



Crime Lab News

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A Message from our Director

Over the past several months we've all been affected by COVID-19 in one way or another. Daycare and school closures; balancing work schedules by doing shift-work in order to social distance; conferences and meetings cancelled; learning to use GoToMeeting and Zoom to interact with colleagues; vacations postponed; learning how to wear masks; and managing everyday life which has required us all to think and act differently.



The one thing that has remained constant is the dedication of all the Crime Lab staff who have pulled together as a team to ensure that our criminal justice partners and families that have been affected by crime continue to receive the services that the laboratory provides—reports of our analysis and the timely completion of death certificates that victims of crime desperately need.

I'm very proud of all of our staff and honored to lead such an incredible group of people.

Current Turn Around Times

Drug Chemistry

▪ Little Rock	2.3 months
▪ Hope	2 months
▪ Lowell	5 months

Toxicology

▪ DUI/DWI (LR)	27 days
▪ DUI/DWI (Lowell)	48 days
▪ Coroner (LR)	23 days
▪ Coroner (Lowell)	34 days
▪ Medical Examiner	29 days

Latent Prints

▪ Comparisons (Homicide)	30 days
▪ Comparisons (Other)	30 days

Firearms

▪ Comparisons (Homicide)	6 months
▪ Comparisons (Other)	36 months
▪ NIBIN	15 days

Digital Evidence

▪ Computers	5 months
▪ Mobile Devices	5 months

Trace Evidence

▪ Ignitable Liquids	30 days
▪ Primer GSR	30 days

Serology

▪ Homicide	30 days
▪ Sexual Assault	30 days
▪ Property/Other	16 Months

DNA

▪ Homicide	6 months
▪ Sexual Assault Kits	4 months
▪ Property/Other	36 months

COVID-19 Response to Arkansas Court Testimony

The Arkansas State Crime Laboratory has been actively utilizing video testimony across the state to ensure the safety of both our staff and court personnel. Video testimony, when authorized, saves the laboratory countless of hours in travel to and from court, allowing our analysts to remain on the bench, processing cases and reducing the backlog. We appreciate the consideration of the criminal justice personnel in making video testimony possible.

Did I mention that this is **Free**?



Making a Difference

Emma Fort, Christopher Glaze, Taylor Sharp, and Jonathan Kordsmeier stepped out of their typical routine at the ASCL and put themselves on the front lines. These four DNA analysts helped serve our community by volunteering to conduct COVID-19 tests at the Arkansas Department of Health. This is just one example of teamwork and how State agencies unite to assist during the pandemic!



Reminder: ASCL Online Training Classes Offered on ACADIS

The following classes are offered online through ACADIS:

- DNA & CODIS (1 hour)
- Evidence Packaging, SA Kit Tracking, and Body Submission (2 hours)
- Firearms & Latent Prints (1 hours)
- Forensic Chemistry & Toxicology (2 hours)

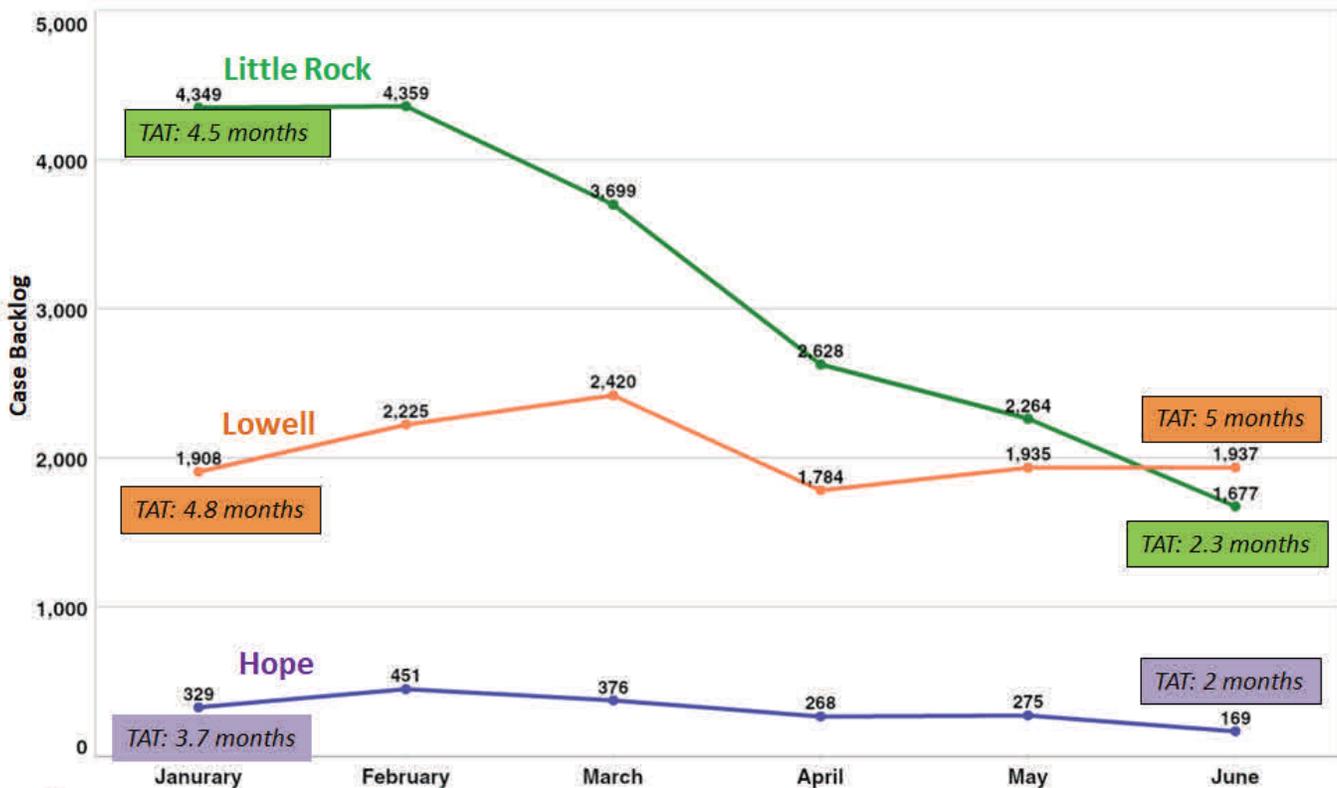
ASCL Subpoena Policy

The Arkansas State Crime Laboratory provides forensic services to all 75 counties across Arkansas. Last year alone, the laboratory received 30,115 cases, of which 22,063 (~74%) were drug submissions.

The turn-around-time to receive a report from the Drug section is approximately 2.3 months in Little Rock, 5 months in Lowell, and 2 months in Hope. All cases received are worked in chronological order unless there are circumstances which require the case to be prioritized.

Due to the number of subpoenas received each year for the Drug section, the laboratory is initiating the following policy to ensure that all 23 Judicial Districts are receiving consistent service.

When a subpoena is issued to the Drug section for a case in which a chemist has not been assigned to perform the work and the court date is greater than 60 days, the subpoena will not get assigned to a specific chemist until 60 days prior to the court date. Once a chemist is assigned to the subpoena, the position (1st, 2nd, or 3rd out) will be placed on that chemist’s calendar. This will ensure that cases are being worked in chronological order.



New Testing Techniques for Plant Materials and Oils

The Forensic Chemistry section has the ability to perform semi-quantitation and full quantitation on certain plant material and oils suspected to contain $\Delta 9$ -THC.

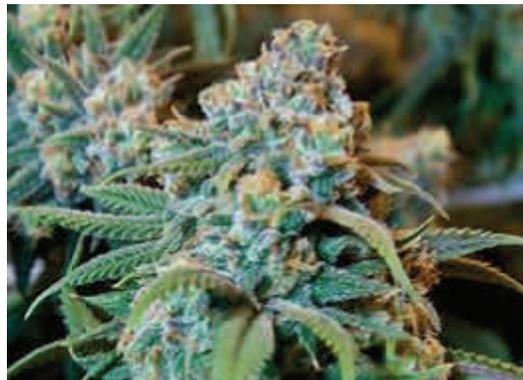
SEMI-QUANTITATIVE TESTING

Semi-quantitative testing will be performed to provide general guidance on whether a sample has a response of less than or greater than 1% $\Delta 9$ -THC. This testing will typically be performed on cases:

- Containing 14 grams or more of plant material that substantiates the highest charge
- Oils suspected to contain $\Delta 9$ -THC/CBD (not in vape cartridges) with a weight of at least 14 grams

SEMI-QUANTITATIVE REPORTING

- Plant material with response $\geq 1\%$ $\Delta 9$ -THC, and where testing criteria for reporting marijuana have been met, will be reported as marijuana with a footnote indicating the testing process.
- Oils with a response $\geq 1\%$ $\Delta 9$ -THC, and where the testing criteria for reporting $\Delta 9$ -THC have been met, will be reported listing the components contained in the sample in order of abundance (from a qualitative test) with a footnote indicating that the response was $\geq 1\%$ $\Delta 9$ -THC .
- Plant material & Oils with a response $<1\%$ $\Delta 9$ -THC, and where the testing criteria for reporting $\Delta 9$ -THC have been met, will be reported listing the components contained in the sample in order of abundance (from a qualitative test) with a footnote indicating that the response was $<1\%$ $\Delta 9$ -THC .



Apple iPhones—Guidance from the Digital Evidence Section

With the advancements in mobile device security, it is advantageous to acquire the device with as little changes to the state it was found in, as possible. Some guidelines to consider are as follows:

- If the phone is on when you encounter it, keep it powered on even if it is locked at the time.
- Unless you know what the passcode is, **do not** try to guess the passcode.
- If in doubt, call the Digital Evidence Section for information

If a phone is on when you encounter it, it may be in *Before First Unlock* (BFU) state. Under these circumstances, we can perform a Partial File System extraction, with a possible brute force passcode attack. There is a chance that the phone is in *After First Unlock* (AFU) state. This is a much more valuable condition for extraction, as we can perform a Full File System extraction and acquire user generated data.

Guessing passcodes that are incorrect can return a phone that is in AFU state to BFU state, thereby severely truncating our examination results.

Please contact Adam Wilson, Digital Evidence Section Chief, with any questions: adam.wilson@crimelab.arkansas.gov or 501-683-6235

Known and/or Elimination Prints for Comparison

- Known and/or elimination finger/palm prints submitted for comparison must be submitted on standard tenprint or major case print cards
 - ⇒ These prints should be fully rolled and contain as much of the subject's identifying information as possible (e.g. DOB, SSN, SID, etc.)
 - ⇒ All fingers **must** be clearly present to enable a comparison
- Tenprint cards have precise and labeled margins for each impression, eliminating any confusion



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Mission



To provide quality forensic services to the criminal justice community and the State of Arkansas in a timeframe amenable to our customers.

Vision



Support public safety by providing analytical results within thirty days of submission.



Clear Communication: Communicate often, promptly, professionally and in person when appropriate

Quality: Excellence, getting it right the first time, consistent performance, continuous improvement, taking pride in one's work

Professional Development: Growing and engaging employees through training, mentoring, and providing leadership opportunities

Safety: Providing a safe work environment and educating employees on safety practices

Accountability: Holding oneself and others responsible for productive and ethical behavior.

Teamwork: Having a common vision, ensuring cohesiveness, assisting one another, supporting other sections, putting others interests first and making decisions based on what is best for the laboratory

ASCL Performance Survey

Feedback from our customers is important in order to keep up with expectations. Continued feedback is necessary to remain aligned to goals, make important decisions, develop strategies, and improve relationships. Please take a moment to check out our **new** survey at the link below:

<https://forms.gle/ps49najmPKUeZ1aA>

A \$25 Amazon gift card is given out quarterly to one participant, so don't miss out! Below are just a few comments from our customers:

- "As always the staff was very receptive and very cordial."
- "Having a new unit (Lowell Lab) has been a great for the area."
- "I understand the wait time but wish the turn around on evidence was faster. All in all I think the crime lab does a great job."

