

General Evidence Information

REV 5 7/1/26



IMPORTANT NOTES

- Improper packaging and/or storage may compromise the evidence and/or jeopardize your case.
- Please check the specific discipline webpage for detailed information.
- Questions? Call the ISPFS laboratory to ask us what the best collection & packaging method is. **We are here to help you.**
- Contact your regional ISPFS laboratory at:

Coeur d'Alene	208-209-8700
Meridian	208-884-7170
Pocatello	208-239-9900



IMPORTANT NOTES

We do not charge for services we offer – and crime scene and clan lab services are available 24 hours a day.

We will assist at **Crime scenes and Clan Labs** if requested.

After hours, contact our Crime Scene Coordinator at 208-501-3971.

You can also contact ISP dispatch, and they will contact our Crime Scene Coordinator.



Types of Analysis

- There are 3 labs in Idaho: Coeur d'Alene Meridian Pocatello
- Each lab provides services for controlled substances, alcohol, and breath alcohol.
- Toxicology is provided in CDA and POC.
- Latent prints, biology, and digital forensics are provided in MER.
- Fire Debris, document examination, and firearms are provided in CDA.
- For unusual cases, call your regional laboratory prior to submitting.
- Click the link on our website: <https://isp.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/Forensics/Evidence/Where-to-submit-evidence.pdf> to see which lab handles the specific analysis you need.



Forensic Services Customers

- ISP Forensic Services accepts criminal evidence from:
 - Police Departments and Sheriff's Offices
 - State and Federal agencies
 - Probation & Parole Offices
 - Prosecuting Attorneys and Public Defenders
 - Other entities by court order.
- Lab results will be released only to the submitting agency or the prosecutor having jurisdiction over the case, if the case was submitted by a police agency.
 - ITD ALS will have access to DUI reports.



Required Evidence Labeling and Proper Seals

- Agency information required on all evidence packaging:
 - Agency name
 - Agency case number
 - Item number
 - Description of evidence
 - Chain of custody
 - Suspect and/or Victim full name (DOB if possible) (recommended)
 - A proper seal with initials



Proper Seals

- A Proper Seal Prevents:
 - Cross contamination with other evidence.
 - Loss of evidence from packaging.
 - Tampering by theft or adulteration.



What is a proper seal?

- The evidence cannot escape the packaging.
- Opening the container results in obvious damage/alteration to the packaging and/or its seal.
- All non-manufactured openings into package must be sealed.
- All seals (evidence tape and/or heat seal and/or self-sealing) **MUST** be initialed.
- If you cover a factory seal with evidence tape and/or clear tape, it must be initialed.
- If using heat sealed bags, seal each opening twice and test by trying to pull them apart. This will help guarantee that they are secured.



Packaging Information

- Use appropriately sized packaging.
- Packaging containers must be large enough that they have room for:
 - Required agency information
 - Chain of custody
 - Laboratory label
 - Seal with initials
 - Room for analysts to access and reseal



Packaging Information

- Do not roll down bags to fit a smaller item:
 - Fold down bag once.
 - Secure with clear packing tape (avoid using staples).
 - Seal with evidence tape and initial. This helps prevent seal breakage.



Sharps Packaging

- Syringes:
 - Must be contained in an appropriate biohazard safety tube.
 - The evidence packaging must be clearly marked as containing a syringe.
 - Should be packaged separately if part of a multi-exhibit case.
 - Improperly packaged syringes will be returned without analysis.
- Other Sharps:
 - Exposed knife blades and broken glass as well as items (for example: wire, metal, plastic, etc.), must be contained and secured within packaging that render it safe to handle.



Sharps Packaging Continued

- Staples:
 - Are considered a sharp.
 - They pose a safety risk.
 - Not a secure seal when used alone.
 - May cause damage to other packages during shipping or in storage.
- If you cannot seal your evidence without the use of staples:
 - Must be secured by covering them with clear packing tape, then evidence tape, then initialed.
 - Do not use staples to attach paperwork to the evidence packaging.
- Evidence submitted with potentially sharp items that are not secured will be refused by the ISPFS lab.



ISP Supplied Evidence Packaging

Sexual Assault Kits (SAK)

To hospitals and coroners.

Urine and Blood Collection Kits

To law enforcement agencies and hospitals.

DNA Database Collection Kits (CODIS)

- Used to collect from Convicted Offenders only.
- To law enforcement agencies, Idaho Department of Corrections, and probation and parole.

Accident Victim (A/V) Kits

To Coroners only.



Accepted Outer Evidence Packaging

Evidence Envelopes:

Can be used for most types of evidence.

Evidence Sacks or bags:

Clothing, bedding, shoes, other large items.

Evidence Specific Kits:

Urine, blood, sexual assault, DNA database samples/kits.

Self-Sealing Plastic Bags or Heat-Sealed Bags:

Do not use for biological evidence.

Friction Lid Cans:

For fire debris.

Rolled Paper (kraft, butcher, etc.):

Oversized items and trace evidence.

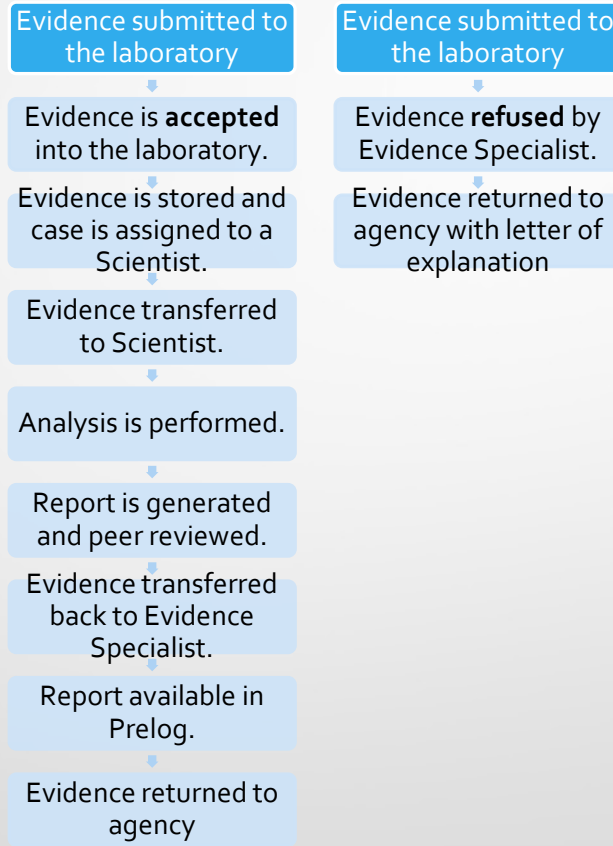


Accepted Outer Evidence Packaging

- Cardboard Boxes:
 - Sharps and items that will not fit into the other packaging and do not require special containment.
- Gun and Knife Boxes:
 - Use lots of zip ties (for safety as well as securing the evidence).
- Evidence Tape:
 - Required on every non-manufactured seal unless using self-sealing plastic evidence bags or heat-sealed bags.
 - Ink pen and/or fine line permanent marker.
 - Initial directly on/or over the seal.
- Coolers and Ice Packs for transport:
 - For biological evidence when outside temperatures rise above 80°.
 - Not included inside the evidence itself.
 - Place in a Ziploc bag to help keep condensation off the evidence.



Laboratory Submission & Analysis Process



Return of Rejected Evidence

- If you ship your evidence to the lab and there is an issue, your evidence will be returned with a letter explaining the issue and how to resolve it.
- Some reasons for refusal are:
 - Envelope/container does not have **evidence tape** across seal.
 - The **initials** of the person who sealed the evidence are not present.
 - Envelope/container is **open**, or the **seals** are **broken** upon arrival.
 - It is **unsafe** or **hazardous** (spilled liquids, broken glass, razor blade, syringe).
 - An item was **not Prelogged**.



Chain of Custody

- Complete chain of custody.
 - Chain begins at the time evidence is collected.
 - A written record of the names and dates for custody of an item of physical evidence.
 - Use your name (not “from: evidence to lab”).
 - Do not use badge number as signature.
 - When shipping evidence “To” should be indicated by: UPS, Certified Mail, U.S. Mail, etc.



General Evidence Issues

- A completed ISP Prelog form **MUST** accompany **all evidence**.
- A case report must accompany your evidence for the following analysis requests:
 - Biology
 - Fire Debris
 - Firearms
 - When in doubt – send the report.
- Include your court date if you have one.



Discovery

- All reports and associated note packets are available through the Prelog system immediately upon publication.
- There is a separate button for each.
- The chain of custody is not part of the note packet as it is not complete until the evidence is returned to the agency.
- The police agency who submitted the evidence and county prosecutor's office both have access to the report and note packet.
- If submitted by public defender only their office will have access.



Discovery

- Discovery Information available on our website:
 - Laboratory accreditation documentation
 - All quality documents and analytical methods
 - Analyst CV's
- Any additional information will require a discovery request for release.



Prelog

- Prelog is a computer program which allows an agency to enter case information which is later pulled into the lab system.
 - The status of the case can be viewed in Prelog.
 - Reports and note packets can be printed from Prelog.
- All Items of evidence for lab submission are **required** to be Prelogged.
 - The initial submission.
 - Additional items submitted at a later date for the same case.
 - Separate labs = separate Prelogs (ex: prints to MER and alcohol to POC)
- Please confirm the information entered is correct.
 - Amended reports will **NOT** be issued for errors in Prelog entry.



Accessing Prelog

- Contact the lab at forensic.services@isp.idaho.gov and include your POST ID and phone number in email (use the email you need your account associated with).
 - If trying to obtain access for another person in your office, please include that person's e-mail address.
- At first log-in change your password.
- Use only Chrome and Adobe Reader.
- Disable your popup blocker.



Website

- Visit our website to find more information!
- Information pertaining to evidence submission and Prelog at:
 - <https://isp.idaho.gov/forensics/evidence/>
- FAQs sheet at <https://isp.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/Forensics/Evidence/ILIMS-PreLog-FAQs.pdf>
- Prelog User's Manual at: <https://isp.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/Forensics/Methods/Methods/Current/QualityManagement/ILIMS-Prelog-Manual-2025.pdf>
- Call us anytime you have a question.
- Come in person! We can walk you through it at the counter.



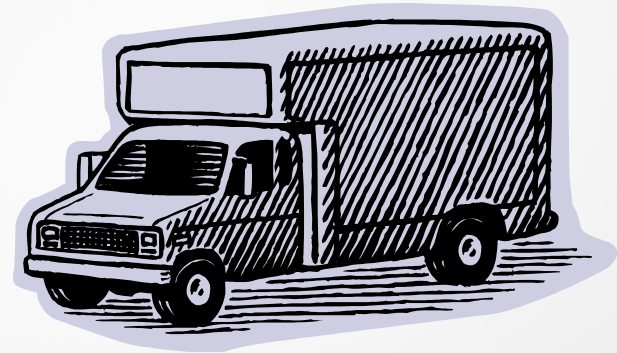
Website

- Please note our Customer Agreement on the web site.
- Biology Acceptance Policy, and additional documents can be found under the Documents tab within ISPFS Prelog system as well.
- Want to know where to submit your items? Check here for details:
 - <https://isp.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/Forensics/Evidence/Where-to-submit-evidence.pdf>



Evidence Shipping Supplies

- Cardboard Boxes
- Packing materials such as:
 - Popcorn
 - Brown wrapping paper
- Clear package tape or security tape
 - Do not use evidence tape on a shipping box.
 - Forensic Evidence Specialists do not break evidence seals and need access to the chain of custody and items.
 - It also draws attention to shipping employees that evidence (possibly drug evidence) is enclosed.



General Shipping Notes

- **We do not recommend shipping critical evidence.** For instance, the only blood sample remaining from a deceased individual or the only piece of evidence that can link your suspect to the crime.
- Always take into consideration...if this evidence is lost in shipping, what impact will it have on the case?
- Can ship via UPS, USPS, FED EX.
- Whatever method you use, be sure you get confirmation of delivery and can track the evidence.



Questions?

- Still have questions? Didn't see the type of evidence you have?
- Call us! We're happy to help!
 - MER lab – 208-884-7170
 - CDA lab - 208-209-8700
 - POC lab – 208-239-9900
- Our analytical methods are also posted on our webpage for each discipline.

