

SWGFAST

Training to Competency for Latent Print Examiners

This outline provides the recommended training program to achieve competency in friction ridge examination. The student must demonstrate knowledge of required objectives by passing written tests and/or practical exercises, and by communicating an understanding of the objectives and underlying principles. It is also strongly recommended that students demonstrate knowledge of supplemental objectives.

1. Principles and Foundations

1.1 Required Objectives

- 1.1.1 An understanding of the basic foundations for friction ridge examination (permanence and individuality) as a means of identification.
- 1.1.2 An understanding of the biology/physiology of friction ridge skin.
- 1.1.3 An understanding of scientific methodology and its application to friction ridge examination.
- 1.1.4 A knowledge of the history of fingerprints.

1.2 Supplemental Objectives

- 1.2.1 An understanding of early methods of personal identification, such as scars, marks, and tattoos.
- 1.2.2 An understanding of personal identification methods other than friction ridge skin, e.g., iris scan, hand geometry, flexion creases.
- 1.2.3 An understanding of fingerprints, palm prints, and footprints for criminal and civil applications.
- 1.2.4 An understanding of the applications of friction ridge impressions for manual and/or automated repositories for 'single print' and 'unidentified latent prints'.

2. Friction Ridge Pattern Recognition and Interpretation

2.1 Required Objectives

- 2.1.1 An understanding of common terminology and definitions associated with friction ridge pattern recognition (arch, loop, whorl).
- 2.1.2 An understanding of pattern recognition and interpretation associated with operational needs of the individual agency.
- 2.1.3 An understanding of friction ridge formations as they relate to recognition, interpretation and individualization.

- 2.2 Supplemental Objective
 - 2.2.1 An understanding of various classification systems (definitions and formulas).
- 3. Friction Ridge Examination (Analysis, Comparison, Evaluation and Verification)
 - 3.1 Required Objectives
 - 3.1.1 An understanding of the individual friction ridge structure (i.e., continuity, texture, pore, and edge definition) for determining the existence of individualizing details.
 - 3.1.2 The ability to analyze friction ridge details to determine the value for comparison.
 - 3.1.3 The ability to recognize and utilize friction ridge flow, scars, creases, and other friction ridge details for supporting the examination.
 - 3.1.4 The ability to recognize and properly determine, when possible, the area from which the friction ridges originated.
 - 3.1.5 The knowledge to properly analyze friction ridge impressions and understand effects such as color reversal, pressure distortion, slippage, and overlays.
 - 3.1.6 The ability to render a proper conclusion of individualization (identification).
 - 3.1.7 An understanding of the necessity for verification by another qualified latent print examiner.
 - 3.1.8 A knowledge of various methods used to record known friction ridge impressions and the ability to properly evaluate ridge structure based on each method.
 - 3.1.9 A knowledge of the benefits associated with obtaining elimination prints and major case prints.
 - 3.1.10 The ability to recognize simultaneous or adjacent friction ridge impressions and their value for examination.
 - 3.1.11 An awareness that different policies and standards exist regarding friction ridge individualization (identification) in the United States and other countries.
- 4. Friction Ridge Detection and Preservation
 - 4.1 Required Objectives
 - 4.1.1 Knowledge of the generally accepted techniques for the detection and visualization of friction ridge impressions.

- 4.1.2 The ability to assess the effectiveness/results of applied techniques.
 - 4.1.3 An understanding of generally accepted preservation methods for friction ridge impressions.
- 5. Documentation of Examination
 - 5.1 Required Objectives
 - 5.1.1 An understanding of proper procedures for recording examination activities.
 - 5.1.1.1 Documentation must be in a form such that another qualified latent print examiner could evaluate what was done and replicate any comparisons.
 - 5.1.1.2 Documentation must include, as a minimum, case identifier(s), identity of examiner(s), date of activities, number and description of items for examination, results/conclusions of the examinations, and the identity of the verifier in the event an identification is made.
 - 5.1.1.3 A well documented chain of custody must be maintained.
- 6. Communication
 - 6.1 Required Objectives
 - 6.1.1 The ability to accurately reflect case examinations and conclusions in written form.
 - 6.1.2 The ability to present case examinations and conclusions.
- 7. Internship
 - 7.1 Required Objective
 - 7.1.1 The ability to practically demonstrate all phases of training under the direction and review of an instructor.
 - 7.2 Supplemental Objective
 - 7.2.1 Active participation in other educational sources, e.g., seminars, conferences, schools and lectures.
- 8. Instructor Qualifications
 - 8.1 Essential Qualifications
 - 8.1.1 An instructor must possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities for the courses being instructed.
 - 8.1.2 An instructor for the Friction Ridge Examination segment of training must have been accepted in court as an expert in friction ridge identification.
 - 8.2 Desirable Qualifications

- 8.2.1 An instructor should have completed training on how to be an instructor.
- 8.2.2 An instructor should have attained accreditation/certification from recognized institutions, agencies or professional organizations.
- 8.2.3 An instructor should have completed a structured training and internship program covering the same subject matter.