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DNA Laboratory

Within the Office of Forensic Sciences, the DNA Laboratory comprises two separate units: the DNA Casework Unit and the CODIS (Combined DNA Index System) Units (which includes a CODIS Unit and a DNA Databasing Unit). The laboratory as a whole is tasked with assisting law enforcement agencies throughout the State of New Jersey in solving crimes utilizing state-of-the-art DNA equipment and technology. Click on the following links for additional information:

- [DNA Casework Unit](#)
- [CODIS \(Combined DNA Index System\) Unit](#)
 - [CODIS Unit](#)
 - [DNA Databasing Unit](#)

Biological evidence is first processed by the [Forensic Serology Unit](#). For evidence submission to the Forensic Serology Unit, please refer to the OFS Evidence Field Manual link on the [OFS home page](#).

DNA Casework Unit

The DNA Casework Unit analyzes biological evidence for the presence of DNA, both autosomal STRs (short tandem repeats) and male-specific YSTRs. DNA profiles generated from evidentiary items can then be directly compared to the DNA profile of a reference sample (from either a victim or suspect) to determine whether that person could have contributed that DNA. In addition, eligible DNA profiles from evidentiary items can be searched in the CODIS (Combined DNA Index System) database to generate potential investigative leads.



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CODIS Units

CODIS is an acronym for the Combined DNA Index System. This is a database containing forensic (crime scene samples), convicted offender, arrestee, and unidentified human remains/missing persons DNA profile information.

At the Office of Forensic Sciences, the CODIS Units consist of the following:

- The **CODIS Unit** is responsible for evaluating potential DNA profile matches in the CODIS software and notifying the appropriate law enforcement agencies of potential investigative leads.
- The **DNA Databasing Unit** is responsible for analyzing DNA reference samples collected from convicted offenders (with qualifying criminal offenses) and arrestees (who have been arrested for qualifying criminal offenses) throughout the State of New Jersey. The DNA Databasing Unit works in cooperation with the CODIS Compliance Unit (CCU) of the Division of Criminal Justice.

CODIS Unit

There are three levels of CODIS in New Jersey: the [National DNA Index System \(NDIS\)](#), the State DNA Index System (SDIS) and the Local DNA Index System (LDIS). NDIS is managed by the FBI, SDIS is managed by our CODIS Unit, and the [Union County DNA Laboratory](#) is currently the only local (LDIS) laboratory in New Jersey. All of these agencies work in collaboration to track and manage the hits to the database.

The database contains various indices, but the most commonly used indices are the offender index, the arrestee index and the forensic indices.

- The offender index contains DNA profiles of individuals convicted of a qualifying offense covered by the law in New Jersey at the time of

conviction.

- The arrestee index contains DNA profiles from individuals arrested for a qualifying offense.
- The forensic indices contain DNA profiles generated from eligible evidentiary stains.

Forensic DNA profiles are searched against the offender index, the arrestee index and the forensic indices. When a match (hit) occurs, appropriate law enforcement agencies are notified of this investigative lead. Agencies must obtain a reference sample from the offender for comparison purposes.

DNA Databasing Unit

The State of New Jersey collects approximately 15,000 to 20,000 samples from convicted offenders and/or arrestees each year. The DNA Databasing Unit is tasked with analyzing these samples for upload into the State (SDIS) and National (NDIS) databases. The laboratory employs state-of-the-art technology to assist in the efficient and expeditious processing of the many hundreds of samples received each week.



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