

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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April 26, 2019

SUBJECT: New Specimen Testing Kit Requirement (Driving Cases)

As you are aware, effective February 1, 2019, the DPS Crime Laboratory stopped accepting specimens for testing in driving cases that are not packaged in a DPS Blood Kit. This new policy will result in greater evidence security, sample processing efficiency, personnel safety, and easier storage for both short and long term retention. Non-compliant submissions on or after May 1, 2019 will not be accepted for analysis unless repackaged in a DPS Blood Kit.

The DPS Blood Kit contains all the materials necessary to meet mailing requirements for biological hazards. It is designed to be sent through the mail with no additional packaging necessary, and provides all the evidence seals needed to secure biological specimens. Even for specimens being delivered to the laboratory in person, the evidence may need to be returned to the submitting agency, shipped between DPS regional laboratories, or forwarded to an outside testing facility based upon prosecutor or defense requests. The DPS Blood Kit provides added protection from breakage of blood tubes, has absorbent material to limit exposure for personnel in the case of tube breakage, ensures the tubes remain in the packaging throughout the analysis process, and provides ease of location in storage.

DPS Blood Kits can be purchased through one of the following options. Please check the respective websites for current cost.

- 1) DPS General Stores
 - a. Local government entities only will need to enter into an inter-local contract <http://www.dps.texas.gov/internetforms/Forms/GS-20.pdf>
 - b. Questions regarding the inter-local contract or purchasing through DPS General Stores can be sent via email to gsoutsidesales@dps.texas.gov
- 2) Texas Smart Buy
 - a. Questions regarding membership or purchasing can be sent via email to txsmartbuy@cpa.texas.gov or via telephone to 1-888-479-7602
 - b. Toxicology and Blood Alcohol kit: <http://www.txsmartbuy.com/product/5641674>

For hospital tube submissions, please reference attached guide for preferable packaging instructions.

Questions and concerns regarding this new policy can be addressed to Dana Baxter at dana.baxter@dps.texas.gov

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Brady Mills'.

Brady Mills
Crime Laboratory Director
Texas Department of Public Safety

Hospital Tube Packaging Guide

It is always preferable to collect a DPS Blood Kit. But, when it is necessary to submit hospital tubes, please see the instructions and photo guide listed below. The preferable packaging still utilizes components of the standard DPS Blood Kit.

Note: The instructions below only apply to the submission of tubes. If you are attempting to submit a urine container, please note the DPS Crime Lab does not test urine in driving cases when there is a blood specimen available. If you still need to submit the urine specimen, please transfer to a tube or submit the urine container in a separate package designed to meet biohazard and mailing requirements.

Preferred Practice:

- 1) Use a DPS Blood Kit.
- 2) Remove the plastic cylinders from the kit.
- 3) Transfer the absorbent sleeves from the cylinder into a ziplock bag, preferably with a preprinted biohazard label.
- 4) If ziplock bag is not printed with a biohazard label, place a biohazard sticker on the ziplock bag.
- 5) Add the hospital tubes to the ziplock bag and seal.
- 6) Place the sealed ziplock bag containing the hospital tubes in the middle of the foam padding if it will fit. If not, discard foam padding and put ziplock bag directly into cardboard box.
- 7) Apply seal to the outside of the DPS Blood Kit and initial and date.
- 8) The kit is ready to be mailed or delivered to the laboratory. Do not add additional packaging.

Acceptable Practice:

- 1) Place tubes in a ziplock bag, preferably with a preprinted biohazard label.
- 2) If ziplock bag is not printed with a biohazard label, place a biohazard sticker on the ziplock bag.
- 3) Add absorbent material to the bag and seal.
- 4) Place ziplock bag in a **small** cardboard box.
- 5) Apply seal to the outside of the cardboard box and initial and date.
- 6) The kit is ready to be mailed or delivered to the laboratory. Do not add additional packaging.

Hospital Tube Packaging Guide

What you will need from the DPS Blood Kit – absorbent pouches, integrity seal, box, and foam insert (optional)



What you will need to provide or get from the hospital – ziplock bag with biohazard marking/sticker, blood tubes



Hospital Tube Packaging Guide

Transfer the absorbent sleeves from the cylinder into a ziplock bag, preferably with a preprinted biohazard label. Add the hospital tubes to the ziplock bag and seal.



Place the sealed ziplock bag containing the hospital tubes in the middle of the foam padding if it will fit. If not, discard foam padding and put ziplock bag directly into cardboard box.



Hospital Tube Packaging Guide

Apply seal to the outside of the DPS Blood Kit and initial and date. The kit is ready to be mailed or delivered to the laboratory. Do not add additional packaging.

