

# PROPERLY PACKAGING EVIDENCE

SD Forensic Lab • Evidence Intake • 1302 E Hwy 14 Ste 6, Pierre SD 57501 • 605.773.7843

*Safety is the first priority of the South Dakota Forensic Laboratory (SDFL), therefore we cannot accept evidence that is improperly packaged. Items of evidence must be properly sealed with evidence tape (must initial/date over evidence tape) and clearly marked with your agency inventory number and description. Make sure to use appropriate size packaging and proper labeling when applicable: BIOHAZARD, SHARPS, etc.*

*Always enclose a BEAST Prelog with each case that is submitted. Each item of evidence should be packaged individually, and pre-logged as an individual item. Please note: If you do not have a BEAST account, or if your password is no longer active, please call Lynsey Anderson or Peggy Hyde at 605-773-7843.*

*If a case contains over 10 pieces of evidence, please contact the SDFL (605-773-7843) to prioritize your most probative items for testing. Please do not submit items which do not need to be examined.*

## Arson

Evidence submitted for arson testing must be properly packaged in a coated aluminum can. Size of the can should be proportional to the size of the sample. Cans should be sealed with the lid, and then sealed with evidence tape (initial/date over tape).

Please Note: Arson evidence will be outsourced to an out-of-state agency.

## Blood

Whole blood should be stored in a refrigerator. Always package tubes of blood separately from any other evidence items in a crushproof container.

## Body Fluids

Evidence that is wet or that may contain body fluids (blood, semen, etc.) must be air-dried completely. Such items should be packaged in paper bags/boxes.

## Buccal Swabs (buccal means “of or relating to the mouth or cheek”)

Known samples can be collected by rubbing sterile swabs against the cheek, inside the mouth. Air-dry and package in a swab container or paper envelope/bag. Do not package in a plastic or zip lock bag. Swabs from areas of a crime scene are not considered “buccal swabs”. The buccal swabs from each individual should be packaged separately.

## Drugs

Do not submit drugs for toxicology testing to the SDFL. The SD Health Lab handles all drug/toxicology testing. If drug related items need DNA or Fingerprint examination, contact the SDFL at 605-773-7843. We will assist you in determining whether the Health Lab or the Forensic Lab would need to examine your evidence first.

If your drug case involves evidence that needs to be fingerprinted or tested for DNA, please do **not** submit the drugs to the lab. When possible, please remove any drugs before sending the packaging for examination.

Please Note: Do not submit syringes with uncapped needles, knives or razor blades without protective coverings. Syringes and other sharps should be submitted in a hard-sided container such as a sealable plastic tube.

## Fingerprints

Fingerprint cards and lifts can be packaged in paper or plastic. Evidence items which have not been processed for prints, should not be packaged in plastic. These evidence items should be secured inside a container which will not rub against the evidence, the container must be sealed. Cardboard boxes work well for packaging items for fingerprint exams.

## Firearms

Firearms (with magazine if available) should be placed in an appropriately sized box and secured down with plastic cable ties, making the firearm temporarily inoperable. Do not place any object or cable ties through the barrel. Seal the box with evidence tape (initial/date over tape). Always check the status of a firearm through NCIC before submission.

Please Note: Do not package weapons with ammunition or any other evidence items. (Firearms are checked upon arrival at the SDFL to ensure they are safe).

## Sexual Assault

Sexual Assault kits should not be packaged with other items. The kit is considered the most probative item of evidence in a sexual assault case and will be examined first. Additional items collected in a sexual assault case will be tested secondary to the kit. If a kit was not collected in a sexual assault case, please contact the SDFL to prioritize the items that were collected.

Please Note: Although urine is collected with some case evidence, it is rarely needed at the SDFL. Please contact us to prioritize your evidence before submitting items such as urine.