/04 | 110001 | 924484 | 1309 | NS | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
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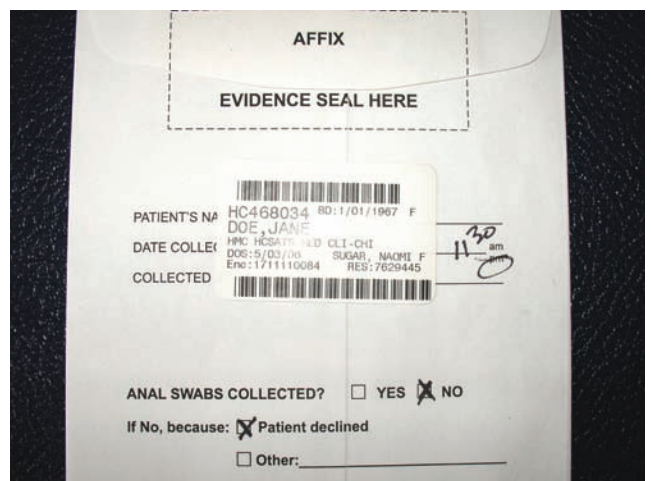
Complete dryer box log form

- Fill out drying box log form including patient ID number, date, time, lock #, your initials
- Dry swabs for 1 hour, do not use fan
- While swabs are drying, complete envelopes and complete labeling and sealing clothing bags



Complete envelopes

- Complete check boxes on each envelope
- Write time of collection and sign



Unused Envelopes

- Mark on back of each envelope Collected "NO" and reason why
 - Do not place Evidence Seal on unused envelopes
 - Place unsealed empty envelopes in evidence kit
- DO NOT DISCARD*



While swabs are drying, lock opened kit

- Lock the opened kit in cabinet until swabs are dry and ready to package



After 1 hour break plastic lock

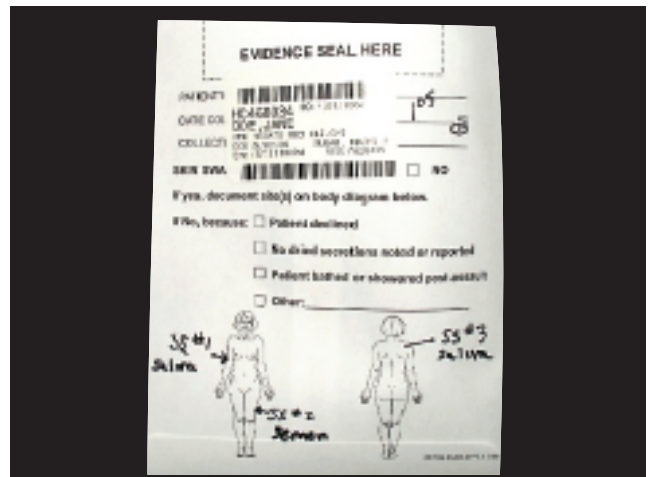
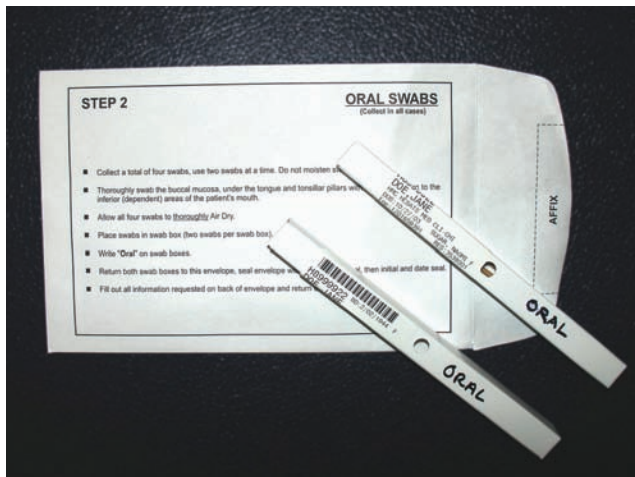
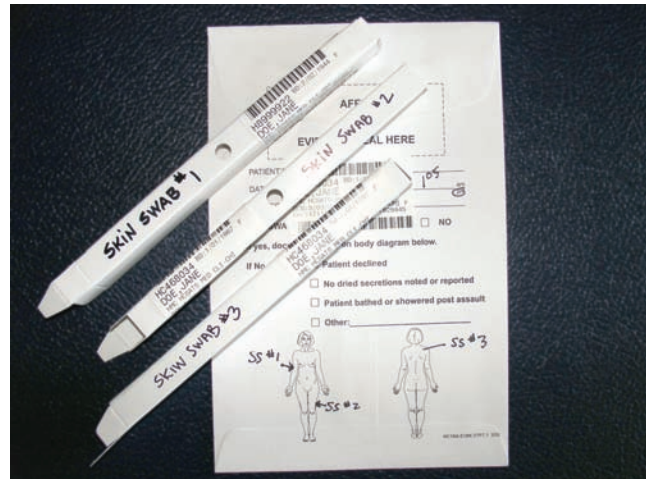
- Check lock number against log form
- Complete drying box log form



Place broken off plastic lock in evidence kit

- Remove swabs from dryer or cabinet

Packaging swabs

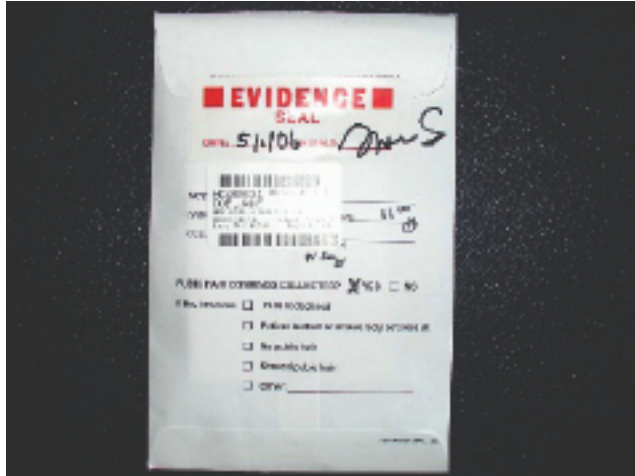


- Fold over short ends of cardboard boxes from kit
- Place patient ID label on each box — do not cover holes in boxes
- Write on each box swab contents e.g., “oral”, “vaginal” “skin site #1” etc.
- Two (2) swabs from same site go in one (1) small cardboard box
- Place cardboard boxes in appropriate envelopes
 - ▶ Typically 2 boxes are placed in one envelope

Packaging Dried Skin Swabs

- Confirm that Skin Swab #1, #2, etc are correctly marked on envelope and on patient chart
 - ▶ Indicate on envelope which fluid is suspected on each site, saliva or semen
- Confirm that cardboard envelopes are correctly marked Skin Swab #1, #2, etc.
- 2 swabs may be placed in each box — must be from same site
- Up to 5 boxes can fit in the Skin Swab envelope

Sealing Envelopes



- Seal each envelope with Evidence Seal from kit

This is how to sign and date over the seal

- ▶ Date goes on the line
- ▶ Signature goes from line on seal onto envelope itself

These items do NOT go into the kit

FORENSIC TOXICOLOGY

Urine

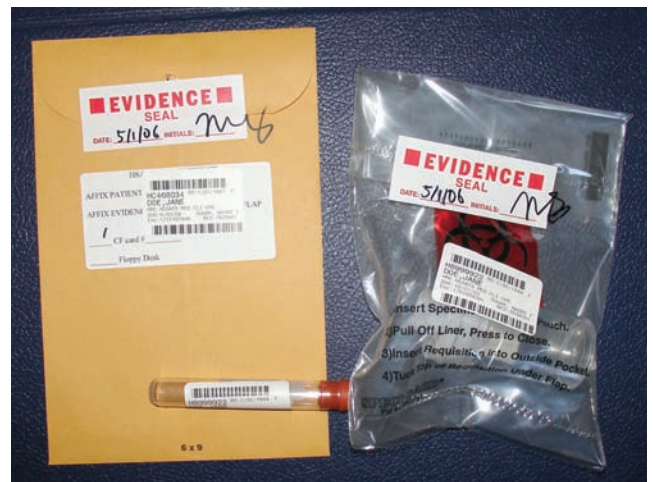
Place in locked freezer

Blood

Any blood tubes for forensics (e.g. toxicology or alcohol level for state toxicology lab)

- Place patient ID label on each tube
- Place tubes in biohazard bag with 2 folder paper towels to absorb possible spills
- Place patient ID label on outside of biohazard bag
- Seal biohazard bag
- Place completed Evidence Seal over bag seal

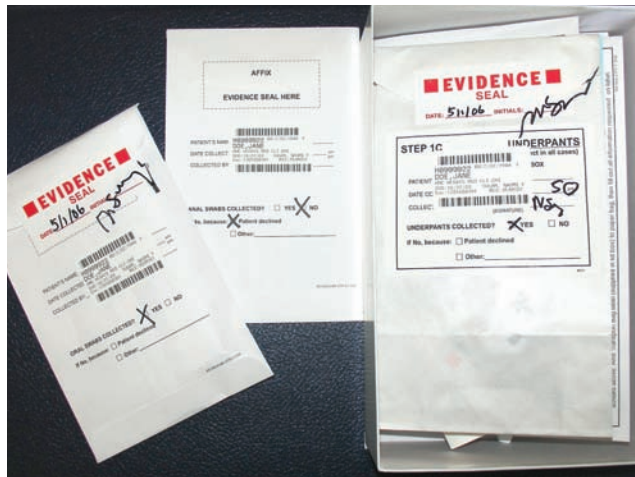
Place these items in locked evidence cabinet



Photos, Photo Disk, or Roll of Film

- Place in envelope
- Place patient ID label outside of envelope
- Complete Evidence Seal with date/time
- Place seal over envelope flap, sign on seal onto envelope
- Place in locked evidence cabinet

Closing the Kit



- Remove 2 Evidence Seals from box
- These items go in the kit: envelopes with contents, envelopes without contents, broken off plastic lock from drier box, underpants in kit bag.
- Double check that all envelopes are completed
- Envelopes with contents: Patient ID label, Evidence seal, sign and date over seal, check boxes completed
- Skin swabs envelopes: indicate on envelope site of collection, whether semen or saliva is suspected
- Debris envelopes: indicate on envelope site of collection and debris type
- Envelopes without contents: Check "Not collected" and why not. Place in box

Sealing the Kit



**STATE OF WASHINGTON
SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE COLLECTION KIT
PATIENT/VICTIM**

**FOR HOSPITAL PERSONNEL
(Please Print)**

PATIENT'S NAME: _____
 PHYSICIAN'S NAME: _____
 HOSPITAL/CLINIC: _____
 KIT SEALED BY: _____
 PLACE: _____ AFTER EVIDENCE COLLECTION

PLACED BY: *[Signature]*
 DATE: _____ TIME: *8 AM* am pm

**FOR POLICE PERSONNEL
CHAIN OF POSSESSION**

RECEIVED FROM: _____

- Place patient labels on TOP and SHORT side of box top
- Place top on box — Place Evidence Seals on sides
- Sign and date over Evidence Seals
- Write your name and date on top of box
- Place in locked evidence cabinet at room temperature or locked refrigerator until transfer to law enforcement

Cleaning Up



- Use hospital approved disinfectant solution
- Wipe inside and outside of drying box
- Remove patient label from drying rack
- Wipe off drying rack
- Throw away excess unused swabs, boxes, etc.

If You Made A Mistake

And sealed the kit and then found you had left something out of the kit

DO NOT PANIC

- Cut open the seals
- Place the item
- Reseal with 2 Evidence Seals AWAY from the first 2 (now broken) seals. Sign over seals.
- DOCUMENT in charting what you did, and why