

APPENDIX A: HELP TEXT

This Help Text provides information to assist in answering items from the Census of Forensic Crime Labs. Please review this Help Text before completing the survey. Refer to the glossary in Appendix B for additional information on definitions of terms used in the survey.

This survey may be completed through an online, hard-copy paper, or PDF version. The web survey offers the following advantages: (a) secure encrypted system with jurisdiction-specific passwords, (b) ability to store information entered if the respondent exits the program, (c) help flags which prompt the survey administrators to contact the respondent to answer questions or concerns, (d) skip patterns which facilitate more efficient survey completion, (e) automatic calculation, and (f) identification of missing responses. You may find the web-based survey at <https://cfcl.urban.org>.

In completing the survey, please respond to ALL questions. On “Yes” or “No” questions, please mark the “No” response if this is the appropriate answer; do NOT only check off the “Yes” boxes and leave the remaining boxes blank. This will result in a follow-up phone call to clarify whether the answer is blank due to non-response or due to an intended “No” response.

If you have further questions or need to request your jurisdiction’s username and password for the online version, please contact the Census of Forensic Crime Labs’ help line at 202-261-5341.

SECTION A: ORGANIZATION

A1. Please mark the box which best describes the jurisdiction of your crime laboratory.

A2. A multiple laboratory system is composed of two or more physically separate facilities that are overseen by a single organization. Many state laboratories are part of a multiple laboratory system.

A3. Please enter the number of laboratories in this system, *including* your own laboratory.

A4. Please write in the name of the organization that has administrative control of your lab. Administrative control includes but is not limited to control of budget and other resources. If your laboratory is administratively independent enter the official name of your laboratory.

A5. Please write in the name of the jurisdiction or geographic area your laboratory serves.

A6. Please record the year (yyyy) in which the laboratory was established.

A7. Please record the year (yyyy) in which the present laboratory facility was constructed.

A8. Please answer “Yes” or “No” for whether there have been any *major* modifications or improvements in your facility since 2005.

A9. Please answer “Yes” or “No” to each general discipline in A9. If you select “Yes” to b., c., d., g., or j., mark each subdiscipline that your laboratory performs. Please note that “Forensic Biology” includes *both* biology screening and DNA analysis, and that “Latent Prints” does *not* include the input of 10-print records. If your laboratory has any additional

disciplines, please mark “Yes” for “Other” and write in the name of the discipline/s in the lines provided. Complete Appendix C for each of these additional disciplines.

SECTION B: BUDGET

If you are unable to provide budgetary information, please complete the remainder of the survey and have the budget section completed by your headquarters or another agency with administrative control.

B1. Please provide the budgetary information for your individual laboratory. If you are unable to provide lab-level financial data, you may report the budgetary information for the multiple laboratory system. However this **must** be noted by marking the appropriate box that states you are unable to provide individual-laboratory budgetary information. If you do not have access to budgetary information please contact an administrative entity that does. Indicate if you are reporting fiscal year 2009 or calendar year 2009 data. If you are providing fiscal year data, enter the beginning and end dates for your laboratory’s fiscal year.

Include all funding sources, including both hard sources (repetitive) and soft sources (one-time special project/purpose funding). Include personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, construction, consultants/contractors, indirect costs, and any other operating costs. Do *not* include costs of outsourcing to other facilities here. This will be asked in a later section.

If you are only able to obtain an estimated budget, please mark the “estimate” box. Please do not enter any dollar signs or commas.

B2. Please consult the attached Glossary, or review your Office of Justice Programs—Financial Guide 2009 Grant Budget Manual (available at www.ojp.gov/financialguide/) for definitions of each budget category. Enter “0” if no budget amount was dedicated to the category. Include fringe benefits within the “Personnel” category. Please do not enter any dollar signs or commas.

B3. Please select “Yes” or “No” for whether the laboratory received funding from grants or fees charged for laboratory services. If you have grant funding, please specify how much funding is received from each type of grant. Enter “0” if no funding was provided by the listed funding source. Please do not enter any dollar signs or commas.

SECTION C: STAFF

For the following questions, please report the personnel numbers and salary ranges for your laboratory. If you are a part of a multi-laboratory system report these values for your *individual* laboratory and NOT for the entire multi-laboratory system (e.g., the number of FTE analysts/examiners actually working in the individual laboratory not in the entire system).

C1. Report the number of *authorized* full-time equivalent positions as of December 31, 2009. An employee is full-time if they are expected to work 40 hours per week. Count each full-time position as 1 FTE. You may round to the nearest tenth for part-time employees. A position is authorized if the organization with administrative oversight has given permission

for that position, regardless of whether funding has been appropriated. Include all types of employees.

C2. Report the number of **funded** full-time equivalents (FTEs) as of December 31, 2009. An employee is full-time if they are expected to work 40 hours per week. Count each full-time position as 1 FTE. You may round to the nearest tenth for part-time employees. A position is funded if resources have been appropriated by the organization with administrative control of the laboratory. Funded positions are either filled or in the process of being filled. Include all types of employees.

C3. Report the number of **working** full-time equivalents as of December 31, 2009 for each employment category. An employee is full-time if they are expected to work 40 hours per week. Count each full-time position as 1 FTE. You may round to the nearest tenth for part-time employees. Include all types of employees. If you have employees that fit within multiple categories, use a decimal estimate of effort allocated to each type of assignment. Do NOT leave any categories blank; write "0" if you have no employees that fall within a certain category.

"Managerial" positions include any individual whose primary responsibilities are supervisory. An individual falls within the "Technical Support" category if they perform laboratory functions other than direct evidence examination (i.e. reagent preparation, instrument maintenance, sample preparation, etc.), whereas an individual falls within the "Clerical/Administrative Support" category if they perform functions related to the operation of the laboratory (e.g., quality assurance, IT) but do not interact with laboratory samples. "Analyst/Examiner" primary responsibilities include evidence examination, report generation and court testimony. If you have another type of position that is not listed, write in the name of the position category on the blank line provided and mark the number of working FTEs in each additional category. All categories should add up to the TOTAL FTEs (j.).

C4-C6. Please enter a number corresponding to the minimum and maximum allowable annual salary in U.S. dollars for each given position. If your laboratory does not use set salary scales, enter in the minimum and maximum salaries for that position or its closest equivalent during 2009. If employees in a particular position are paid a wage rather than a salary, please report the minimum and maximum pay the employees would receive if they worked 40 hours per week for an entire year and received no overtime. If, for a given position, the minimum and maximum salaries are equal, enter the same value in **both** columns. Please mark the "No such position" checkbox if, on December 31, 2009, your office had no employees occupying the given position and the position was not considered vacant.

Refer to the glossary for position definitions. An employee qualifies as a "Researcher Only" if his or her primary work is dedicated toward forensic science research. Report salary ranges for every listed position type that exists at your laboratory. Please note that part (d.) "Analyst/Examiner senior-level" refers to the highest level ONLY and excludes intermediate-level analysts. Do not enter dollar signs or commas. You may round the salary estimates to the nearest \$1000.

C7. Please mark "Yes" or "No" for whether any FTE hours were lost to involuntary, unpaid furlough in 2009.

SECTION D: WORKLOAD

D1. Please answer "Yes" or "No" for whether your laboratory has a Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS).

This may be any electronic system or software used to manage laboratory tasks. If you answer "No," skip to item D3.

D2. Please select the LIMS functions that your laboratory uses. Refer to the Glossary for explanations of the LIMS functions. If you use another LIMS function category that is not listed, mark "Yes" for the "Other" category and write in a description of the function in the blank line provided.

D3. This question asks about the number of cases your laboratory received between and including January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009. A case is defined as evidence submitted from a single criminal investigation. One case may include multiple evidence submissions and/or multiple discipline requests.

D4. This question asks about the number of cases that were within the laboratory for 30 days or more without submitting a report to the laboratory customer, as of January 1, 2010.

D5. Please answer "Yes" or "No" for each type of advanced technology or procedure your laboratory uses. Choose "Yes" if the technology is used for casework. Refer to the Glossary for explanations of these technologies.

D6. Please answer "Yes" or "No" for each type of database your laboratory uses (e.g., enter items, conduct searches, etc.)

D7. Please answer "Yes" or "No" for whether your lab entered or searched bullets within the NIBIN database in 2009. Mark "Not Applicable" if your lab does not perform functions related to Firearms and Toolmarks examination.

D8-D17. These questions ask about the workload for each general discipline listed in item A9. The subcategories for each discipline that you indicated will not be asked here. If your laboratory does not perform the discipline listed in a particular column, mark the box at the top of the column labeled "Discipline Not Applicable." A single case may result in multiple requests (e.g., one case may include a request for forensic biology AND a request for latent prints), and a single request may include multiple items (e.g., multiple DNA samples). Enter "0" if there were no requests during the specified time period. Do NOT include items outsourced to other laboratories in this section. For all applicable disciplines, report the following information:

(a) Number of pending requests awaiting analysis as of January 1, 2009. A pending request refers to any request submitted to the laboratory for which analysis has not yet started.

(b) Number of pending requests that were backlogged (requests unreported for 30 days or longer) as of January 1, 2009. Record the number of backlogged requests at the beginning of the target year on January 1, 2009. A request is backlogged if a report has not been generated within 30 days of submission to the laboratory.

(c) Total number of new requests received in 2009. Record the total number of requests received between and including January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009.

(d) Total number of requests completed in 2009. Record the total number of requests completed (analyzed and reported) between and including January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009.

(e) Number of FTEs it took to complete the requests (as reported in item d). Record the total number of FTEs working in that discipline between

and including January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009.

(f) Total number of all pending requests awaiting analysis as of January 1, 2010. A pending request refers to any request submitted to the laboratory for which analysis has not yet started.

(g) Number of these pending requests that were backlogged (requests held for 30 days or longer) as of January 1, 2010. Record the number of backlogged requests at the beginning of the target year on January 1, 2010. A request is backlogged if a report has not been generated within 30 days of submission to the laboratory

(h) Current average turnaround time for requests. Determine the average amount of days it takes for your laboratory's staff to complete a request, from the time the sample is assigned to the time the report is completed. Round to the nearest whole day.

Part h. for the crime scene analysis discipline asks for average personnel response time rather than current average turnaround time. Report the average personnel response time in days, and round to the nearest whole day.

D18. This question is a subsection of D16. Please report the requested information about sexual assault evidence ONLY. Refer to the glossary for more information about how sexual assault evidence is defined. If your laboratory does not perform this type of analysis, please mark the "Not Applicable" box at the top of the top of the question and skip to D19.

D19-20. Please provide the requested information for convicted offender and arrestee reference samples submitted for inclusion in a database. Call the toll-free Help Line if you are unable to extract data separately for offender and arrestee samples. If your laboratory does not perform this type of analysis, please mark the "Not Applicable" box at the top of the top of the question and skip to the next appropriate question.

SECTION E: OUTSOURCING

E1. Please answer "Yes" or "No" on whether your laboratory outsourced the analysis of any type of evidence or sample at any point during the 2009 calendar year. If you answer "No," skip to item E4.

E2. Report the total amount of your laboratory's budget that was spent on outsourcing in 2009. Enter "0" if no financial resources were spent on outsourcing. Please do not enter any dollar signs or commas.

E3. Report the number of requests your laboratory outsourced during the 2009 calendar year for each discipline. Mark "Not Applicable" if your laboratory does not have the listed discipline. Enter "0" if your laboratory did not outsource any requests within a particular discipline. If you have a type of request that is not listed, write in a description of the request type in the blank line provided within the "Other" category. The TOTAL number of requests outsourced (o.) should equal the sum of the number of requests for each discipline (a.-n.).

E4. Please mark "Yes" or "No" for whether your laboratory received requests for analysis from other laboratories (e.g., other laboratories' outsourced samples). If you answer "No," skip to item F1.

E5. Report the number of requests your laboratory *received* from other laboratories (e.g., other laboratories' outsourced samples) during the 2009 calendar year for each discipline. Mark "Not Applicable" if your laboratory does not have the listed discipline. Enter "0" if your laboratory did not receive any requests within a particular discipline. If you have a type of request that is not listed, write in a description of the request type in the blank line provided within the "Other" category. The TOTAL number of requests outsourced (o.) should equal the sum of the number of requests for each discipline (a.-n.).

SECTION F: QUALITY ASSURANCE

F1. Please select "Yes" or "No" for whether your laboratory was accredited as of December 31, 2009. If you answer "Yes," skip to item F3.

F2. Please select "Yes" if your laboratory has submitted an application for accreditation and is in the process of being accredited. Answer "No" if you are not seeking accreditation or are preparing to submit an application but have not yet done so. If you answer "No," skip to item F4.

F3. Please select "Yes" or "No" for whether your lab had received accreditation or was in the application process for accreditation for each of the listed accrediting bodies. You may check more than one. Check "Other" and write in the accrediting body if your laboratory is accredited by an organization that is not listed here.

F4. Please answer "Yes" or "No" for whether analysts/examiners in your laboratory undergo proficiency testing. If you answer "No," skip to item F6.

F5. If you answered "Yes" to F4 please select the type of proficiency test the analysts/examiners undergo. Definitions are included in the question text. Mark "Yes" to all that apply.

F6. Please report the number of examiners/analysts which are externally certified by at least one of the listed organizations. Please do not report any examiners/analysts who are solely certified internally or certified by an unlisted organization only.

F7. List the number of requests one FTE examiner/analyst was expected to complete during a one year period in 2009 for each discipline. This number represents a managerial expectation and may be more or less than the number of requests actually completed. Mark the "Not Applicable" box if your laboratory does not have the specified discipline.

F8. Report the percentage of time spent, on average, on court testimony and related tasks for each listed position over a year-long period in 2009. Please include preparing for, traveling to, and providing court testimony. Mark "Not Applicable" if your laboratory did not have the listed position in 2009. Enter "0" if your laboratory has the listed position but those employees did not spend any time in 2009 on court testimony.

F9-F10. Report the percentage of time spent, on average, on receiving training (F9) or providing training (F10) for each listed position over a year-long period in 2009. Please include both initial and continuing training. Mark "Not Applicable" if your laboratory did not have the listed position in 2009. Enter "0" if your laboratory has the listed position but those employees did not spend any time in 2009 on training.

F11. Please answer "Yes" or "No" for whether your laboratory has resources specifically dedicated for research, for example

work-hours or funding dedicated specifically to supporting research (e.g., supplies, salaries, etc.).

SECTION G: CURRENT ISSUES

G1. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being a significant increase and 5 being a significant decrease, describe any observed changes in the demands on laboratory resources during 2009. Enter 3 if there has been no observable change in the demands. Enter 0 ("Not Applicable") if your laboratory does not perform the listed function.

SECTION H: FEEDBACK AND SUBMISSION

H1. Please write any comments you would like to share with the Bureau of Justice Statistics about (a) your survey responses, (b) the survey content or format, (c) the manner of administration of the survey, or (d) any other applicable comments.