



**State
Police**

**Forensic
Investigation
Center**

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FIREARMS UNIT EVIDENCE SUBMISSION & TESTING INFORMATION

Firearms Examination

The Unit will apply its forensic expertise to select the most appropriate evidence and test methods, limiting the scope of the examination to answer the relevant forensic questions for each case.

The Section does not accept or perform:

- Examinations of black powder guns, bb / pellet guns, paint ball guns or air soft guns
- Non-ballistic toolmark examinations (e.g. pry marks on door moldings, marks on cut copper wire)
- Tests for the presence of gunshot residue (shooter's hands, clothing)
- Cartridge case to projectile comparisons
- NIBIN on projectiles or revolvers.

Requests for Pre-Submission Consultation

The Firearms Supervisor and FIC Case Management are available to consult with an agency prior to submission of evidence. The purpose of this consultation is to determine the most probative evidence to submit. Agencies are requested to email FICCMR@troopers.ny.gov with a case synopsis including offense type and a list of evidence. The subject of the email should be "Case Review". **Consultations are required in advance of submission of evidence for all homicide cases as well as cases with more than ten (10) items of evidence.**

Evidence Submission & Testing Limits by Case Category

Test Method	Evidence Item Submission Limit
Operability	One gun for the first round of testing to establish the charge. Submit with recovered ammunition, if applicable. A maximum of two (2) magazines and ten (10) live cartridges should be submitted. Submit ammunition separately from firearms (the firearms in one package and the ammunition and magazines in a separate package). When possible, package the firearm zip-tied to the bottom of the box with the action open and the serial number facing the top of the box). For

	<p>submerged / heavily rusted guns or modified starter pistols and flare guns – contact the Firearms Unit prior to submission. Guns recovered in water should be collected, stored and submitted submerged in the same water. Do not disassemble guns and ensure guns are zip-tied to the gun boxes whenever possible.</p>
NIBIN	<p>Agencies are encouraged to do their own test fires, submitting two (2) test-fired casings to the lab. If applicable, a gun needs to be processed for latent prints and then swabbed for DNA prior to operability testing. Record the make, model caliber and serial number of the test fired gun on the submission form. NIBIN entries are only being made on <u>cartridge cases</u> from semi-automatic pistols, 7.62 mm rifles, .556 caliber rifles, .223 caliber rifles, rifles that fire handgun ammunition, and on 12-gauge shotgun shells.</p> <p>Police Officers' duty guns are not entered into NIBIN.</p>
Microscopic Comparison	<p>Consult with the Firearms Unit in cases with a large number of exhibits. Microscopic comparisons will only be conducted in cases where a relevant gun has been recovered.</p>
Gun Shot Residue – Range Determination	<p>Consult with the Firearms Unit prior to submission. Submit the ammunition seized with the gun. Do not test fire the gun prior to submission. As this is muzzle-to-target distance estimation only, we cannot conduct testing on shooter's or bystanders' clothing. The Unit cannot work with autopsy photographs but can produce test shots to be used by a qualified medical examiner.</p>
Serial Number Restoration	<p>Submit the gun to the lab in a safe condition (action open), zip-tied to the gun box. Do not attempt restoration prior to submission. Oftentimes the Unit restores partial serial numbers. Do not resubmit a gun to the lab for a second round of restoration. For other defaced items (vehicle VIN, electronics) contact the Firearms Unit prior to submission.</p>
Caliber / General Rifling Characteristics	<p>In the absence of a gun the Unit will determine caliber or caliber class, suitability for comparison, and provide a list of possible manufacturers of the gun that fired the projectiles</p>

Shotshells and Shotshell components	Shotshells can be examined to determine gauge and manufacturer. 12 Gauge shotshells can be entered into NIBIN. Pellets can be examined to determine shot size. Wadding can be examined to determine gauge, manufacturer and for individual markings that can be compared to test fires from the shotgun.
Gun destruction	Contact the Firearms Unit to schedule an appointment to submit guns for destruction. A file check record must accompany each submitted gun. A maximum of 25 guns can be submitted on a given day. All accessories submitted with the gun (e.g. scope, sling) must be listed on the submission paperwork.

Contact information:

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Forensic Investigation Center

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Firearms Unit Direct Line: 518 485-8365

To obtain Laboratory submission forms/Section Fact Sheets, Policies or informational Videos please visit the Crime Laboratory System web page of the New York State Police public website at <https://troopers.ny.gov/crime-laboratory-system-sections>.