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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMPETENCY TESTING OF NONCERTIFIED LATENT PRINT EXAMINERS

Position Statement

SWGFAST recognizes the need of the judicial system as the trier of fact to have confidence in the ability of a witness to provide friction ridge examination testimony.

Current latent print examiner certification programs exist to assess excellence in latent print identification. However, a need exists for a program available to the general latent print community that accurately assesses noncertified latent print examiner competency.

An applicant for competency testing should not be required to have work experience but must be trained to competency as a latent print examiner.

A proctored, validated, two-part test should be developed that will determine competency, based on the following:

- A demonstration of knowledge in the form of a written test. The written portion of the test should conform to the required objectives in Sections 1 through 6 of the SWGFAST Training to Competency for Latent Print Examiners guidelines.
- A demonstration of skills in the form of a comparison test consisting of individualizations and exclusions of latent print impressions. The comparison portion of the test should conform to the guidelines of the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors / Laboratory Accreditation Board for proficiency testing.

Credentialing should require successful completion of the testing procedure and should be valid for a period of no more than five years. It is the intent of this program that the applicant will aspire toward a program of excellence. However, the applicant should not be prevented from reapplying and retesting in the competency program.