

# Use of Elimination Samples as a Gateway for CODIS Entry

One of the gateways governing 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.

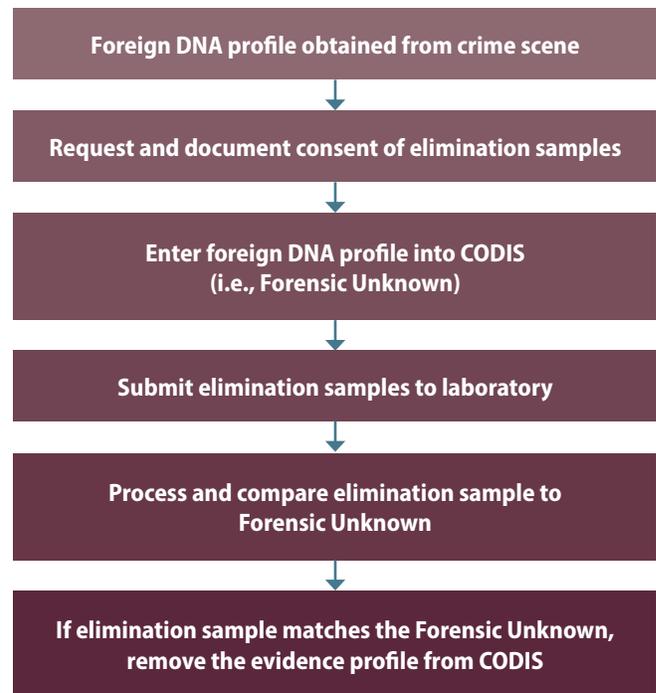
Elimination samples are voluntarily collected DNA samples from individuals not involved in the alleged crime, although their DNA may be obtained from items associated with a crime scene. For example, in a sexual assault, crime scene items generally are collected from body swabs, underwear, and even bedding.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

The DNA profiles from elimination samples are used exclusively to manually compare with any crime scene DNA profile(s) to identify foreign DNA (i.e., DNA foreign 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.<sup>1</sup> See Figure 1 for a National DNA Index System (NDIS)-accepted process flow regarding the use of elimination samples.<sup>2</sup>

Elimination samples are not always easily collected, especially in reinvestigating cold cases. The law enforcement official is required to request and document consent for a DNA sample obtained from these individuals.<sup>1</sup> 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 the DNA comparison of the elimination sample to the forensic unknown takes place.<sup>2</sup> This action allows the investigation to continue and utilize the benefits of CODIS. If an elimination sample is submitted later for testing, which results in an inclusion or match between the elimination sample profile and the forensic unknown profile, 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 be used to support the efforts of the National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative.

**Figure 1. NDIS-Supported Process for Using Elimination Samples**



References:

1. Federal Bureau of investigation (FBI) Laboratory. (2017, January 1). National DNA Index System (NDIS) Operational Procedures Manual, Version 5. Retrieved from <https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/ndis-procedures-manual-ver4-approved-04272016.pdf/view>
2. Scientific Working Group on DNA Analysis Methods (SWGDM). (2016, December 5). Recommendations for the efficient DNA processing of sexual assault kit outsourcing projects from Houston, TX, and Detroit, MI. Retrieved from: [http://media.wix.com/ugd/4344b0\\_4daf2bb5512b4e2582f895c4a133a0ed.pdf](http://media.wix.com/ugd/4344b0_4daf2bb5512b4e2582f895c4a133a0ed.pdf)

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