



August 17, 2026

Dear Law Enforcement Partner,

I am writing to inform you that, effective Aug. 10, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation's DNA Laboratory will begin rigorously enforcing its DNA Evidence Submission Policy. *I would also like to provide additional clarification to ensure the expectations of this policy are fully enforced – please see content added under Firearm and Cartridge Case Testing in Violent Crimes below.*

This [submission policy](#) itself is not new; it has been in place since Jan. 1, 2024. Over time, however, it has become clear that strict adherence to the policy is essential for the DNA Lab to provide consistent, high-quality service and improve turnaround times for all agencies statewide.

What does this mean for your agency in practical terms? It means that, beginning Aug. 10, any evidence submitted to the DNA Lab for analysis must comply with the established guidelines **or it will be returned to you for resubmission according to the policy.**

Here are some key elements of the policy to note:

Limits on First-Round Submissions

- Crimes against a person (homicide, assault, aggravated burglary): five items
- Property crimes (including burglary): two items
- Touch DNA evidence: Is accepted only for crimes against persons (unless a weapon was stolen) and when no other evidence items are available.

Firearm and Cartridge Case Testing in Violent Crimes

- Violent offenses include felonious assault and homicide.
- BCI both swabs and performs DNA testing. Swabs from cartridge cases will only be tested if someone is shot or there is a NIBIN association.
- *Your agency must swab cartridge cases for Shooting into Habitation cases prior to NIBIN testing. The swab(s) will only be accepted for DNA testing if there is a NIBIN association.*

Firearm and Cartridge Case Testing in Nonviolent Crimes

- Nonviolent crimes encompass all possession cases, including weapons under disability
- Your agency must swab firearms and cartridge cases using clean technique (see below for guidance) prior to NIBIN testing, either by your agency or if submitting the firearm and cartridge cases to BCI for NIBIN testing.
- DNA testing will be performed only on cartridge case swabs after a NIBIN association (a hit to another NIBIN entry).
- Firearms taken directly off an individual will not be tested.

- Firearms found in public places that were lost or discarded with no known association to a crime will not be DNA-tested unless there is an association in NIBIN to a violent crime.
- Reference standards are required for weapons under disability or possession cases.

For evidence that has the potential for DNA and NIBIN testing, firearms and cartridge cases must be handled in a manner that preserves the presence of DNA, or DNA testing will not be done.

Also, please note that swabbing should be performed according to AGO/OPOTA guidance outlined in the [Swabbing Guidance for Cartridge Cases & Firearms](#) flyer and the DNA Evidence Submission Policy. Swabbing training is provided by BCI upon request and is offered through OPOTA.

We continue to recommend that your agency communicate with us prior to submitting evidence, particularly for testing in complex investigations or in cases for which additional or expedited testing may be necessary. In such cases, the evidence items and testing requests should be discussed with DNA Laboratory management.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact DNA Lab Manager Brenda Gerardi, at (234)-400-3682 or Brenda.Gerardi@OhioAGO.gov.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping BCI to ensure timely, high-quality service to your agency and all others throughout Ohio. We look forward to continuing to work alongside you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bruce Pijanowski".

Bruce Pijanowski
BCI Superintendent