

Standard for Forensic DNA Analysis Training Programs



WHAT IS AN AAFS STANDARD FACTSHEET?

The AAFS produces clear, concise, and easy-to-understand factsheets to summarize the contents of technical and professional forensic science standards on the OSAC Registry. They are not intended to provide an interpretation for any portion of a published standard.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STANDARD?

Testing of evidence containing DNA (e.g., blood, semen, saliva, tissue) is routinely performed to exclude or potentially link an individual to a crime scene. DNA testing involves a sequential series of required steps specific to each type of DNA testing performed. The general steps are outlined in the diagram below.

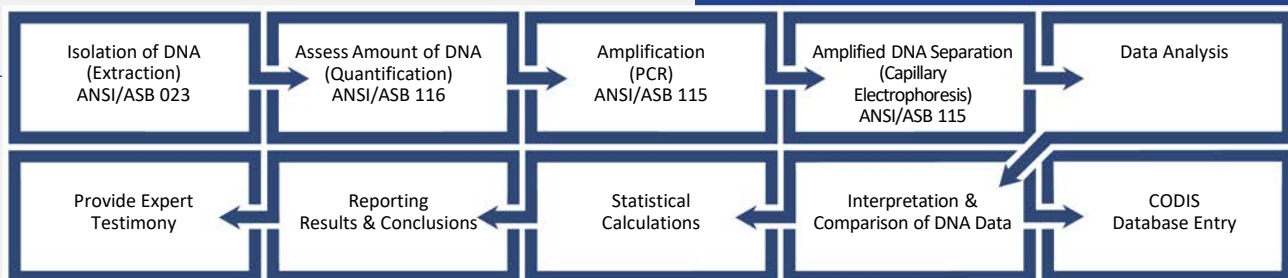
Comprehensive and documented training of personnel prior to conducting any testing on database samples or evidence in a case is required to ensure quality and consistency in the testing and communication of the DNA test results and the conclusions derived.

This document establishes requirements for the overall structure and design of a DNA analysis training program.

WHY IS THIS STANDARD IMPORTANT? WHAT ARE ITS BENEFITS?

This standard provides general requirements for the training program for all personnel who will be performing forensic DNA testing. This standard is to be used as a foundational document in conjunction with additional training standards that provide specific requirements for each of the steps of the DNA testing process.

Proper training in each of the steps of the DNA testing process is necessary to ensure the generation of quality DNA test results that are appropriately and consistently evaluated and communicated to the stakeholders in the criminal justice system.



HOW IS THIS STANDARD USED, AND WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS?

The standard details requirements for the foundation of the training program for all personnel performing forensic DNA testing. The standard includes requirements for a documented training program specifically addressing: 1) personnel; 2) general relevant training (e.g., operations, safety, software, procedures, quality management, validation); and 3) knowledge-based and practical competency assessment of that training. It includes the requirement that all training is documented and retained by the forensic science service provider (FSSP).

This standard provides the overall scope and framework for the DNA testing training program. It is intended to be used in conjunction with other individual ANSI/ASB standards for forensic DNA analysis training (see the individual boxes in the diagram) that contain specific requirements detailed for the various steps of the DNA testing process.

This is a standard practice. Additional training beyond that required in the standard may be necessary depending on the testing assays used and the types of evidence tested by the FSSP.