

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE COLLECTION KIT INSTRUCTIONS**

(For Healthcare Personnel)

Healthcare facilities may choose to use either the Department of Health (DOH) developed paperwork that can be downloaded from the DOH website at [www.saform.health.pa.gov](http://www.saform.health.pa.gov) or their own forms of documentation, so long as all specifically required information necessary for forensic processing is included.

**STOP! Failure to thoroughly and accurately complete all information requested may jeopardize the successful investigation and prosecution of a chargeable crime.**

This kit is designed to assist the examiner in the collection of evidentiary specimens for analysis by an approved Forensic Laboratory. The health care facility should not analyze any of the specimens/evidence collected in this kit. Any specimens required by the health care facility are to be collected with in-house supplies.

**Cap-Shure swabs are the replacement for the current swabs and boxes and will also be used in place of the buccal swab collector. To use Cap-Shure, open the tip protector cap and slide it down the swab stick. After swabbing, slide the cover back in place, snapping it closed. These ventilated caps permit normal air drying.**

**Lightly moistened swabs equal the use of one to two drops of distilled water added to cotton tip of swab.**

Victims are entitled to a sexual assault forensic examination regardless of whether or not they speak or cooperate with law enforcement at the time of examination. Costs of the forensic rape examination and medications provided as a direct result of a sexual offense shall not be charged to the victim. There are treatment and testing options that may not be covered by the forensic rape examination (FRE) through Victims Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP). Prior to the examination, the health care facility should inform the victim of the availability of a sexual assault crisis center counselor, contact the counselor at the request of the victim, provide the victim an opportunity to consult with the counselor in person and in private while at the facility, and give the telephone number of the crisis center to the victim. If the local crisis center number is not available, call 1-888-772-7227.

Sexual assault is a legal matter for the court to decide and is not a medical diagnosis.

**RECOMMENDED TIME FRAMES FOR EVIDENCE COLLECTION\***

Type of Assault	Collection Time
Vaginal	Up to 120 hours (5 days)
Anal	Up to 72 hours (3 days)
Oral	Up to 24 hours (1 day)
Bite marks/saliva on skin	Up to 96 hours (4 days)
Unknown	Collect respective samples within the time frames listed above

\*Recommended time frames published in National Institute of Justice *National Best Practices for Sexual Assault Kits: A Multidisciplinary Approach* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, August 2017): <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/250384.pdf>

Due to increased sensitivity in DNA testing methods, additional measures are necessary to avoid contaminating specimens. Gloves must be worn by all healthcare providers in the collection and packaging of evidence and changed frequently. Masks should also be worn during the collection and packaging of intimate samples and swabs. The need for these precautions should be explained to the victim when collecting the evidence.

**STEP 1 CONSENT FOR COLLECTION AND RELEASE OF EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION FORM**

Fill out all information requested and have victim (or parent/guardian, if applicable) and witness sign where indicated.

**STEP 2 CLOTHING AND UNDERPANTS COLLECTION**

Note:

1. Wet or damp clothing should be air dried before packaging
2. If victim is not wearing the clothing worn at the time of the reported assault, collect only the items that are in direct contact with the victim's genital area
3. If victim changed clothing after assault, inform officer in charge so that the clothing worn at the time of the assault may be collected by law enforcement
4. Do not cut through any existing holes, rips or stains in victim's clothing
5. Do not shake out victim's clothing or microscopic evidence may be lost
6. If additional clothing bags are required use only new paper (grocery-type) bags
7. Do not put bags in kit

Unfold and place a clean bed sheet on floor. Instruct victim to stand in center of bed sheet and carefully disrobe. Standing on the bed sheet prevents contamination should any of the clothing items come in contact with the floor. Collect each item as removed and place in a separate Clothing bag. Collect victim's underpants and place in Underpants bag. Fold tops of bags and tape shut, then seal with evidence seals provided. Fill out all information requested on bag labels. Return bed sheet to healthcare facility laundry. If any item that may be considered evidence is present on the sheet after the victim removes their clothing, consider packaging the items in the STEP 4 miscellaneous collection envelopes.

**STEP 3 ORAL ASSAULT COLLECTION SAMPLES**

Note:

1. When collecting swabs from a mucosal (moist) surface there is a first swab and a second swab
2. When collecting swabs roll the cotton tip over the collection surface to maximize the surface area of the swab coming in contact with the area of potential trace evidence
3. Do not moisten swabs prior to sample collection

Remove all components from envelope. Using one swab, carefully swab the buccal area and gum line. Place "First Swab" label on the bottom of the swab stick. Carefully swab the buccal area and gum line a second time with the remaining swab.

Return swabs to the Step 3 Oral Assault Collection Samples envelope. Seal with tape or a label (do not lick) or utilize self-sealing envelope and fill out all information requested on envelope.

**STEP 4 MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTION**

Note:

- 1) When collecting swabs from a non-mucosal (dry) surface there is a wet swab followed by a dry swab
- 2) When collecting swabs roll the cotton tip over the collection surface to maximize the surface area of the swab coming in contact with the area of potential trace evidence
- 3) If available, it is recommended that an Alternate Light Source (ALS) be used in the following procedure

**(DEBRIS, DRIED SECRETIONS, TAMPON/SANITARY NAPKIN)**

**DEBRIS:** Remove folded paper sheet from envelope. Unfold and place on flat surface. Collect any foreign debris, such as dirt, fiber, hair, etc., and place in center of paper sheet. Refold paper in manner to retain debris. Label paper sheet with location of foreign debris found. Return folded paper sheet to the Step 4 Miscellaneous Collection envelope.

**TAMPON/SANITARY NAPKIN:** Remove wax bag from envelope. Collect the tampon/sanitary napkin and place on paper sheet from in-house stock. Allow tampon/sanitary napkin to air dry. Place tampon/sanitary napkin in wax bag and seal bag. Wax bag must be clearly labeled for identification purposes. Do not put in kit. Tampon/sanitary napkin must be packaged separately from kit to permit refrigeration or freezing of item.

**FORCEFUL CONTACT SWABBING:** Collect only if case scenario supports aggressive handling, such as strangulation. Remove swabs from envelope. Lightly moisten one swab with distilled water in kit and thoroughly swab the area of contact. Place “Wet Swab” label on the bottom of the swab stick. Using a dry swab, thoroughly swab the area of contact a second time. Label wet and dry swabs with “Forceful Contact” swab labels. Place both swabs in Step 4 envelope.

**DRIED SECRETIONS:** Remove swabs from envelope. Secretions such as dried semen, blood, saliva, etc. should be collected. Lightly moisten one swab with distilled water in kit and thoroughly swab the area of dried secretions. Place “Wet Swab” label on the bottom of the swab stick. Using a dry swab, thoroughly swab the area of dried secretions a second time. Label the location of swabs from which dried secretions samples were taken using blank labels and place them on the bottom of the wet and dry swab sticks. Place both swabs in Step 4 envelope. Follow the same procedure for additional dried secretions. If more swabs are needed, collect using in-house supplied swabs following the same procedure. Then return them to their original paper sleeve and label sleeve “Dried Secretions from \_\_\_\_\_” then place in Step 4 envelope. Note location(s) from which dried secretions sample(s) were taken on anatomical drawings on envelope. Seal with tape or a label (do not lick) or self-sealing envelope and fill out all information requested on envelope.

**STEP 5**

**FINGERNAIL SWABBINGS: Collect only if case scenario supports.**

Note:

1. When collecting swabs from a non-mucosal (dry) surface there is a wet swab followed by a dry swab
2. When collecting swabs roll the cotton tip over the collection surface to maximize the surface area of the swab coming in contact with the area of potential trace evidence

Remove all components from envelope. Lightly moisten one swab with distilled water in kit and swab the underside of each left-hand fingernail. Place “Wet Swab” label on bottom of the swab stick. Using a dry swab, swab the underside of each left-hand fingernail a second time. Place the “Left Hand” labels on the bottom of the wet and dry swab sticks. Follow the same collection and labeling procedure for right hand.

Return swabs to the Step 5 Fingernail Swabbings envelope. Seal with tape or a label (do not lick) or self-sealing envelope and fill out all information requested on envelope.

## STEP 6

### EXTERNAL GENITALIA COLLECTION SAMPLE

Note:

1. For female genitalia this collection has contact with mucosal (wet) and non-mucosal (dry) surfaces, follow the non-mucosal technique
2. When collecting swabs from a non-mucosal (dry) surface there is a wet swab followed by a dry swab
3. When collecting swabs roll the cotton tip over the collection surface to maximize the surface area of the swab coming in contact with the area of potential trace evidence

#### IF FEMALE GENITALIA:

Remove all components from envelope. Lightly moisten one swab with distilled water and thoroughly swab the vulva. This is a large area to swab, and it includes the mons pubis, labia majora, labia minora, the folds between the labia majora and minora, the clitoris, the urethra, the inner aspect of the labia minora, and the vestibule. Place "Wet Swab" label on the bottom of the swab stick. Using a dry swab, swab the entire area a second time. Place the "Vulva" labels on the bottom of the wet and dry swab sticks.

Return swabs to the Step 6 External Genitalia Collection Sample envelope. Seal with tape or a label (do not lick) or self-sealing envelope and fill out all information requested on envelope.

#### IF MALE GENITALIA:

Remove all components from envelope. Lightly moisten one swab with distilled water and thoroughly swab the glans and shaft of the penis. Place "Wet Swab" label on the bottom of the swab stick. Using a dry swab, thoroughly swab the glans and shaft of the penis a second time. Place the "Penis" labels on the bottom of the wet and dry swab sticks.

Using the second set of swabs, lightly moisten one swab with distilled water and thoroughly swab the scrotum. Place "Wet Swab" label on the bottom of the swab stick. Using a dry swab, thoroughly swab the scrotum a second time. Place the "Scrotum" labels on the bottom of the wet and dry swab sticks.

Return swabs to the Step 6 External Genitalia Collection Sample envelope. Seal with tape or a label (do not lick) or self-sealing envelope and fill out all information requested on envelope.

## STEP 7

### VAGINAL CONTACT/PENETRATION COLLECTION SAMPLES

Note: **DO NOT COLLECT ON PREPUBESCENT CHILDREN**

1. When collecting swabs from a mucosal (moist) surface there is a first swab and a second swab
2. When collecting swabs roll the cotton tip over the collection surface to maximize the surface area of the swab coming in contact with the area of potential trace evidence
3. Do not stain or chemically fix smear
4. If a condom is present, package in a plastic bag or container and clearly label. Do not put in kit. Condom must be packaged separately from kit to permit refrigeration or freezing of item.

Remove all components from envelope. Using one swab, thoroughly swab the vaginal vault. Place "First Swab" label on the bottom of the swab stick. Thoroughly swab the vaginal vault a second time with the remaining swab. With the labeled surface (black masked portion) facing up, use both swabs to prepare one smear (smear should be confined to the oval area on the slide). Allow smear to air dry. Place the "Vaginal" labels on the bottom of both swab sticks.

Using the second set of swabs provided, use one swab to swab the cervix thoroughly. Place "First Swab" label on the bottom of the swab stick. Thoroughly swab the cervix a second time with the remaining swab. Place the "Cervical" labels on the bottom of both swab sticks.

Return smear and swabs to the Step 7 Vaginal Contact/Penetration Collection Samples envelope. Seal with tape or a label (do not lick) or self-sealing envelope and fill out all information requested on envelope.

## STEP 8 PERIANAL/PERINEUM CONTACT COLLECTION SAMPLES

Note:

1. When collecting swabs from a non-mucosal (dry) surface there is a wet swab followed by a dry swab
2. When collecting swabs roll the cotton tip over the collection surface to maximize the surface area of the swab coming in contact with the area of potential trace evidence

### Perianal/Perineum Collection:

Remove all components from envelope. Lightly moisten one swab with distilled water in kit and thoroughly swab the perianal and perineal area. Place "Wet Swab" label on the bottom of the swab stick. Using a dry swab, thoroughly swab the perianal and perineal area a second time.

Return swabs to Step 8 Perianal/Perineum Contact Collection Samples envelope. Seal with tape or a label (do not lick) or self-sealing envelope and fill out all information requested on envelope.

## STEP 9 ANAL/RECTAL CONTACT/PENETRATION COLLECTION SAMPLES

Note: **COLLECT ONLY IF CASE SCENARIO SUPPORTS OR IF UNKNOWN**

1. When collecting swabs from a mucosal (moist) surface there is a first swab and a second swab
2. When collecting swabs roll the cotton tip over the collection surface to maximize the surface area of the swab coming in contact with the area of potential trace evidence
3. Do not stain or chemically fix smear
4. If a condom is present, package in a plastic bag or container and clearly label. Do not put in kit. Condom must be packaged separately from kit to permit refrigeration or freezing of item.
5. Rectal samples should only be collected by a trained healthcare provider with the use of an anoscope.

**Anal Collection:** Applying traction to the anal verge, carefully swab the anal sphincter using one swab. Be careful not to touch the anal verge tissues. Place "First Swab" label on the bottom of the swab stick. Carefully swab the anal sphincter a second time with the remaining swab. With the labeled surface (black masked portion) facing up, use both swabs to prepare one smear (the smear should be confined to the oval area on the slide). Place "Anal" labels on the bottom of both swab sticks.

**Rectal Collection:** If rectal samples are collected, use two dry swabs and follow the same procedure for smear preparation. Place "Rectal" labels on the bottom of both swab sticks.

Return smear and swabs to Step 9 Anal/Rectal Contact/Penetration Collection Samples envelope. Seal with tape or a label (do not lick) or self-sealing envelope and fill out all information requested on envelope.

**STEP 10 REFERENCE SAMPLE BUCCAL SWAB COLLECTION (For DNA Analysis)**

This collection should be done last to minimize risk of contamination from a foreign contributor. Have victim rinse their mouth thoroughly with water before swabbing.

Four (4) swabs will need to be collected. Swab the cotton tip on the buccal mucosa. Each swab should be swabbed up and down at least four (4) times (one up motion and one down motion is one time).

Return swabs to the Step 10 Reference Sample Buccal Swab Collection envelope. Seal with tape or a label (do not lick) or self-sealing envelope and fill out all information requested on envelope.

**STEP 11 TRANSFER OF EVIDENCE FORM**

Hand law enforcement the Step 11 form. Have the officer inventory all evidence and fill out all information requested on the form. Have law enforcement and examiner sign and date the form where indicated.

**FINAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- 1) Make sure all information requested on all forms, envelopes, and bag labels has been filled out completely.
- 2A) Retain copy of all forms for Medical Records and Law Enforcement.
- 2B) Place pages 1-8 of the documentation from medical examination in the Lab Copies of Forms envelope affixed to the bottom of the kit box. Seal with tape or a label (do not lick) or self-sealing envelope. Only pages 1-8 are needed by the lab. If forms do not easily fit inside the envelope, they should be placed inside the kit box.
- 2C) Give copy of appropriate forms to victim or victim's parent/guardian.
- 3) With the exception of sealed and labeled clothing, underpants, condom, and tampon/sanitary napkin bags, return all other evidence collection envelopes, bags, used or unused, to kit box.

NOTE: Only evidence requested should be placed in kit. Any specimens collected for other uses (e.g. blood or urine collected for toxicology testing) should not be placed in kit but should be sent to the appropriate laboratory for analysis.

- 4) Initial and affix red police evidence seals where indicated on box top.
- 5) Fill out all information requested on kit box top under "For Health Care Personnel," then affix biohazard label where indicated. If box lid has biohazard pre-printed this step is not necessary.
- 6) Hand sealed kit, sealed bags, and copies of forms to law enforcement.

NOTE: If law enforcement is not present at time of collection, placed sealed kit, sealed bags, and forms in locked area and hold for pick up by law enforcement (if bag contains tampon/sanitary napkin or other saturated item, place in a secure refrigerated area).

**FDA INSERT**  
**Important Information Regarding**  
**RE-3PA (Tri-Tech)**  
**PAAC100B (Sirchie)**

This product information sheet is included  
to comply with FDA Regulations

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO INSIDE OF KIT**

Expiration Date Information:

The expiration date on this product pertains only to specific components. Please check the expiration date on the following components. If any are beyond the expiration date, please replace with similar components from hospital stock.

28 Cap-Shure swabs

**\*Make sure all replacement swabs have the same lot number.**

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Intended Use:

Evidence collection from the victims of sexual assault

**Contents:**

Kit instructions sheet	Envelopes	Plastic slide mailers
Bags with labels affixed	Paper bindles	Labels
Microscope slides with labels affixed	Consent	Police evidence seal
Cap-Shure swabs	Distilled water	Do not tamper seals
Paper ruler	Transfer evidence form	Wax paper bag
SAEK Survey		

**Warnings and Precautions:**

Blood and other biological fluids should be handled and processed as if they are potentially infectious.

**Identification:**

Kit manufacturers will be responsible for adding a unique identifier and bar code. The unique identifiers provided by a manufacturer should use an alpha-numeric combination to prevent duplication by other manufacturers.

# Consent for Collection and Release of Evidence and Information

Name of Healthcare Facility \_\_\_\_\_

Healthcare Provider \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Patient Information:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I understand that hospitals and healthcare facilities must report certain crimes to law enforcement authorities in cases where a victim seeks medical care.</li> <li>I have been informed that Pennsylvania law provides that a victim of a sexual offense shall not be charged for the costs of a forensic rape examination. Options for billing for the forensic rape examination (FRE) will be provided. Components of a forensic medical examination are defined by the state. There are treatment and testing options that may not be covered by the FRE through <a href="#">Victims Compensation Assistance Program (VCAP)</a> or <a href="https://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Documents/VCAP%20Manual%202022.pdf">https://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Documents/VCAP%20Manual%202022.pdf</a></li> <li>The report of the examination and any evidence will be provided to law enforcement authorities based on reporting option selected.</li> <li>I understand information, including photographs, may be collected from this report for health and forensic purposes and provided to health authorities and other qualified persons with a valid educational or scientific interest for demographic and/or epidemiological studies.</li> </ul>		
<b>Patient Consent:</b> Please initial to the right to indicate agree/disagree for each statement	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
<b>Examination</b>		
I understand that a forensic examination may be conducted, with my consent, by a healthcare professional(s) to identify injury and collect/preserve evidence from the sexual assault per the events reported.		
I understand that I may withdraw consent at any time for any portion of the examination.		
<b>Photographs</b>		
I understand that collection of evidence may include digital images of injuries and that these images may include the genital area.		
<b>genital images</b>		
<b>non-genital images</b>		
Photographs may be released to investigating agencies as part of the report of the examination.		
<b>genital images</b>		
<b>non-genital images</b>		
<b>Reporting</b>		
I am 18 years or older and choosing an anonymous reporting option. (see Patient Consent Form Anonymous Report) <i>* Initial here if choosing an anonymous reporting option. This is the only initial needed in the reporting section, skip to signature below.</i>	*	
<b><i>If not choosing an anonymous reporting option, please initial the following:</i></b>		
I agree to talk to investigating agencies about the assault I'm being evaluated for today to file a report.		
I agree that law enforcement can send the evidence to a laboratory approved by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for CODIS access. The evidence will undergo testing analysis by the approved laboratory.		
I understand that I may withdraw consent for evidence testing by contacting the law enforcement agency investigating my case.		

I fully understand the nature of the examination and the fact that medical information gathered by this means may be used as evidence in a court of law or in connection with enforcement of public health rules and laws.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name (patient)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (patient)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Time

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian/Relationship



**PLACE IN KIT ALONG WITH SELF-ADDRESSED RETURN ENVELOPE  
FOR COMPLETION BY FORENSIC LABORATORY PERSONNEL**

**Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit (SAEK) Survey for Best Practice**

Thank you for taking a couple minutes to complete this survey to improve the practice of the Sexual Assault Examiners in PA. It is our goal to provide you with the most accurate evidence to assist in the analysis. To do this, your feedback is crucial. Specific information in the areas of needed improvement is extremely appreciated.

**Demographic Information**

1. Hospital Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Collector:
  - a. Nurse (credentials): \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Physician: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Date of Collection: \_\_\_\_\_

**Documentation**

1. History of Events available and clearly documented?  
 N/A  Yes  No - Improvements? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Pages 1 - 8 included for State Crime lab?  
 N/A  Yes  No
3. What additional information would have been helpful in the analysis of the SAEK?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**SAEK Packaging**

4. SAEK and envelopes labeled and sealed correctly?  
 N/A  Yes  No - Improvements on which item needed? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Swabs adequately dried?  
 N/A  Yes  No - Improvements? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Chain of custody maintained?  
 N/A  Yes  No - Improvements? \_\_\_\_\_

**Evidence Quality**

7. Microscope slides prepared correctly?  
 N/A  Yes  No - Improvements? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Adequate number and type of swabs collected based on history of events?  
 N/A  Yes  No - Improvements? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Buccal swab included in SAEK?  
 N/A  Yes  No - Improvements? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Specimens submitted were found to be consistent with the history of events?  
 N/A  Yes  No - Improvements? \_\_\_\_\_

Any additional constructive feedback is appreciated: \_\_\_\_\_

# Transfer of Evidence/Chain of Custody Form

On \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ (am or pm) the  
(Date) (Time)

following items were given to \_\_\_\_\_  
(Police Officer)

of the \_\_\_\_\_  
(Police Department)\_

## Evidence Received

Check YES or NO for all items (if no, explain)

Photographs: CD  YES  NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Other  YES  NO \_\_\_\_\_

Clothing (list): Shirt/Blouse  YES  NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Pants/Slacks  YES  NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Bra  YES  NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Underpants  YES  NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Jacket/Coat  YES  NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Other  YES  NO \_\_\_\_\_

Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit:  YES  NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Tampon/Sanitary napkin included:  YES  NO \_\_\_\_\_

Drug Facilitated Sexual Assault Kit:  YES  NO \_\_\_\_\_  
Copy of Forensic Medical Record:  YES\*  NO \_\_\_\_\_

**Copy of pages 1-8 must be included in the Evidence Kit for State Crime Lab**

Other evidence:  YES  NO

If YES, describe: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm

To: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm

From: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm

To: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm