



# Standard Specifications for Preparation of Laboratory Analysis Requests in Sexual Violence Investigations<sup>1</sup>

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## INTRODUCTION

The meaningful analysis of physical evidence recovered in sexual violence investigations requires the careful attention to the preservation of easily damaged or degraded biological materials as well as the transmittal of a clear description and explanation of that evidence for the examining analyst. This description should include the source of, and relationships between, different evidence items and is sometimes referred to as a “case synopsis.” The more information the analysts have at their disposal concerning the circumstances of the incident and the relationship(s) of the involved individuals, the more successful their efforts will be in resolving questions in the investigation. Failure to adequately document and report this information in the request for scientific analysis could lead to the application of useless tests of the evidence that can destroy materials better used in other more meaningful examinations.

## 1. Scope

1.1 These specifications describe the basic elements of a request for the scientific examination of physical evidence collected in the investigation of a sexual violence incident. These specifications are designed to be used in conjunction with other specifications, guides, and practices associated with sexual violence examinations that are listed in Section 2.

1.2 These specifications outline considerations that facilitate the analysis of sexual violence evidence by forensic experts. These experts can include, but are not limited to, serologists, toxicologists, pathologists, odontologists, latent print examiners, firearm and toolmark examiners, and trace materials analysts. The success of their combined work requires a clear understanding of the issues and relationships involved in the case.

1.3 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety, health, and environmental practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

1.4 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standard-*

*ization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

## 2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*<sup>2</sup>

E1732 Terminology Relating to Forensic Science

E1843 Guide for Sexual Violence Investigation, Examination, and Evidence Collection Protocol

## 3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—For definitions of terms used in these specifications, refer to Terminology E1732.

## 4. Summary of Practice

4.1 Requests for laboratory analysis should be supported by sufficient documentation to allow the forensic science service provider to understand the conditions surrounding the incident and the relationship(s) between different items of evidence.

4.2 These specifications are used in conjunction with Guide E1843.

## 5. Significance and Use

5.1 These specifications are designed to ensure that evidence associated with a sexual violence investigation is

<sup>1</sup> These specifications are under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E30 on Forensic Sciences and are the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E30.11 on Interdisciplinary Forensic Science Standards.

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<sup>2</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard’s Document Summary page on the ASTM website.