WEST NORRITON TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Subject: Sexual Assault Testing and Evidence Collection		Policy # 4.14.1
Accreditation 4.14.1		
Effective Date: May 23, 2017	Revised Date:	
By Authority Of: Chief A. Dale Mabry	Signature: ADMabry	

4.14.1 SEXUAL ASSAULT TESTING AND EVIDENCE COLLECTION

A. POLICY:

It is the policy of the West Norriton Township Police Department to comply with the requirements of the Sexual Assault Testing and Collection Act (SATEC), PA Title 35, §§ 10172.1 – 10172.4, otherwise known as Act 27 of 2015.

B. PURPOSE:

It is the purpose of this policy to ensure that the West Norriton Township Police Department appropriately and timely delivers sexual assault kits, often referred to as "rape kits," to a laboratory for testing. This practice will prevent the unnecessary backlog of untested sexual assault kits and will further the investigatory process to ensure the identification of involved person(s).

C. PROCEDURE:

1. Whenever the West Norriton Township Police Department is made aware that a sexual assault collection kit exists pertaining to any incident which occurs within West Norriton Township, a member of the Department shall take possession of the kit within 72 hours of being notified of its existence.

2. In all cases in which the victim of sexual assault, or a victim advocate acting at the victim's direction has provided written notice of consent to forensic testing, the West Norriton Township Police Department shall submit the sexual assault kit evidence awaiting testing to an approved laboratory within 15 days for testing.

3. In all cases in which the victim of sexual assault has not provided consent to forensic testing, the sexual assault kit evidence shall be preserved and stored for a period of no less than two years, unless consent is provided before that period.

4. The sexual assault kit shall be stored in compliance with the policy developed as per Act 27. The Pennsylvania Bulletin, 46 Pa.B. 7927, dated 12/17/2016, outlines procedures for storage which shall be followed by the West Norriton Township Police Department. The following best practices for the storage and preservation of sexual assault evidence have been identified:

Long Term Storage Conditions Matrix:

Type of Evidence:	Frozen:	Refrigerated:	Temperature Controlled:	Room Temperature:
Liquid Blood	Never	Best	-----	-----
Urine	Best	-----	-----	-----
Dry biological stained item	-----	-----	Best	-----
Hair	-----	-----	Best	Acceptable
Swabs with biological material	-----	-----	Best (dried)	-----
Buccal swabs	-----	-----	Best	-----
DNA extracts	Best (liquid)	Acceptable (liquid)	Acceptable (liquid)	-----
Wet items (if they cannot be dried)	Best	Acceptable	-----	-----

Definitions:

Frozen: Temperature is maintained thermostatically at or below -10°C (14°F)
Refrigerated: Temperature is maintained thermostatically between 2°C and 8°C (36°F and 46°F) with less than 25% humidity.
Temperature Controlled: Temperature is maintained thermostatically between 15.5°C and 24°C (60°F and 75°F) with less than 60% humidity.
Room Temperature: Temperature is equal to the ambient temperature of its surroundings; storage area may lack temperatures and humidity control methods.

5. An annual report shall be filed each year as per the requirements of the Pennsylvania State Police. Act 27 requires that each law enforcement agency report any backlogged evidence to the Pennsylvania State Police prior to January 31.