



Presidential Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives Operation Lady Justice



Request of Elimination Samples as a Gateway for CODIS Entry

One gateway that governs whether a foreign DNA profile can be entered into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) involves the request and documentation of consent to collect DNA from specified individuals for elimination samples.

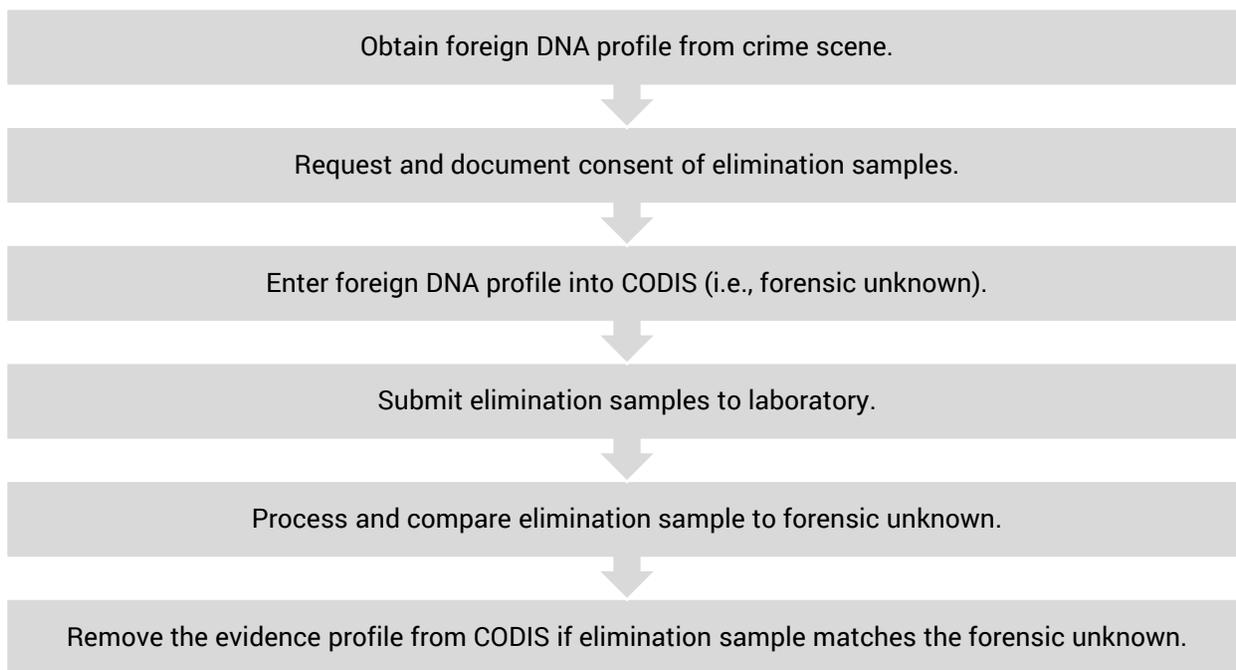
Elimination samples are voluntarily collected DNA samples from individuals who are not involved in the alleged crime, although their DNA may be obtained from items associated with a crime scene. For example, in a sexual assault, crime scene items generally are collected from body swabs, underwear, and even bedding. Thus, a consensual partner who has engaged in sexual activity with the victim in the days leading up to the sexual criminal allegation, may be a contributor to DNA profiles obtained from the crime scene. Similarly, in a property crime of a residential home, the residents may be requested to provide DNA samples for elimination.

The DNA profiles from elimination samples are used for the sole purpose of manually comparing any crime scene DNA profile(s) to identify foreign DNA (i.e., DNA not belonging to the victim, consensual partner, or any other appropriate elimination sample). This helps ensure the DNA profiles—entered into CODIS as the forensic unknown(s)—are from foreign DNA that may identify a putative perpetrator. Elimination samples are, therefore, not stored or compared in the CODIS database.¹ See Figure 1 for a National DNA Index System (NDIS)-accepted process flow regarding the use of elimination samples.²



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Figure 1. NDIS-Supported Process for Using Elimination Samples



Elimination samples are not always easily collected, especially when reinvestigating cold cases. The law enforcement official is required to request and document consent for a DNA sample obtained from these individuals.¹ There is reasonable expectation that efforts will be made to collect and process elimination samples. However, with proper written documentation, the forensic unknown sample still can be entered into CODIS before comparing the DNA of the elimination sample to the forensic unknown.² This action allows the investigation to continue and utilize the benefits of CODIS. If an elimination sample is submitted later for testing and results in an inclusion or a match between the elimination sample profile and the forensic unknown profile, then the forensic profile must be removed from CODIS.

Laboratories may have submission guidelines that modify the NDIS-supported flow and impact proper documentation of a request to collect elimination samples. Communicate with the laboratory to understand how this gateway can best support the Presidential Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives.

References

1. Federal Bureau of investigation (FBI) Laboratory. (2021, February). National DNA Index System (NDIS) Operational Procedures Manual, Version 9. Retrieved from <https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/ndis-operational-procedures-manual.pdf/view>
2. Scientific Working Group on DNA Analysis Methods (SWGDM). (2016, December). Recommendations for the efficient DNA processing of sexual assault evidence kits. Retrieved from https://media.wix.com/ugd/4344b0_4daf2bb5512b4e2582f895c4a133a0ed.pdf

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