

545.1 BUCCAL ORAL SWABS/DNA:

- I. **PURPOSE:** It is important for officers to understand the proper procedure when obtaining an oral swab from a subject during an investigation. Once the oral swab has been legally and properly obtained, it may be placed into the DNA database at FDLE. The sample would be maintained within the database and could assist in proving the innocence or guilt of a subject. DNA samples have linked offenders to crimes in other jurisdictions, helped solve cold cases and have been a critical piece of evidence that afforded the successful prosecution of countless subjects.
- II. **DISCUSSION:** Prior to obtaining the oral swab, the section on the Consent and Release Form (TPD 310) titled Consent to Search/Waiver of Search Warrant for Oral Swab/DNA must be read to the subject in its entirety. Oral buccal swabs can be obtained from any consenting subject. Supervisors will maintain an ample supply of the sterile swabs. Once an oral buccal swab is taken from a subject, the shelf life of the sample is unlimited as long as the sample is air dried and stored in the cardboard box (never plastic) in a dry location.
- III. **PROCEDURES:**
 - A. Consent to Search/Waiver of Search Warrant for Oral Swab/DNA (TPD 310):
 1. The officer will read the form to the subject and X the box in the front of the first sentence.
 2. The officer will have the subject place his/her initials where designated.
 3. The officer will have the subject print his/her name and sign the same in the bottom portion of the form.
 4. The officer will fill in the day, date and year where designated, then sign his/her name and badge # in the section provided.
 - B. Collection and Submission of Sterile Oral Buccal Swabs: Officer(s) will ensure the following procedures are followed prior to swabbing a subject or multiple subjects:
 1. The officer will wash or sterilize (with use of hand cleaner) their hands.
 2. The officer will wear and utilize gloves (standard issued blue latex gloves are acceptable) prior to removing the swabs from the sterile package.
 3. The officer will remove the two swab sticks from the sterile package.
 4. Either the officer or the subject can swab the inside of the subject's mouth, back portion, between the gums and molar teeth.

5. The officer will place the two (2) swab sticks back into the cardboard swab box. The officer will punch out the two small holes on the sides, to allow air into the swab box. The box will then be sealed and initialed.
6. The officer will then fill in the blanks on the swab container box by writing the report number, the subject's name consenting to the swab, the officer's name, date and time swab taken.
7. Always puncture the two (2) holes in the cardboard swab box, allowing the swabs to air dry. After approximately 15 to 20 minutes, the officer will put the cardboard box into a paper envelope (never plastic) and put it into evidence.
8. If additional individuals are to be swabbed, the same process must be utilized. The officer must change gloves and utilize a fresh pair of gloves after sterilizing, prior to swabbing any additional suspects. Each sample must be in its own individual box, never combine the samples.
9. The air dried and sealed sample will be placed in evidence according to existing policies.
10. The sample will be delivered to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Laboratory by the Tampa Police Department's assigned evidence transport technician.
 - a. An FDLE laboratory processing request form must be completed by the requesting officer/detective to accompany the sample.
 - b. The case officer/detective may elect to hand deliver the sample to the FDLE.
 - c. The processing request form must be completed and accompany the sample when hand delivered.
 - d. FDLE will conduct scientific processing of the swabs and issue a report to the department.
 - e. FDLE will report the results of the examination to the Tampa Police Department by two methods.
 - 1) One report will be a hard copy report generated from the original request and mailed to the department.
 - 2) An additional report will be made available on the department's PreLog account, after an e-mail notification to the evidence technician, assigned detective, or the Captain

of the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) or their designee and the Forensic Unit Manager.

- f. The CID Captain or their designee will be the point of contact to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement in regard to DNA sample submissions.
 - g. The CID Captain or their designee will be notified in regard to hand carried cases, “rush requests” cases and cases that require latent work or cases that may have be assigned to retired or former employees.
- C. The original Consent and Release form (TPD 310) will be entered into evidence only after a copy is made for imaging into Versadex.
- D. A notation will be made in the body of the officer’s General Offense Report that a voluntary oral swab was obtained, and the consent form was placed into evidence.

Supersedes SOP 545.1, dated 12/20.