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MEMO TO: All Law Enforcement Agencies

FROM: Office of Attorney General
Crime Laboratory Division

DATE: February 10, 2005

REGARDING: Syringe Submission Update

This memo is an update to the March 11, 1998 memo regarding syringes. The Crime Laboratory Division will no longer accept syringes suspected of being used to inject drugs.

This policy is in direct response to the laboratory's concern with the exposure of its staff to blood borne pathogens. Intravenous drug abusers constitute a high proportion of blood borne pathogen infected individuals. Shared needles and syringes are known routes of transmission of blood borne pathogens.

Agencies and officers handling this type of evidence should exercise caution to avoid needle sticks. Syringes may be rinsed with distilled water into a clean container which can be submitted to the laboratory for analysis. If necessary, the laboratory will provide a vial into which the syringe can be rinsed.

Any decisions regarding exceptions to this policy will be made by the laboratory on a case by case basis. If you have any questions or need further assistance please contact the Crime Laboratory Division.