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# CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES TESTING AND COLLECTION

## 8020.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to establish protocol for the handling, collection and booking of controlled substances.

## 8020.2 INTRODUCTION

Law enforcement officers frequently encounter controlled substances that have the potential for serious health risks if not properly handled. However, with the recent proliferation of Fentanyl and its analogs (i.e. Carfentanil), the risk of serious injury or death is much greater. Fentanyl is a highly toxic and easily transferable powerful opioid that poses a serious danger to personnel handling it. Fentanyl can be absorbed into the body by all means including injection, oral ingestion, contact with mucous membranes, inhalation and through skin contact. It can be manufactured in pill, powder, liquid and patch form and has also been found in Heroin and other drugs which makes identification difficult. Therefore, accidental exposure by first responders is a very real danger.

## 8020.3 GROSS FENTANYL EXPOSURE

In situations involving possible gross Fentanyl contamination, where there are signs of Fentanyl overdose and/or exposure risks are high, first responders should assess the environment, notify supervision and request the proper personnel and equipment. The Watch Commander should be contacted if any of the following are needed: the Orange County Fire Authority's Hazardous Materials Team, the Santa Ana Police Department's Narcotics Unit or the Regional Narcotic Suppression Program's Lab Response Team.

## 8020.4 CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES LOCATED IN THE FIELD

While the effects of Fentanyl can differ from person to person, it is important to remember exposure to an extremely small amount can have adverse and potentially deadly consequences. Due to the extreme toxicity of Fentanyl in all forms, the following protocols shall be followed in the handling, collection and booking of all controlled substances.

## 8020.5 FIELD TESTING

1. In all cases where Fentanyl is suspected, no presumptive test kit shall be performed in the field. The substance shall be booked according the procedures outlined below in section 8020.7 and 8020.8.
2. Misdemeanor charge - Personnel should not conduct a presumptive field test of any controlled substances when the involved charge is a misdemeanor.
3. Felony charge – If the involved charge is a felony and an articulable need to test the substance exists, presumptive field tests can be completed at the officer's discretion prior to packaging and sending to the lab for evaluation. If presumptive testing is

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deemed necessary, **personnel are strongly encouraged to conduct the field testing with a partner present.**

### 8020.6 COLLECTION/HANDLING PROCEDURES

1. Communicate with other first responders and emergency personnel when an unknown substance is present.
2. When possible, all controlled substances should be collected with two officers present. Nasal Naloxone should be readily available.
3. The handling officer should don PPE, consisting of a minimum of two (2) pair of nitrile gloves, face mask (N95) and eye protection.

### 8020.7 PACKAGING PROCEDURES

1. All narcotics and other unknown substances will be packaged in a sealed, clear plastic ziploc baggie, which shall then be placed in a second, sealed Ziploc baggie (or clear plastic heat sealed bags of appropriate size). The evidence should then be placed into an Evidence envelope and sealed.
  - A. Exception: Plant material will mold in plastic and therefore can be placed in paper bags and/or envelopes.)
2. When removing PPE, pull off the outer set of gloves before touching anything else. Once the outer gloves are off, you can then remove the rest of your PPE, removing the second set of gloves last.
3. All PPE utilized during the collection of any suspected controlled substances shall be placed into the first responder red disposal bag (included in testing kit), tied up and disposed of at the police department.
  - A. Exception: If the controlled substance is suspected to be Fentanyl or if any of the controlled substance comes into contact with the PPE, place PPE into a red disposal bag and dispose of in the biohazard disposal bin located in the dry locker.
4. All suspected controlled substances shall be packaged in the field prior to transportation to the department to minimize the risk of exposure.
5. All controlled substances shall be transported in vehicle trunks or in the rear cargo area of SUV's.
6. Any substance believed to contain Fentanyl shall be immediately booked into evidence and a large neon sticker "Fentanyl Suspected" attached to the package.
  - A. In addition to the primary package, evidence suspected to be Fentanyl (or a similar toxic substance) must be contained in a least two plastic bags.
  - B. If Fentanyl or a similar toxic substance is suspected, it must be noted on the WRCS evidence request and documented on the evidence whenever possible
7. All large item cases of 400 grams or more, including kilos, must be in plastic ziplocs or heat seal bags prior to placement in boxes or paper bags.

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### 8020.8 EXPOSURE PROCEDURES

1. Exposure: Fentanyl can be ingested orally or inhaled through the nose. It can also be absorbed through the skin or eyes.
2. Symptoms: The onset of overdose symptoms due to Fentanyl exposure usually occurs within minutes. Symptoms include respiratory depression, drowsiness, sedation, disorientation, pinpoint pupils, skin rash and clammy skin.
3. Immediate Action: If exposure occurs move exposed individual from the contaminated environment (fresh air), call EMS, and immediately wash the exposed area of the individual with soap and water.
4. Medical Intervention: Seek medical attention and monitor victim. Be prepared to administer nasal Naloxone. If the exposed individual exhibits overdose symptoms, immediately administer nasal Naloxone which is proven to be effective in counteracting Fentanyl exposure. Be prepared to administer additional doses of nasal Naloxone every 2-3 minutes and perform CPR if necessary until EMS arrives or until the victim is breathing on their own for at least 15 minutes.
5. If you believe you have been exposed to Fentanyl, notify your supervisor immediately.

### 8020.9 EXAMPLES OF FENTANYL



### 8020.10 FILING PROCEDURES

The following procedures need to be followed to ensure these cases are filed by the District Attorney's Office:

#### 8020.10.1 MISDEMEANOR VIOLATIONS - CITATIONS AND BOOKINGS

The OC District Attorney's Office has provided guidance in the following area:

If the officer is unable to determine the exact type of controlled substance (i.e. Methamphetamine or Cocaine) being collected, list both violations on the citation. The assigned Deputy District Attorney can amend the complaint after the forensic analysis has been completed.

1. Document your observations and provide a detailed description of the suspected narcotic (shape/appearance/obvious strong odor emitting from a distance)
2. Record any admission of the substance being a narcotic by the suspect or any witness
3. List your training and experience related to narcotics
4. If the arresting officer has limited training and experience, another officer with more experience should identify the substance

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5. Submit an OCSD Forensic Science Services request for any substance(s) you believe to be present

### 8020.10.2 FELONY VIOLATIONS

1. Document your observations and provide a detailed description of the suspected narcotic (shape/appearance/obvious strong odor emitting from a distance)
2. If a presumptive field test for narcotics was completed, describe the test kit used and result
  - A. **Personnel conducting presumptive testing and strongly encouraged to work with a partner**
3. Document your training and experience as it relates to the felony violation (i.e. sales of narcotics)
4. Record any admission of the substance being a narcotic by the suspect or any witness
5. List your training and experience related to narcotics
6. If the arresting officer has limited training and experience, another officer with more experience should identify the substance
7. Submit an OCSD Forensic Science Services request for any substance(s) you believe to be present
8. If additional expertise is needed, the Watch Commander may contact the Special Investigations Commander to determine if additional personnel are required