



# INDIANA STATE POLICE LABORATORY DIVISION

## PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

## BULLETIN

### **MISSING PERSONS/UNIDENTIFIED REMAINS**

**INTRODUCTION:** The National Missing Persons DNA database is part of the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). The purpose of the database is to provide identifications using DNA by matching profiles from unidentified humans to profiles of missing individuals or closely related family members.

In order to best meet National DNA Index System (NDIS) eligibility requirements and individual case particulars, missing persons cases may be either worked at the Indiana State Police Laboratory Division or outsourced to a laboratory equipped to perform mitochondrial DNA analysis, Y-STR analysis, and/or kinship/pedigree testing. In order to perform some types of testing, it will be required that all appropriate and available case information, including whether DNA samples have been collected and profiled; dental records and radiographs; fingerprint cards; photographs if available; and any other relevant information must be entered into the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs' National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) by the appropriate medical examiner, coroner, or law enforcement agency. If assistance is needed to enter the case into NamUs, please contact a member of the Indiana State Police Biology Section's Missing Person and Unidentified Human Remains Team or the University of North Texas Center for Human Identification Forensic Services Unit Program Manager at 817 765-5451 or visit <http://www.untsu.com/> for additional information.

Missing Persons cases, including unidentified human remains, may be submitted to the Indiana State Police Laboratory Division. The type of case and samples should be clearly marked on the Request for Laboratory Examination Form. NamUs Missing Person and Family Reference Sample Information and Donor Consent Form and/or NamUs Unidentified Human Remains Submission Form shall also be completed when applicable.

The following sample types are eligible for entry into CODIS:

#### **I. UNIDENTIFIED HUMANS (REMAINS)**

- A. Includes skeletal or decomposed remains that are not identified by traditional means, as well as individuals who are unable or unwilling to identify themselves.

Permission should be obtained from the coroner before samples from remains are submitted for analysis.

1. Submit an oral/buccal swab standard or a blood standard in a purple top tube from living individuals.
2. Submit a bone, tooth, blood, or tissue sample as a DNA standard from deceased individuals. The chance of obtaining a DNA profile from human remains is heavily dependent on the quality of the sample. Please contact a member of the Biology Section's Missing Persons and Unidentified Human Remains Team for assistance, if needed.
  - a. *Tissue*-submit approximately 1 square inch as a standard only if little or no decomposition has occurred. Sample should be obtained by a medical professional and submitted in a plastic specimen jar inside proper packaging. Store in an evidence freezer until time of submission.
  - b. *Bone/teeth* - if possible, submit at a minimum one bone sample of at least three inches in length, or one whole tooth with no fillings (molars are preferred). Submission of multiple bone/tooth standards is strongly recommended, especially for potentially poor quality samples (dry, damaged, sun-bleached, etc.). For assistance with sample selection, please contact a member of the Biology Section's Missing Persons and Unidentified Human Remains Team.
  - c. If the sample is "wet" (has adherent soft tissues or fats), it should be packaged in a plastic container with no preservatives and store in an evidence freezer until time of submission.
  - d. If the sample is "dry", package in paper and store at room temperature until time of submission.

## II. DEDUCED VICTIM STANDARDS

- A. Includes items that can logically be assumed to contain DNA from the missing person. Care should be taken to select items that should contain DNA only from the missing individual. Examples may include, but not be limited to:
  1. Medical samples obtained prior to the individual going missing, such as slides, tissue specimens or heel stick cards.
  2. Personal care items (for example: razor, toothbrush, or hair brush).
  3. Baby teeth known to come from the missing individual.
  4. Clothing worn by the missing individual, particularly unlaundered undergarments known to have been worn only by the missing individual.
- B. DNA standards from closely related family members should be submitted, if possible, to support the relationship.

### **III. FAMILY REFERENCE STANDARDS**

- A. Submit an oral swab standard or a blood standard in a purple top tube from parents, children, and full siblings of the missing individual.
- B. Consent forms signed by the donor and witnessed by collecting law enforcement officer are required for all family reference samples.

### **IV. CONTACT INFORMATION**

For more information or to obtain submission and consent forms, please contact a member of the Missing Persons Team at the Indianapolis Regional Laboratory.

Indiana State Police Laboratory Division  
Indianapolis Regional Laboratory  
550 West 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite C  
Indianapolis, IN 46202  
Telephone: 317-921-5300  
Toll Free: 866-855-2840

Laboratory hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Monday through Friday