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Instructions for Human Biomonitoring Chain of Custody Form and Shipping Manifests

SCOPE

In the event of a terrorist attack using chemical agents, samples from victims are to be collected and shipped to the Missouri State Public Health Laboratory and/or CDC. These samples are then processed as part of the Rapid Toxic Screen.

Samples collected from victims exposed to chemical agents are regarded as forensic as well as diagnostic samples and must be handled as such. The name of each entity/organization that has control of the samples must be documented throughout the sample(s) existence.

Each piece of evidence must have a chain-of-custody form and a shipping manifest linked or attached to the item/batch of evidence. The form documents the when/why/where/who/what of the evidence. The chain contains the signature of each person who has custody of the evidence at any given time.

The first chain begins with the signature, date and time of the person who collected the item from the scene. **ALL** persons thereafter who take custody of the item must sign their complete name along with the date and time they received the evidence on their chain of custody form. This method continues for the entire sample existence.

A shipping manifest must be completed and submitted in order to track sample information for evidentiary and laboratory purposes.

A chain of custody form and shipping manifest is not required for each tube collected. A chain of custody form and shipping manifest can be used to represent a set of tubes collected from one victim or a batch of samples collected from one site in response to one event that is transferred together as a unit.

SIGNIFICANCE OF USE

These instructions are intended to provide those submitting samples from a chemical terrorism event to the Missouri State Public Health Laboratory and/or CDC guidance for correctly completing the Human Biomonitoring Chain of Custody Form and Shipping Manifests.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Human Biomonitoring Blood and Urine Shipping Manifest Forms

- 1.1 Since blood tubes and urine cups are shipped separately, prepare a separate shipping manifest for each.
- 1.2 Complete all fields of the shipping manifest for blood and/or urine samples submitting.
- 1.3 Be sure to list patient/victim identification number in space provided.
- 1.4 Submitter should signify the number of tubes submitted for each type of tube/container collected.
- 1.5 The MSPHL will assign a MSPHL Laboratory Identification Number for each sample collected.
- 1.6 List any comments that are determined to be necessary.
- 1.7 The Human Biomonitoring Blood and Urine Shipping Manifests must accompany the sample(s) during shipping throughout the existence of the sample. Place each completed shipping manifest along with the appropriate completed MSPHL sample submission form(s) in a plastic zippered bag on top of the

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specimens before closing the Styrofoam lid of the corrugated fiberboard box used for shipment to facilitate rapid location and removal by sample accessioning personnel.

2.0 Human Biomonitoring Chain of Custody Form

- 2.1 Submitter may use MSPHL Human Biomonitoring Chain of Custody Form or a similar chain of custody form utilized by submitter entity/organization.
- 2.2 The person collecting the sample(s) **must** print and sign his/her full name, indicate the date and time of sample collection, identify the collector's organization, specify the reason for sample collection, and list a detailed description of the sample.
- 2.3 **Each person thereafter** who takes custody of the sample(s) must print and sign his/her full name, indicate the date and time of taking possession, identify the individual's organization, and specify the reasons for taking possession of the sample(s) on a chain of custody form utilized by that entity/organization.
- 2.4 **The chain of custody form does not need to be transported with the samples.** Each entity/organization handling the specimens is responsible for the specimens only during the time that they have control of the specimens. Each entity/organization receiving the specimens must sign-off on the chain of custody form of the entity/organization relinquishing the specimens to close the chain. When receiving specimens, each new entity/organization must begin their own chain of custody and have the entity/organization relinquishing the specimens sign their chain of custody to start the chain and indicate that they have transferred the specimens. **When specimens are transferred between entities/organizations, each entity/organization retains their chain of custody.**
- 2.5 **NOTE:** When the individual /entity relinquishing the specimens and the individual/entity receiving the specimen are not together at the time of specimen transfer, the relinquisher will document on their chain of custody that the receiver is FedEx Tracking Number or have the individual transporting the specimens sign the chain of custody to indicate that they have taken control of the specimens. Likewise, when the receiver receives the specimens, they will document on their chain of custody that the relinquisher is FedEx Tracking Number or have the individual transporting the specimens sign the chain of custody.
- 2.6 When samples are in custody of institutions (FedEx, Hospitals, MSPHL) whereby internal sample tracking can be traced by systems already in place, the institution's system can take the place of the chain of custody form while the sample(s) are in possession of the institution. The institution must, however, still sign the chain of custody form at the time of receipt of the sample(s) and observe them at the time of release.
- 2.7 Sample(s) chain of custody forms should be retained by each entity/organization holding custody of the sample(s) for future reference.
- 2.8 This method will continue for the existence of the sample(s).

REFERENCES

CDC Shipping Instructions for Specimens Collected from People Who May Have Been Exposed to Chemical-Terrorism Agents, CSH Guidelines Version 11.06

CDC Shipping Instructions for Specimens Collected from People Potentially Exposed to Chemical Terrorism Agents, 11/30/05

CDC Chain of Custody Instructions Form

U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigations. Handbook of Forensic Science, June 1994.

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Personal Communication, Donald M. Kerr, Assistant Director, FBI, March 2000.

Personal Communication, Susanna H. Mullally, FBI Evidence Program Manager, March 2000.