

# **DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCES**

FY 2022 PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

**JANUARY 15, 2023** 



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#### 1 DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCES

*Mission*: The mission of the Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS) is to produce high quality, timely, accurate, and reliable forensic science with the use of the best available technology and practices, unbiased science, and transparency with the overall goal of enhancing public health and safety.

Services: DFS provides independent analysis of evidence and samples submitted by agencies within the District of Columbia and its federal neighbors. The DFS analyzes evidence submitted from criminal cases, including DNA, fingerprints, firearms, materials, drugs and digital evidence. The DFS also provides expert witness testimony in defense of their analytical reports in the District's courts of law. The Public Health Laboratory Division provides diagnostic and analytical testing for biological pathogens and chemical agents from clinical, environmental, or food sources and provides emergency response testing. The Crime Scene Sciences Division provides the collection, analysis, processing, and preservation of evidence found at crime scenes in the District. The DFS Directorate supports the work of the entire agency through strategic direction, training, quality assurance, research, recruitment and hiring of personnel, information technology, data management, fleet management, procurement, and other administrative support services. The Scientific Advisory Board provides guidance by providing peer review to ensure that scientifically valid protocols are developed, followed, and updated.

## 2 2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Accomplishment	Impact on Agency	Impact on Residents
The Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS) Forensic Intelligence Unit (FIU), in conjunction with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), successfully achieved generation of an intelligence report for firearms cartridge casings collected in the 7th District in order to provide potential leads to assist in the closure of criminal cases involving firearms.	Working in conjunction with our public safety and justice partners, the DFS FIU was able to turn data into actionable intelligence to assist with the District's continuing efforts in combating crime.	With the agency's ability to identify trends and patterns in evidence collection based on various geographic boundaries within the District, with a focus on Wards 7 and 8, customers and stakeholders can utilize actionable intelligence products to combat violent crimes and enhance public safety.
The Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS) Forensic Biology Unit (FBU) is a recipient of the multi-discipline Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) federal grant award, a multi-agency grant award project between the Department of Forensic Science (DFS), Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia (USAO-DC) to research and re-evaluate unsolved cold cases in an effort to provide new investigative leads through the application of modern technology and testing methods.	Thanks to the hard work and dedication of the DFS FBU SAKI team, MPD and USAO were able to obtain a conviction in an unsolved DNA 2006 cold case that involved particularly heinous circumstances. Achieving a conviction in these types of cases involves intensive coordination between the involved agencies and is no small lift. The USAO-DC issued a press release on the conviction and sentencing of the defendant.	The continued partnership of the SAKI project has led to the closure of additional cases to include the arrest in a 2005 case and the closure of a 30-year-old homicide case!
The Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS) Forensic Chemistry Unit (FCU) is a recipient of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Overdose to Action (OD2A) grant award. Through this grant opportunity FCU has collected, collated, and reported vital data to law enforcement and public health authorities on emerging dangerous substance, drug trends in the Nation's Capital, and the prevention of opioid overdoses through the analysis and surveillance studies of dangerous controlled substances.	The FCU now issues monthly drug intelligence bulletins to DFS customers and stakeholders to efficiently disseminate timely, actionable information based in validated science.	The unit shifted its emphasis from surveillance of powders/pills to increase surveillance of syringes. This greatly improved partnerships with the syringe-exchange community and opened doors for continued education and information exchange with needle-exchange providers on analytical data, opioid abuse practices, and negative impacts on the user.

### (continued)

Accomplishment	Impact on Agency	Impact on Residents
The Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS) was able to achieve a 15% decrease in the agency's vacancy rate in FY2022.	This vacancy reduction rate allows the agency to provide more efficient services by increasing response times to critical forensic and public health services.	Filling vacancies within the Public Health Laboratory division has expanded capabilities for the ongoing fight against COVID-19, Monkeypox, and other viral outbreaks; filling vacancies in the Crime Scene Sciences division has been crucial to evidence collection capabilities in the city's fight against the increase in crime; and, filling vacancies in the Forensic Science Laboratory division supports re-accreditation efforts to bring forensic services back online for in-house analysis of evidence collected to help swiftly solve criminal cases impacting DC residents.

## **3 2022 OBJECTIVES**

Strategic Objective	Number of Measures	Number of Operations
Provide high-quality forensic science and public health laboratory analysis to stakeholders so they can execute their own core services to the public in a timely manner. Our three overarching core services are: crime scene evidence collection, forensic science analysis, and public health laboratory diagnostic, analytical, and emergency response testing	13	5
Provide administrative support, training and risk management oversight to our laboratory and technical units by ensuring compliance with the legal mandate to make analysis documents available. The science lab units will each have administrative support services to maintain operational capacity in the form of training, continuing education, safety, risk management, quality and legal support	5	3
Create and maintain a highly efficient, transparent, and responsive District government	11	6

## 4 2022 OPERATIONS

Operation Title	Operation Description	Type of Operation
their own core services to the	science and public health laboratory analysis to stakeho public in a timely manner. Our three overarching core cience analysis, and public health laboratory diagnostic,	services are: crime scene
Improve laboratory efficiency through technological advances	DFS will continue to expand its capabilities as a top tier forensic and public health laboratory by implementing new scientific programs and investing in laboratory equipment infrastructure.	Key Project
Provide timely testing of pathogens of public health significance	The Public Health Laboratory will provide diagnostic, analytical and emergency response testing for biological pathogens and chemical agents from clinical, environmental, or food sources.	Daily Service
Cyber Operations	Cyber Operations performs activities that protect sensitive information, gather evidence to mitigate possible or real-time threats, and support other agency intelligence activities.	Daily Service
Conduct professional and expedient crime scene responses, collection, and storage of evidence	The Crime Scene Sciences Division will serve as stewards of evidence by maintaining custody of evidence from collection to storage at DFS.	Daily Service
Conduct timely forensic analysis	The Forensic Science Laboratory division will conduct coordinated and timely forensic analysis in accordance with industry standards and accreditation guidelines.	Daily Service
by ensuring compliance with the each have administrative supp	rt, training and risk management oversight to our labo he legal mandate to make analysis documents available port services to maintain operational capacity in the fo ment, quality and legal support	. The science lab units will
Offer training curriculum for professional development	Provide a training curriculum to DFS employees to ensure they maintain skill sets, meet standards of excellence, and deliver high quality, accurate, and reliable services	Daily Service
Monitor quality compliance with certification requirements	Assurance that DFS produces products that are fit for stakeholders' purposes by maintaining ISO 17025 accreditation for the agency, maintains Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act (CLIA) certification, as well as, compliance with applicable federal regulations such as the Division of Select Agents and Toxins (DSAT)	Daily Service
Oversee the laboratory environment is both safe and healthy for staff	Establish, manage and ensure compliance of federal, district, and local regulations and policy; and provide medical surveillance to staff, mandates safety training for all staff members, and audits laboratory facilities to ensure a safe work environment	Daily Service
Create and maintain a highly e	fficient, transparent, and responsive District governme	ent
Efficiently procure vital services and resources	Proactively procure the necessary services, supplies, and equipment for the laboratories to meet the daily needs of scientists and agency personnel	Daily Service

#### (continued)

Operation Title	Operation Description	Type of Operation
Strategically forecast, analyze, and present agency data to determine levels of resource efficiency and goal attainment	Analyze raw data and present graphical visuals of real-time workload from data obtained from LIMS, and other databases to better inform strategic leadership decisions to enhance laboratory services	Key Project
Responsible for human capital management and recruitment for DFS and serves as liaison to external entities	Supports the hiring of new employees and provides employee data on residency, on-board time, and performance plan completion from data pulled from PeopleSoft	Daily Service
Education and Grief Counseling Services	Education and Grief Counseling Services	Daily Service
Provide legal advice to the agency and facilitate stakeholder engagement	Facilitate stakeholder engagement, legally advise director level decision-making, train scientists for court testimony and presentation of scientific expertise, draft contracts and agreements with government and private organizations, and process discovery requests	Daily Service
Ensures all IT systems and databases are operational and secure for scientists and agency personnel to deliver reports and services to stakeholders	Promote and facilitate the effective integration of technology into the DFS divisions by developing, supporting, and maintaining a highly effective, reliable, secure, and innovative information systems to support agency needs	Daily Service

## 5 2022 STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

In FY 2022, Department of Forensic Sciences had 8 Strategic Initiatives and completed 12.5%.

Title	Description	Completion to Date	Update	Explanation for Incomplete Initiative
360 Review	In an effort to ensure accuracy and the quality and consistency of firearms examination practices, the Firearms Examination Unit (FEU) will complete an internal 360 review of the laboratory operations, procedures, and equipment. The objective is to conduct a review to determine how efficient and effective these changes were and assist in rebuilding an accredited unit.	O-24%	This initiative will be ongoing as the agency works towards re-accreditation.	This initiative is still ongoing pending rebuilding of the quality unit and staffing needs.
Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC) 7 District (Ward 8) initiative broadens scope to include 6 District (Ward 7)	This FY22 Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC) 7th District (Ward 8) initiative will broaden the scope to include the 6th District (Ward 7). Evidence acquired from Firearms from the 7th District (Ward 8) is prioritized for delivery to DFS for analysis by ATF and MPD personnel. In continuation of the prioritization of violent gun crime reduction, FIU will visually demonstrate National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) associations with the evidence item. This will assist our customers and stakeholders in the closure of cases.	Complete	In conjunctions with our partners at the ATF and MPD, an intelligence report was generated regarding the casings collected in the 7th District to provide potential leads to assist in the closure of cases.	
LIMS Upgrade	DFS will complete the customization and implementation of upgrades to the Laboratory Information System (LIMS) used by all divisions.	75-99%	Configuration and development continued for Release 2 Chemistry, updated go live October 22	Due to resource constraints and competing priorities with the accreditation project, the planned go-live date slipped.

Development of photograph and video analysis capability in the Digital Evidence Unit (DEU)	DFS will develop the photograph and video analysis capability in the Digital Evidence Unit (DEU). This capability will allow DEU to recover, analyze, and enhance still photograph and video files to provide critical information to investigators. DEU will address work flow, develop written policies and procedures, and competency measures in accordance with accreditation guidelines.	O-24%	Due to the loss of accreditation and transfer of employees to MPD during Q3, this initiative will not be met.	Due to the loss of accreditation and transfer of employees to MPD during Q3, this initiative will not be met.
DFS- Quality Assurance Manual	DFS -Quality unit will develop a standard operating procedure to capture the quality of services rendered to the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL),the Public Health Laboratory (PHL), the Crime Scene Science (CSS) laboratory and the Department's Directorate. This manual will include guidance on how to perform internal and external audits as well as quality practices in line with regulatory guidelines outlined in CLIA, ISO/IEC 17025:2017, AR3125 and CDC-DSAT.	50-74%	The training manual is completed and waiting for external Quality Consultant (contractor) to advise and provide additional input and guidance	Waiting for feedback from Quality Consultants
Develop and implement an electronic discovery process	The DFS legal team will create, plan, and design an online portal for stakeholders to obtain documents relevant to the discovery process.	25-49%	This project has not been able to be started because the Enabling Statute has not yet been changed to allow DFS to give discovery to anyone other than the prosecutor's office.	This project has not been able to be started because the Enabling Statute has not yet been changed to allow DFS to give discovery to anyone other than the prosecutor's office.
Strengthen Agency Wide Re- cruitment	Build and strengthen recruitment processes in order to lower vacancy rate by 5 - 10% while ensuring alignment of human resourcing to programmatic needs.	75-99%	This initiative closes in Q4 with progress at 75% - 99%.	This initiative remains top priority and ongoing to reduce the agency's vacancy rate.

Racial Equity Initiative	Expand racial equity discussion offerings for all employees with a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion.	50-74%	This initiative closes in Q4 with progress at 50% - 74%.	This initiative remains ongoing to train all staff in DEI.
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## 6 2022 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND WORKLOAD MEASURES

### Key Performance Indicators

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Provide high-quality forensic science as services are: crime scene evidence coll	nd public he	alth laboratory	y analysis to st	akeholders so	they can exec	ute their own	core services	to the public ir	n a timely man	ner. Our three ove	rarching core
Percent of crime scenes responded to within 30 minutes	Up is Better	87.3%	84.9%	90%	80.5%	79%	81%	81.9%	80.6%	Unmet	Traffic issues due to the return of a large number of the workforce to the workplace after the pandemic and rush hour timeframes
Percent of Crime Scene Reports completed within 14 calendar days	Up is Better	95.9%	89.6%	95%	78%	84.9%	85%	83.5%	83%	Unmet	Due to the extreme shortage in manpower staff is responding to a larger amount of calls causing less administrative time to complete reports within the 14 calendar day turnaround time.
Percent of all firearms will be transferred to the Evidence Control Branch (ECB) within 21 days after all forensic tests are completed	Up is Better	98%	96.6%	90%	99.5%	97.9%	90.9%	98.8%	96.7%	Met	
Percent of high priority biological terrorism and chemical terrorism samples analyzed and reported within 24 hours	Up is Better	100%	100%	90%	No applicable incidents	100%	100%	100%	100%	Met	
Percent of OCME samples ordered in microbiology will be tested and reported within 12 business days of receipt in the laboratory	Up is Better	98.9%	87.4%	90%	91.7%	100%	100%	95.7%	96.3%	Met	

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Percent of Core Labratory Response Network for Chemical Threats (LRN-C) methods within the Clinical Toxicology Unit (CTU) that are evaluated as competent by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) LRN-C Program (competence is defined as successful score of >80% in two-out-of-three testing events, per method)	Up is Better	90.9%	75%	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Met	•
Percent of all rabies STAT specimen with human exposure are tested and reported to the Zoonotic Disease Epidemiologist within 24 hours or 1 business day of receipt in the laboratory	Up is Better	96.6%	100%	95%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Met	
Percent of samples ordered in molecular diagnostics will be tested and reported within 72 hours or three (3) business days of receipt in the laboratory	Up is Better	98.7%	97.9%	90%	96.9%	100%	99.8%	No data available	99.8%	Met	
Percent of all jewelry received will be transferred to Evidence Control Branch (ECB) within 14 days	Up is Better	97.9%	98.6%	90%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	Met	
Percent of evidence processing cases completed within three (3) business days of receipt by unit	Up is Better	73.4%	35.6%	90%	No applicable incidents	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available		
Percent of digital evidence cases completed within five (5) business days of receipt of legal authority and device(s)	Up is Better	96.3%	98.2%	90%	97.3%	No data available	No data available	No data available	97.3%	Met	
Percent of all drugs will be transferred to Evidence Control Branch (ECB) within 30 days after all forensic testing is completed	Up is Better	100%	98.4%	90%	70.8%	100%	90%	100%	88.4%	Nearly Met	Staffing shortages impacted unit's ability to complete drug transfers within the 30 day window after completion of testing

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Percent of cases received in the Forensic Chemistry Unit will be tested and reported within 60 days of receipt in the laboratory	Up is Better	98%	99.1%	90%	100%	100%	66.7%	100%	96.3%	Met	
Provide administrative support, traini The science lab units will each have ad	•	•	•	•		•		_		•	
Percent of scientists meeting technical competency requirements	Up is Better	99.3%	98.7%	95%	38.6%	91.6%	96.3%	95.6%	80.4%	Unmet	At the time of FY2022 1st Quarter [Oct-Nov-Dec], the estimation did not include the competency of ISO units because there was no clear definition in place to determine competencies of DFS-FSL and DFS-CSS scientists.
Percent of safety incident reports submitted to DFS Safety Officer within two (2) business days	Up is Better	100%	100%	100%	No applicable incidents	No applicable incidents	100%	100%	100%	Met	
Percent of overtime events preauthroized	Up is Better	87.8%	100%	80%	Annual Measure	Annual Measure	Annual Measure	Annual Measure	64.47%	Unmet	Glitches with SharePoint platform impacted ability for staff to enter OT requests timely, and competing demands impacted management's ability to approve entered requests timely.

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Percent of QCAR situation and root cause analysis sections completed within 30 business days	Up is Better	78.4%	65.5%	100%	50%	66.7%	19%	50%	26.4%	Unmet	Quality was not able to meet the 100% benchmark due to following reasons: 1) Shortage of DFS Quality Assurance Unit staff during this time period ,2) Initiation and continual surveillance of large numbers of nonconformities previously opened in FY2022 Q3 in both CSS and PHL, 3) Large number of additional findings from annual CLIA Internal Audit of the PHL Laboratory Division, and 4) The respective unit responsible party delayed response to submitting Objective Evidence in a timely manner.
Percent of FOIA responses returned on time (15 business days)	Up is Better	100%	97.4%	100%	100%	100%	100%	66.7%	92%	Nearly Met	Our FOIA officer left and it took a few weeks to have the new FOIA officer trained. During that time, we requested and received extensions from all FOIA requests. However, they were not completed in 15 business days during this time. They were not late because an extension was received.

#### Workload Measures

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Conduct professional and expedient crime	scene response	s, collection, and storag	e of evidence				
Number of evidence items received	83,529	74,902	15,375	11,897	11,213	17,413	55,898
Number of crime scenes processed	6194	6005	312	1088	1792	1659	4539
Conduct timely forensic analysis							
Number of service requests from stakeholders	4387	4037	952	3662	756	701	5119
Number of CODIS database hits	260	185	12	13	6	23	42
Number of AFIS database entries	7990	3847	274	344	306	378	Waiting on Data
Number of CODIS database entries	770	402	No applicable incidents	No applicable incidents	No applicable incidents	0	0
Number of AFIS database hits	1828	931	140	195	98	168	461
Number of Gigabytes of data processed	123,331	101,307	15,565	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available
Number of items processed in	16,527	6090	No applicable	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available
Evidence-processing unit			incidents				
Provide timely testing of pathogens of pub	lic health signific	cance					
Number of validation efforts performed	24	31	Annual Measure	Annual Measure	Annual Measure	Annual Measure	19
Number of Proficiency Tests performed	62	86	26	22	80	17	119
Number of tests performed for each recieved public health sample	85,377	229,770	11,829	36,414	21,952	21,571	79,937
Monitor quality compliance with certificati	on requirements	5					
Number of Quality Corrective Action Requests opened	74	93	4	4	41	7	52
Number of stakeholder complaints received	1	0	No applicable incidents	No applicable incidents	No applicable incidents	0	0
Number of internal audits	12	17	No applicable incidents	No applicable incidents	9	0	9
Offer training curriculum for professional	development						
Number of training hours completed by	4440	4790	1346.8	884.5	874.4	1711.9	3470.8
employees							
Oversee the laboratory environment is bot	th safe and healt	hy for staff					
Number of safety incidents reported	27	15	No applicable	No applicable	2	1	3
'			incidents	incidents			
Efficiently procure vital services and resou	rces						
Number of requisitions submitted into	296	283	114	57	58	114	229
PASS	•		·		-	•	•
Ensures all IT systems and databases are o	perational and s	ecure for scientists and	agency personnel to delive	er reports and services	to stakeholders		
Number of IT service requests received	2013	1348	407	336	235	368	939
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#### Workload Measures (continued)

Reasure	<12020	< 1-20 <sup>2</sup>	Ed Joseph Ca	<42022 Q2	K 2522 05	EL JOST CA	€ <sup>4</sup> 2022	
Provide legal advice to the agency and facilitate stakeholder engagement								
Number of discovery requests received	964	439	83	153	127	118	398	
Number of MOA/MOUs the agency	8	21	13	4	4	4	12	
enters into with other agencies								
Number of FOIA requests received	34	37	10	4	5	6	15	
Responsible for human capital management and recruitment for DFS and serves as liaison to external entities								
Number of employees on-boarded	25	50	8	3	9	20	32	