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TO: All Submitting Agencies

FROM: Allegheny County Office of the Medical Examiner Division of Forensic Laboratories

SUBJECT: Updates to Forensic Biology Case Triage Protocols

DATE: July 10, 2026

The Forensic Biology Section employs a tiered approach to triage cases in order to most efficiently allocate resources and provide optimal case turnaround times for our customers. The [ACOME Evidence Submission Manual](#) contains guidance of the triage parameters to include the maximum number of items which will be tested when the case request is submitted. Any exceptions must be discussed with and approved by the Forensic Biology Manager or the Director of Forensic Services. Depending on the case circumstances and evidence items submitted, the scientist may choose the best item(s) for further testing.

With the exception of homicide and sexual assault cases, the laboratory will no longer routinely initiate testing of additional items if results are not obtained from the initial tier of testing. All evidence items will be returned to the agency following the initial serology processing and unworked items may be resubmitted following the receipt of the DNA laboratory report if additional testing is required. DNA laboratory reports will indicate that testing has concluded and if testing on additional items or samples is necessary following the receipt of the completed laboratory report, it may be requested by contacting the scientist who authored the report or the Forensic Biology Manager.

If there are any questions regarding this update, please contact Forensic Biology Manager, Lori Seman at 412-350-7023.

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