

TEXAS FORENSIC SCIENCE COMMISSION

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

December 2024–November 2025



TEXAS FORENSIC SCIENCE COMMISSION
FOURTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT
TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction and Background.....	3
II.	Forensic Science Commission Members and Budget.....	4
	A. <i>Appointments to Date</i>	
	B. <i>Annual Budget</i>	
III.	Summary of Complaints and Disclosures.....	6
	A. <i>Complaint/Disclosure Tally</i>	
	B. <i>Complaint/Disclosure Screening Process</i>	
IV.	Final Investigative Reports Issued from December 1, 2024, to November 30, 2025....	8
V.	Forensic Analyst Licensing Developments.....	8
	A. <i>New License Advisory Committee Appointments</i>	
	B. <i>Continuation of New Voluntary License Disciplines</i>	
VI.	Forensic Development/Training Initiatives.....	9
	A. <i>DNA Mixture Trainings</i>	
	B. <i>Firearms Working Group</i>	
	C. <i>Statewide Taskforce on Rapid DNA</i>	
	D. <i>Other Presentations/Forensic Development</i>	
VII.	Additional Items Required in Annual Report by Statute.....	12
	A. <i>Accreditation Update</i>	
	B. <i>Forensic Analysis Definition</i>	
	C. <i>Developments in Forensic Science Made or Used in Other State or Federal</i> <i>Investigations and Related Commission Activities</i>	
	D. <i>Other Relevant Information</i>	
	E. <i>Participation in Crime Lab Records Connect Discovery Portal</i>	

EXHIBIT LIST

Exhibit A	Copy of Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Article 38.01
Exhibit B	FY2026 Budget Plan
Exhibit C	Complaint/Disclosure Spreadsheet

I. Introduction and Background

This report covers Texas Forensic Science Commission (“Commission” or “FSC”) activities from December 1, 2024, through November 30, 2025. The Commission is administratively attached to the Office of Court Administration “OCA”¹ which publishes an annual report including a section on the Forensic Science Commission. The OCA’s annual report may be found [here](#).

The Texas Legislature created the Commission during the 79th Legislative Session by passing House Bill 1068. HB 1068 amended the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure to add Article 38.01, which describes the composition and authority of the Commission. The Commission is required to investigate allegations of professional negligence or professional misconduct that would substantially affect the integrity of the results of a forensic analysis, examination, or test and related testimony that is conducted by a crime laboratory.² The Legislature also requires the Commission to develop and implement a reporting system through which a crime laboratory may report professional negligence or professional misconduct.³ During subsequent legislative sessions, the Legislature further amended the Code of Criminal Procedure to clarify and expand the Commission’s jurisdictional responsibilities to include oversight of the crime laboratory accreditation and forensic analyst licensing programs.⁴ The 87th Legislature further required the Commission to adopt and publish a Code of Professional Responsibility to regulate the conduct of forensic analysts and crime laboratory managers subject to the Commission’s jurisdiction.⁵ The 89th Legislature required OCA and the Commission to establish and administer the Texas Forensic Analyst Apprenticeship Pilot Program (TFAAPP) to address the growing need for forensic science

¹ Tex Code Crim. Proc. art. 38.01 § 9.

² *Id.* at 38.01 § 4(a)(3)(A)-(C).

³ *Id.* at § 4(a)(1).

⁴ *Id.* at §§ 4-a, 4-d.

⁵ *Id.* at § 3-b.

professionals in the state. The Commission is also actively engaged in various forensic development initiatives and works collaboratively with stakeholders in the criminal justice system to improve education and training in forensic science and the law. For a complete historical perspective on the creation and evolution of the Commission, please see Section II of the Commission's first annual report, which may be obtained on the Commission's website [here](#).

II. Forensic Science Commission Members and Budget

A. Appointments to Date

To date, the FSC has had 34 different members and currently has 7 full-time employees. Following is a table providing appointment and expiration dates for current members as of November 30, 2025, as well as the basis for each appointment.

Current Members	Original Appointment Date	Basis for Appointment	Expiration Date
Jeffrey Barnard, MD <i>Presiding Officer</i>	10/31/2011	University of Texas (Dallas) Art 38.01, Section 3(a)(4)	09/01/2025 (holdover)
Erika Ziemak, MS	09/20/2023	Forensic Science Expertise (Biology/DNA) Article 38.01, Section 3(a)(1)	09/01/2025 (holdover)
Patrick Buzzini, Ph.D.	04/04/2019	Sam Houston State University Article 38.01. Section 3(a)(8)	09/01/2026
Mark Daniel, J.D.	11/28/2016	Texas Criminal Defense Lawyer's Association Article 38.01, Section 3(a)(3)	09/01/2025 (holdover)

Stacey Mitchell, Ph.D.	05/08/2025	Texas A&M Faculty Article 38.01, Section 3(a)(5)	09/01/2026
Jasmine Drake, Ph.D.	11/28/2016	Texas Southern University Article 38.01, Section 3(a)(6)	09/01/2026
Michael Coble, Ph.D.	11/19/2020	UNTHSC/CHI Director— Missing Persons DNA Article 38.01, Section 3(a)(7)	09/01/2026
Sarah Kerrigan, Ph.D.	11/28/2016	Forensic Science Expertise (Toxicology) Article 38.01, Section 3(a)(1)	09/01/2025 (holdover)
Jarvis Parsons, J.D.	11/28/2016	Texas District & County Attorney’s Association, Brazos County District Attorney Article 38.01, Section 3(a)(2).	09/01/2025 (holdover)

B. Annual Budget

The FSC’s FY2025 annual budget was \$553,996 (general revenue) with an additional \$162,209.88 in collected licensing program fees (including any unexpended balance and licensing revenue carryover from FY2024 or previous fiscal years that was available for use in FY2025). The FSC’s adopted budget for FY2026 is \$1,031,369 with a projected \$134,000 in collected licensing program fees and including an increase in funding from the Legislature. A copy of the FY2026 projected budget summary is attached as **Exhibit B**. The Commission will dedicate funds to the following critical priorities during FY2026: (1) funding of staff salary and overhead, including a newly hired staff scientific program coordinator, a position created and funded by the 89th Legislature; (2) complaint and disclosure investigative activities; (3) management and

administration of the crime laboratory accreditation program; (4) management and administration of the forensic analyst licensing program; (5) discipline-specific reviews and related training and forensic education initiatives; (6) development and administration of a forensic analyst apprenticeship program as mandated and funded by the 89th Legislature; and (7) forensic development initiatives, including statewide trainings for crime laboratory personnel and other criminal justice stakeholders.

III. Summary of Complaints and Self-Disclosures

A. Complaint/Disclosure Tally

Commission staff receives complaints from a range of sources, including but not limited to attorneys (both defense and prosecution), current inmates, state and national advocacy groups, former laboratory employees, other laboratories and interested members of the public. The Commission relies upon crime laboratories (primarily through its mandatory self-disclosure program), attorneys and interested members of the public to bring issues of concern to the Commission's attention. For a complete summary of the Commission's investigative jurisdiction, please see **Section II** of the Commission's seventh annual report.

To date, the Commission has received a total of 409 complaints and 416 self-disclosures and has disposed of 799 complaints and self-disclosures, either through dismissal, investigation, and release of a report, and/or referral to another agency. Of the total complaints and self-disclosures received (825), 76 were received from December 1, 2024, through November 30, 2025. The Commission currently has 26 open complaints/self-disclosures to be considered at the Commission's January 30, 2026, quarterly meeting. For a complete spreadsheet detailing the disposition and status of each complaint and self-disclosure applicable to this reporting period,

see Exhibit C. To access the Commission's historical (and current) database of all complaints and self-disclosures and corresponding dispositions, visit the following link: <https://fsc.texas.gov/>.

B. Complaint/Disclosure Screening Process

Complaint and self-disclosures submitted to the Commission may be considered initially through the Commission's Complaint/Disclosure Screening Committee (CSC). The chair of the CSC presents the complaints and self-disclosures to the Commission with a recommendation for disposition. The Commission considers and deliberates on each complaint or self-disclosure during quarterly meetings and ultimately votes, by a majority of a quorum of commissioners, on what further action, if any, is merited for each complaint or self-disclosure received. After the Commission votes to investigate, the Commission's presiding officer may nominate at least three members of the Commission to an investigative panel for complex investigations subject to the approval of a majority of a quorum of commissioners. For investigations in which an investigative panel is deemed unnecessary, the Commission instructs staff to conduct the investigation.

The Commission reviews allegations of professional negligence or professional misconduct for those cases involving *accredited* crime laboratories and *accredited* forensic disciplines only. For cases involving *unaccredited* disciplines, the Commission may accept the complaint and issue a report when the Commission determines the review would be an effective use of public resources and is likely to benefit the criminal justice system in Texas. Some complaints are dismissed because they do not satisfy these criteria. Other complaints are dismissed because they lack basic information or fail to state an actual complaint regarding forensic analysis as that term is defined in the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure. Finally, the Commission must dismiss any complaint involving the portion of an autopsy conducted by a medical examiner or other forensic pathologist who is a licensed physician. *See* Tex. Code Crim. Proc. 38.01, § 2(4).

IV. Final Investigative Reports Issued from December 1, 2024, to November 30, 2025

The Commission issued four final investigative reports this reporting period covering the following: (1) a complaint by defense attorney Mark Thiessen alleging an interpretive toxicology analyst committed professional negligence and misconduct and violated the Code of Professional Responsibility in connection with his testimony in three specific criminal cases in Fort Bend and Montgomery counties between August 27 and October 21, 2024; (2) a self-disclosure by the Department of Public Safety - Weslaco reporting an incident in its seized drugs section where an analyst deliberately altered a random number generator (RNG) form required to be documented in the case file, either to avoid a quality incident or to avoid additional work on the case; (3) a self-disclosure by DNA Reference Laboratory, Inc. reporting ambiguous misconduct allegations against an analyst who recently resigned employment with the laboratory. The analyst responded to each allegation by the laboratory and described several issues that raised concerns about the laboratory's quality system; and (4) a self-disclosure by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences alleging a toxicology analyst falsified her proficiency monitoring certification form to include the seized drugs discipline as one of her licensed disciplines *after* it was signed and distributed by the laboratory's quality manager for toxicology only, and subsequently submitted the modified document to the Commission for renewal of her license in both disciplines.

Copies of all final investigative reports may be found on the Commission's website [here](#) or in the Commission's [public database](#) under each complaint or self-disclosure.

V. Forensic Analyst Licensing Developments

A. New License Advisory Committee Appointments

On October 24, 2025, the Commission accepted nominations from the Texas Association of Crime Laboratory Directors and appointed the following three Licensing Advisory Committee

members: 1) Celestina Rossi, Montgomery County District Attorney's Office, Investigator; 2) Lauren Woolridge, NMS Labs, Quality Assurance Compliance Technical Specialist; and 3) Ashleigh Berg, Denton County Sheriff's Office Crime Laboratory, Forensic Investigator.

B. Continuation of New Voluntary License Disciplines

Pursuant to its forensic analyst licensing authority in Code of Criminal Procedure § 4-a, the Commission may establish voluntary licensing programs for forensic examinations or tests not subject to mandatory accreditation and licensing requirements. Over the past two fiscal years, the Commission developed and adopted rules for six new voluntary licenses in the categories of latent print processing technicians, crime scene processing technicians, crime scene investigation analysts, crime scene reconstruction analysts, crime scene reconstruction analyst—shooting incident expertise, and crime scene reconstruction analyst—bloodstain pattern expertise. Requirements include formal education, work experience, specific coursework, and certain critical accreditation components, including employment at a laboratory that has a policy for routine proficiency monitoring. In addition to the latent print processing technician and the added crime scene categories of licensure, the Commission currently issues voluntary forensic analyst licenses to qualifying document examiners, forensic anthropologists, latent print analysts, and digital/multimedia evidence analysts.

VI. Forensic Development/Training Initiatives

A. DNA Interpretation Trainings

On March 27 and 28, 2025, the Commission continued its training for DNA technical leaders by hosting another two-day DNA-focused training for Texas DNA technical leaders in Waco, Texas that covered several complex DNA mixture interpretation issues. The meetings included discussion by laboratory technical leaders regarding suitability determinations and related

documentation. The Commission continued its DNA-focused work in a series of online meetings throughout the year, in collaboration with the Center for Human Identification, to address DNA-specific testimony issues and the future direction of evaluative reporting given activity level propositions in the United States following publication of the Commission's final investigative report in Complaint #23.67 (Evaluation of Biological/DNA Results Given Activity Level Propositions).

B. Firearms Working Group

In 2024, the Commission recommended establishing a working group comprised of Texas firearms examiners, a prosecutor and defense representative, statistics and other experts to address the issues identified during its investigation in Complaint #21.27 (Nanon Williams). The working group first met on September 25, 2024, and again on December 9, 2024, and developed a standard definition for "consultation" as recommended in the Commission's investigative report. The Commission approved the definition at its January 31, 2025, quarterly meeting and directed staff to provide the definition to the accrediting bodies, ANSI National Accreditation Board and the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation. On February 10, 2025, the working group met again and is currently working towards creating *method conformance* and *method performance* data tables to assist legal end-users in better understanding the reliability of firearms analysis depending on evidence quality and other factors. The working group has also approved blind verification policies for all laboratories and is in the process of evaluating firearms comparison standard operating procedures statewide for increased consistency and data-sharing. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) has collaborated with the working group to create a statistical tool, referred to as VAST (Validation Assessment Tool), that will be

used to collect and generate important data concerning firearms analysis for use in the criminal justice system.

C. Statewide Taskforce on Rapid DNA

In response to an FBI-announced rule change regarding the availability of CODIS for crime scene samples using Rapid DNA technology, the Commission voted at its January 31, 2025, quarterly meeting to establish a statewide working group on Rapid DNA for the purpose of recommending criteria for a state program. The Commission requested participants from the following organizations to participate in the working group: Texas Association of Crime Laboratory Directors, Texas Association of Forensic Quality Assurance Managers, Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association, Texas District and County Attorneys Association, the Licensing Advisory Committee, ANSI National Accrediting Body (ANAB), American Association of Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA), Texas Rangers, Texas Police Chiefs Association, and the Sheriffs' Association of Texas. Since its inception, the working group has met three times, including April 17, 2025, June 27, 2025, and November 7, 2025. At its June 27, 2025 meeting, the taskforce established three deliverables: 1) develop a statement regarding the types of samples that are best suited for Rapid DNA based on existing technology and research; 2) develop an accreditation umbrella memorandum of understanding that may be adopted by laboratories accredited by ANAB or A2LA in partnership with law enforcement agencies (FBI soon to release a model); and 3) develop parameters for a Rapid DNA operator licensing program. The work of this group is ongoing, and additional developments will be reported.

D. Other Presentations/Forensic Development

Staff participated in numerous training and educational presentations for lawyers, judges, and forensic practitioners in Texas and nationally. For example, staff attended and presented at the

National Association of Forensic Science Boards annual conference on October 20-21, 2025. Staff also attended and presented at the American Association of Forensic Sciences Annual conference held in February 2025.

VII. Additional Items

A. Accreditation Update

As part of its statutory annual report requirement, the Commission must describe any forensic method or methodology the Commission designates or removes as part of the accreditation process for crime laboratories.⁶ At its July 25, 2025 quarterly meeting, the Commission adopted amendments to its administrative rules related to forensic disciplines subject to accreditation requirements (37 Texas Administrative Code, Section 651.5) to distinguish Rapid DNA analysis as its own forensic discipline for accreditation purposes. The change is consistent with actions taken by the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB) and the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation (A2LA), the two accrediting bodies currently recognized by the Commission under 37 Texas Administrative Code Section 651.4(a). Rapid DNA analysis is the fully automated (hands-free) process of developing a CODIS acceptable STR profile from a casework reference or forensic sample. The “swab in – profile out” process consists of automated extraction, amplification, separation, detection and allele calling without human intervention. The Commission adopted the amendments in response to an announcement by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) of a change to its Quality Assurance Standards (QAS) that authorizes crime scene samples processed utilizing Rapid DNA technology to be uploaded and searched in the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) as long as certain requirements are met. The FBI adopted new rules (effective July 2025) to allow law enforcement to utilize Rapid DNA technology within

⁶ Tex. Code Crim. Proc. art 38.01 § 8(2).

the umbrella of the existing accreditation of a crime laboratory. This FBI rule change in turn sparked changes in the way the accrediting bodies recognized by the Commission categorize Rapid DNA analysis. Whereas previously, Rapid DNA technology was classified within the general category of forensic biology/DNA analysis, it now has its own distinct category. The adopted amendments make this same change to the Commission's administrative rules. The goal is to ensure consistency and clarity between the FBI's rules, the approach taken by recognized accrediting bodies, and the Commission's administrative rules.

B. Forensic Analysis Definition

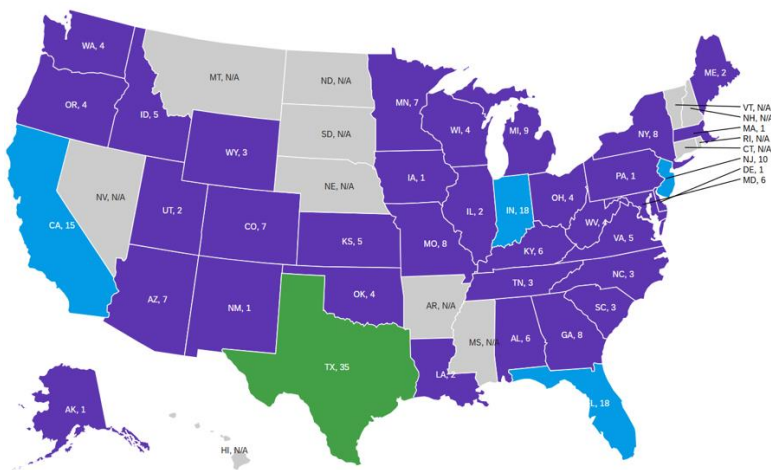
In addition to the explanation of accreditation changes, the Commission's enabling statute also requires a report on recommendations for “best practices concerning the definition of ‘forensic analysis’ provided by statute or by rule” each year.⁷ The Commission has not identified any recommendations regarding the statutory definition of “forensic analysis.” The Commission may revise its conclusion on this issue as necessary in future annual reporting periods.

C. Developments in Forensic Science Made or Used in Other State or Federal Investigations and the Activities of the Commission with Respect to Those Developments.

The Commission continues to encourage and recognize crime laboratories who have adopted forensic science standards published on the Organization of Scientific Area Committees for Forensic Science (OSAC) Registry. OSAC is an organization within NIST that works to strengthen forensic practice through improved standards. OSAC attempts to achieve this goal by 1) facilitating the development of technically sound, science-based standards through a formal standard developing organization (SDO) process; 2) evaluating existing standards published by SDOs for placement on the OSAC Registry; and 3) promoting the use of OSAC Registry approved

⁷ *Id.* at § 8(3).

standards throughout the national forensic science community. The Commission works closely with the OSAC Program Office on methods for encouraging implementation of uniform standards across Texas-accredited crime laboratories, including publication and recognition of OSAC implementer certificates in the Commission's searchable database at <https://fsc.txcourts.gov/StandardPublic>. Many laboratories in Texas have implemented OSAC standards either partially or fully and display this information publicly in the database, including the Houston Forensic Science Center, the Austin Forensic Science Department, the Department of Public Safety, the Plano Police Department Crime Laboratory, and the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences, among others. As shown in the following map, the State of Texas has more OSAC Registry of standards implementers than any other state.



D. Other Relevant Information

Commission and OCA staff developed, populated, and released a centralized database of Commission information accessible at <https://fsc.txcourts.gov/>. The goal of the database is to increase public access to information regarding licensees, accredited labs, complaints, self-disclosures, quality incidents reported by laboratories, and OSAC Registry implementers.

E. Participation in Development of Crime Lab Records (CLR) Connect Portal

The 88th Texas Legislature invested significant resources to facilitate the discovery of crime laboratory records in a direct-to-stakeholder fashion through a statewide initiative (Senate Bill 0991) directing the Department of Public Safety to create a centralized Texas crime laboratory records portal, now referred to as CLR Connect. The legislation requires accredited crime laboratories to directly share crime laboratory records using the CLR Connect system. The system is designed to streamline the request and transfer of crime laboratory records among crime laboratories, attorneys representing the state, and other authorized parties as part of the discovery criminal discovery process under Article 39.14, Code of Criminal Procedure. The legislation further requires the Commission to develop accreditation rules related to disciplinary actions for crime laboratory violations of and noncompliance with the CLR Connect rules once the portal is live. DPS is targeting the launch of the CLR Connect discovery portal by August 2026. The Commission is actively working with DPS to coordinate the development of administrative rules related to disciplinary actions for noncompliance.


EXHIBIT A

Tex. Code Crim. Proc. Art. 38.01

*** This document is current through the 2025 Regular Session and the 2nd C.S. of the 89th Legislature. ***

***Texas Statutes & Codes Annotated by LexisNexis® > Code of Criminal Procedure > Title 1
Code of Criminal Procedure of 1965 > Trial and Its Incidents > Chapter 38 Evidence in Criminal
Actions***

Notice

 This section has more than one version with varying effective dates.

First of two versions of this section.

Art. 38.01. Texas Forensic Science Commission. [Effective until September 1, 2017]

Sec. 1. Creation. — The Texas Forensic Science Commission is created.

Sec. 2. Definitions. — In this article:

- (1) “Accredited field of forensic science” means a specific forensic method or methodology validated or approved by the commission under this article.
- (2) “Commission” means the Texas Forensic Science Commission.
- (3) “Crime laboratory” has the meaning assigned by Article 38.35.
- (4) “Forensic analysis” means a medical, chemical, toxicologic, ballistic, or other expert examination or test performed on physical evidence, including DNA evidence, for the purpose of determining the connection of the evidence to a criminal action, except that the term does not include the portion of an autopsy conducted by a medical examiner or other forensic pathologist who is a licensed physician.
- (5) [2 Versions: As Added by [Acts 2015, 84th Leg., ch. 1215](#)] “Office of capital and forensic writs” means the office of capital and forensic writs established under Subchapter B, Chapter 78, Government Code.
- (5) [2 Versions: As Added by [Acts 2015, 84th Leg., ch. 1276](#)] “Physical evidence” has the meaning assigned by Article 38.35.

Sec. 3. Composition.

- (a) The commission is composed of nine members appointed by the governor as follows:
 - (1) two members who must have expertise in the field of forensic science;
 - (2) one member who must be a prosecuting attorney that the governor selects from a list of 10 names submitted by the Texas District and County Attorneys Association;
 - (3) one member who must be a defense attorney that the governor selects from a list of 10 names submitted by the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association;
 - (4) one member who must be a faculty member or staff member of The University of Texas who specializes in clinical laboratory medicine that the governor selects from a list of five names submitted by the chancellor of The University of Texas System;

- (5) one member who must be a faculty member or staff member of Texas A&M University who specializes in clinical laboratory medicine that the governor selects from a list of five names submitted by the chancellor of The Texas A&M University System;
- (6) one member who must be a faculty member or staff member of Texas Southern University that the governor selects from a list of five names submitted by the chancellor of Texas Southern University;
- (7) one member who must be a director or division head of the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth Missing Persons DNA Database; and
- (8) one member who must be a faculty or staff member of the Sam Houston State University College of Criminal Justice and have expertise in the field of forensic science or statistical analyses that the governor selects from a list of five names submitted by the chancellor of the Texas State University System.

- (b) Each member of the commission serves a two-year term. The terms expire on September 1 of:
 - (1) each odd-numbered year, for a member appointed under Subsection (a)(1), (2), (3), or (4); and
 - (2) each even-numbered year, for a member appointed under Subsection (a)(5), (6), (7), or (8).
- (c) The governor shall designate a member of the commission to serve as the presiding officer.

Sec. 3-a. Rules. The commission shall adopt rules necessary to implement this **article**.

Sec. 4. Duties.

- (a) The commission shall:
 - (1) develop and implement a reporting system through which a **crime** laboratory may report professional negligence or professional misconduct;
 - (2) require a **crime** laboratory that conducts forensic analyses to report professional negligence or professional misconduct to the commission; and
 - (3) investigate, in a timely manner, any allegation of professional negligence or professional misconduct that would substantially affect the integrity of the results of a forensic analysis conducted by a **crime** laboratory.
- (a-1) The commission may initiate for educational purposes an investigation of a forensic analysis without receiving a complaint, submitted through the reporting system implemented under Subsection (a)(1), that contains an allegation of professional negligence or professional misconduct involving the forensic analysis conducted if the commission determines by a majority vote of a quorum of the members of the commission that an investigation of the forensic analysis would advance the integrity and reliability of forensic science in this state.
- (b) If the commission conducts an investigation under Subsection (a)(3) of a **crime** laboratory that is accredited under this **article** pursuant to an allegation of professional negligence or professional misconduct involving an accredited field of forensic science, the investigation:
 - (1) must include the preparation of a written report that identifies and also describes the methods and **procedures** used to identify:
 - (A) the alleged negligence or misconduct;
 - (B) whether negligence or misconduct occurred;
 - (C) any corrective action required of the laboratory, facility, or entity;
 - (D) observations of the commission regarding the integrity and reliability of the forensic analysis conducted;
 - (E) best practices identified by the commission during the course of the investigation; and

- (F) other recommendations that are relevant, as determined by the commission; and
- (2) may include one or more:
 - (A) retrospective reexaminations of other forensic analyses conducted by the laboratory, facility, or entity that may involve the same kind of negligence or misconduct; and
 - (B) follow-up evaluations of the laboratory, facility, or entity to review:
 - (i) the implementation of any corrective action required under Subdivision (1)(C); or
 - (ii) the conclusion of any retrospective reexamination under Paragraph (A).
- (b-1) If the commission conducts an investigation under Subsection (a)(3) of a **crime** laboratory that is not accredited under this **article** or the investigation is conducted pursuant to an allegation involving a forensic method or methodology that is not an accredited field of forensic science, the investigation may include the preparation of a written report that contains:
 - (1) observations of the commission regarding the integrity and reliability of the forensic analysis conducted;
 - (2) best practices identified by the commission during the course of the investigation; or
 - (3) other recommendations that are relevant, as determined by the commission.
- (b-2) If the commission conducts an investigation of a forensic analysis under Subsection (a-1), the investigation must include the preparation of a written report that contains:
 - (1) observations of the commission regarding the integrity and reliability of the forensic analysis conducted;
 - (2) best practices identified by the commission during the course of the investigation; and
 - (3) other recommendations that are relevant, as determined by the commission.
- (c) The commission by contract may delegate the duties described by Subsections (a)(1) and (3) to any person the commission determines to be qualified to assume those duties.
- (d) The commission may require that a **crime** laboratory investigated under this section pay any costs incurred to ensure compliance with Subsection (b), (b-1), or (b-2).
- (e) The commission shall make all investigation reports completed under Subsection (b), (b-1), or (b-2) available to the public. A report completed under Subsection (b), (b-1), or (b-2), in a subsequent civil or criminal proceeding, is not prima facie evidence of the information or findings contained in the report.
- (f) The commission may not make a determination of whether professional negligence or professional misconduct occurred or issue a finding on that question in an investigation initiated under Subsection (a-1) or for which an investigation report may be prepared under Subsection (b-1).
- (g) The commission may not issue a finding related to the guilt or innocence of a party in an underlying civil or criminal trial involving conduct investigated by the commission under this **article**.
- (h) The commission may review and refer cases that are the subject of an investigation under Subsection (a)(3) or (a-1) to the office of capital and forensic writs in accordance with Section 78.054(b), Government **Code**.

Sec. 4-a. Forensic analyst licensing.

- (a) Notwithstanding Section 2, in this section:
 - (1) "Forensic analysis" has the meaning assigned by **Article** 38.35.
 - (2) "Forensic analyst" means a person who on behalf of a **crime** laboratory accredited under this **article** technically reviews or performs a forensic analysis or draws conclusions from or interprets a

forensic analysis for a court or crime laboratory. The term does not include a medical examiner or other forensic pathologist who is a licensed physician.

(b) [Effective January 1, 2019] A person may not act or offer to act as a forensic analyst unless the person holds a forensic analyst license. The commission by rule may establish classifications of forensic analyst licenses if the commission determines that it is necessary to ensure the availability of properly trained and qualified forensic analysts to perform activities regulated by the commission.

(c) The commission by rule may establish voluntary licensing programs for forensic disciplines that are not subject to accreditation under this article.

(d) The commission by rule shall:

(1) establish the qualifications for a license that include:

(A) successful completion of the education requirements established by the commission;

(B) specific course work and experience, including instruction in courtroom testimony and ethics in a crime laboratory;

(C) successful completion of an examination required or recognized by the commission; and

(D) successful completion of proficiency testing to the extent required for crime laboratory accreditation;

(2) set fees for the issuance and renewal of a license; and

(3) establish the term of a forensic analyst license.

(e) The commission by rule may recognize a certification issued by a national organization in an accredited field of forensic science as satisfying the requirements established under Subsection (d)(1)(C) to the extent the commission determines the content required to receive the certification is substantially equivalent to the content of the requirements under that subsection.

(f) The commission shall issue a license to an applicant who:

(1) submits an application on a form prescribed by the commission;

(2) meets the qualifications established by commission rule; and

(3) pays the required fee.

Sec. 4-b. Advisory Committee.

(a) The commission shall establish an advisory committee to advise the commission and make recommendations on matters related to the licensing of forensic analysts under Section 4-a.

(b) The advisory committee consists of nine members as follows:

(1) one prosecuting attorney recommended by the Texas District and County Attorneys Association;

(2) one defense attorney recommended by the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association; and

(3) seven members who are forensic scientists, crime laboratory directors, or crime laboratory quality managers, selected by the commission from a list of 20 names submitted by the Texas Association of Crime Laboratory Directors.

(c) The commission shall ensure that appointments under Subsection (b)(3) include representation from municipal, county, state, and private crime laboratories that are accredited under this article.

(d) The advisory committee members serve staggered two-year terms, with the terms of four or five members, as appropriate, expiring on August 31 of each year. An advisory committee member may not serve more than two consecutive terms. A vacancy on the advisory committee is filled by appointing a member in the same manner as the original appointment to serve for the unexpired portion of the term.

- (e) The advisory committee shall elect a presiding officer from among its members to serve a one-year term. A member may serve more than one term as presiding officer.
- (f) The advisory committee shall meet annually and at the call of the presiding officer or the commission.
- (g) An advisory committee member is not entitled to compensation. A member is entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing duties as a member of the advisory committee subject to the General Appropriations Act.
- (h) Chapter 2110, Government Code, does not apply to the advisory committee.

Sec. 4-c. Disciplinary Action.

- (a) On a determination by the commission that a license holder has committed professional misconduct under this article or violated this article or a rule or order of the commission under this article, the commission may:
 - (1) revoke or suspend the person's license;
 - (2) refuse to renew the person's license; or
 - (3) reprimand the license holder.
- (b) The commission may place on probation a person whose license is suspended. If a license suspension is probated, the commission may require the license holder to:
 - (1) report regularly to the commission on matters that are the basis of the probation; or
 - (2) continue or review continuing professional education until the license holder attains a degree of skill satisfactory to the commission in those areas that are the basis of the probation.
- (c) Disciplinary proceedings of the commission are governed by Chapter 2001, Government Code. A hearing under this section shall be conducted by an administrative law judge of the State Office of Administrative Hearings.

Sec. 4-d. Crime Laboratory Accreditation Process.

- (a) Notwithstanding Section 2, in this section "forensic analysis" has the meaning by Article 38.35.
- (b) The commission by rule:
 - (1) shall establish an accreditation process for crime laboratories and other entities conducting forensic analyses of physical evidence for use in criminal proceedings; and
 - (2) may modify or remove a crime laboratory exemption under this section if the commission determines that the underlying reason for the exemption no longer applies.
- (b-1) As part of the accreditation process established and implemented under Subsection (b), the commission may:
 - (1) establish minimum standards that relate to the timely production of a forensic analysis to the agency requesting the analysis and that are consistent with this article and applicable laws;
 - (2) validate or approve specific forensic methods or methodologies; and
 - (3) establish procedures, policies, and practices to improve the quality of forensic analyses conducted in this state.
- (b-2) The commission may require that a laboratory, facility, or entity required to be accredited under this section pay any costs incurred to ensure compliance with the accreditation process.
- (b-3) A laboratory, facility, or entity that must be accredited under this section shall, as part of the accreditation process, agree to consent to any request for cooperation by the commission that is made as part of the exercise of the commission's duties under this article.

(c) The commission by rule may exempt from the accreditation process established under Subsection (b) a crime laboratory conducting a forensic analysis or a type of analysis, examination, or test if the commission determines that:

- (1) independent accreditation is unavailable or inappropriate for the laboratory or the type of analysis, examination, or test performed by the laboratory;
- (2) the type of analysis, examination, or test performed by the laboratory is admissible under a well-established rule of evidence or a statute other than Article 38.35;
- (3) the type of analysis, examination, or test performed by the laboratory is routinely conducted outside of a crime laboratory by a person other than an employee of the crime laboratory; or
- (4) the laboratory:
 - (A) is located outside this state or, if located in this state, is operated by a governmental entity other than the state or a political subdivision of the state; and
 - (B) was accredited at the time of the analysis under an accreditation process with standards that meet or exceed the relevant standards of the process established under Subsection (b).

(d) The commission may at any reasonable time enter and inspect the premises or audit the records, reports, procedures, or other quality assurance matters of a crime laboratory that is accredited or seeking accreditation under this section.

(e) The commission may collect costs incurred under this section for accrediting, inspecting, or auditing a crime laboratory.

(f) If the commission provides a copy of an audit or other report made under this section, the commission may charge \$6 for the copy, in addition to any other cost permitted under Chapter 552, Government Code, or a rule adopted under that chapter.

Sec. 5. Reimbursement. — A member of the commission may not receive compensation but is entitled to reimbursement for the member's travel expenses as provided by Chapter 660, Government Code, and the General Appropriations Act.

Sec. 6. Assistance. — The Texas Legislative Council, the Legislative Budget Board, and The University of Texas at Austin shall assist the commission in performing the commission's duties.

Sec. 7. Submission. — The commission shall submit any report received under Section 4(a)(2) and any report prepared under Section 4(b)(1) to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year.

Sec. 8. Annual Report. — Not later than December 1 of each year, the commission shall prepare and publish a report that includes:

- (1) a description of each complaint filed with the commission during the preceding 12- month period, the disposition of each complaint, and the status of any complaint still pending on December 31;
- (2) a description of any specific forensic method or methodology the commission designates as part of the accreditation process for crime laboratories established by rule under this article;
- (3) recommendations for best practices concerning the definition of "forensic analysis" provided by statute or by rule;
- (4) developments in forensic science made or used in other state or federal investigations and the activities of the commission, if any, with respect to those developments; and
- (5) other information that is relevant to investigations involving forensic science, as determined by the presiding officer of the commission.

Sec. 9. Administrative Attachment to Sam Houston State University.

- (a) The commission is administratively attached to Sam Houston State University.

(b) The Board of Regents of the Texas State University System shall provide administrative support to the commission as necessary to carry out the purposes of this **article**.

(c) Only the commission may exercise the duties of the commission under this **article**. Except as provided by Subsection (b), neither the Board of Regents of the Texas State University System nor Sam Houston State University has any authority or responsibility with respect to the duties of the commission under this **article**.

Sec. 10. Open Records Limitation. — Information that is filed as part of an allegation of professional misconduct or professional negligence or that is obtained during an investigation of an allegation of professional misconduct or professional negligence is not subject to release under Chapter 552, Government **Code**, until the conclusion of an investigation by the commission under Section 4.

Sec. 11. Report Inadmissible As Evidence. — A written report prepared by the commission under this **article** is not admissible in a civil or criminal action.

Sec. 12. Collection of Certain Forensic Evidence. The commission shall establish a method for collecting DNA and other forensic evidence related to unidentified bodies located less than 120 miles from the Rio Grande River.

History

[Acts 2005, 79th Leg., ch. 1224 \(H.B. 1068\), § 1](#), effective September 1, 2005; am. [Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., ch. 782 \(S.B. 1238\), §§ 1—4](#), effective June 14, 2013; am. [Acts 2015, 84th Leg., ch. 1215 \(S.B. 1743\), §§ 8, 9](#), effective September 1, 2015; am. [Acts 2015, 84th Leg., ch. 1276 \(S.B. 1287\), §§ 1—7](#), effective September 1, 2015.

Texas Statutes & **Codes** Annotated by LexisNexis®
Copyright © 2025 Matthew Bender & Company, Inc.
a member of the LexisNexis Group. All rights reserved.

EXHIBIT B

BUDGET STATUS REPORT FY26 FIRST QUARTER
10/07/2025

Category/Description	Itemized Category Costs	Budgeted YTD	Expended/Obligated	Balance	% Total Budget	% Projected Used
FY26 Expenditures						
Staff salaries						
<i>All labor costs for 7 full-time employees (includes OCA \$30K Admin allocation)</i>		839,455.72	155,187.62	684,268.10	64.72%	18.49%
<i>Other personnel costs, includes: longevity, and workers comp for employees</i>		7,240.00	7,240.00	-	0.56%	100.00%
Travel for Commissioners, Licensing Advisory Committee Members and Staff						
		27,033.71	149.80	26,883.91	0.01%	0.55%
Professional Fees & Services						
		1,000.00	144.75	855.25	0.01%	14.48%
<i>EAP Deer Oaks</i>	144.75					
Consumable Supplies		1,240.00	-	1,240.00	0.00%	0.00%
<i>Office Supplies</i>	650.04					
Utilities		1,967.49	1,967.49	-	0.15%	100.00%
<i>Verizon</i>	1,967.49					
Rent - Parkng - Building		75.00	75.00	-	0.01%	100.00%
Rent - Machine - Xerox		4,293.84	4,293.84	-	0.33%	100.00%
Other Operating Expenses, including Forensic Development		268,622.23	39,634.66	228,987.57	3.06%	14.75%
<i>UNTHSC-CHI Training Collaboration</i>	-18,424.34					
<i>Payroll Health Contributions</i>	8,394.56					
<i>Payroll Retirement Contributions</i>	4,197.28					
<i>Lexis-Nexis</i>	1,632.24					
<i>PublicData Criminal History Search for Licensing</i>	277.00					
<i>DIR</i>	776.48					
<i>SORM</i>	580.03					
<i>AAFS Membership & Conf Lynn, Robert, Leigh</i>	585.00					
<i>Udemy</i>	680.40					
<i>Dropbox Renewal</i>	127.79					
<i>SHSU Blackboard Exam Fees</i>	670.00					
<i>State Bar Fees</i>	849.00					
<i>PO Box</i>	200.00					
<i>FedEx</i>	700.00					
<i>NAFSB Conference</i>	450.00					
<i>Tape dispenser, letter opener</i>	51.35					
<i>Transcript</i>	65.13					
<i>Law Books</i>	396.00					

BUDGET STATUS REPORT FY26 FIRST QUARTER
10/07/2025

<i>NAFSB Membership Fees</i>	<i>400.00</i>					
<i>Administrative Law Conference Fee (LMT)</i>	<i>425.00</i>					
<i>Prezi</i>	<i>228.00</i>					
<i>Conferencing Video Equipment</i>	<i>7,500.00</i>					
<i>Conferencing Annual Maintenance Fee</i>	<i>1,900.00</i>					
FY25 Revenue			-			
	<i>Projected licensing fee revenues FY26</i>					
		-	<i>114,000.00</i>			
		<u>\$ 1,150,927.99</u>	<u>\$ 208,693.16</u>	<u>\$ 942,234.83</u>		18.13%
FY26 Budget Totals						
	<i>FY25 Budget Appropriation</i>	<i>\$ 1,031,369.00</i>				
	<i>Current Revenue FY26</i>	<i>7,424.01</i>				
	<i>Remaining Projected Licensing Revenue FY26</i>					
	<i>(114K total)</i>	<i>106,454.99</i>				
	<i>UB GR0001 + AY2025</i>	<i>\$ 54,753.62</i>				
	<i>UNT Grant</i>	<i>\$ 3,264.34</i>				
Total Expendable Budget FY26		<u>\$ 1,203,265.96</u>				

EXHIBIT C

FILE NO.	DISCLOSURE	COMPLAINT	DATE REC'D	COMPLAINANT/LAB	SUBJECT LAB	DISCIPLINE	STATUS
24.26	X		7/17/2024	Serological Research Institute		Forensic Biology/DNA	No Further Action
24.32	X		9/13/2024	DNA Reference Laboratory		Forensic Biology/DNA	Final Report Issued
24.47	X		10/9/2024	NMS Labs		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
24.48	X		10/16/2024	NMS Labs		Toxicology	No Further Action
24.49	X		11/12/2024	Southwestern Institute of Forensic Sciences		Toxicology	No Further Action
24.50	X		11/19/2024	Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office Crime Laboratory		Toxicology	No Further Action
24.51	X		11/27/2024	Jefferson County Regional Crime Laboratory		Forensic Biology Screening	No Further Action
24.52	X		12/2/2024	DPS Cleburne		Breath Alcohol	No Further Action
24.55	X		12/10/2024	Austin Forensic Science Department		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
25.01	X		1/6/2025	Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences		Toxicology	Final Report Issued
25.02	X		1/6/2025	Center for Human Identification		Forensic Biology/DNA	No Further Action
25.04	X		1/9/2025	NMS Labs		Toxicology	No Further Action
24.54	X		12/3/2024	DPS Austin		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
24.45		X	11/21/2024	Thiessen, Mark	DPS Houston	Toxicology	Final Report Issued
24.46		X	11/21/2024	Nilles, Patrick	Forensic Forgery Experts	Document Examination	Dismissed
24.58		X	1/2/2025	Schuetz, Kevin	DPS Tyler	Seized Drugs	Final Report Issued
25.03		X	1/7/2025	Atkinson, Lucio	DPS Austin	Seized Drugs	Dismissed
24.43		X	11/21/2024	Anonymous	Veritaco	Digital/Multimedia	Dismissed
24.44		X	11/21/2024	Robinson, Bianca	Laboratory Not Specified	No Forensic Analysis	Dismissed
24.53		X	12/8/2024	Robertson, Rhonda	Laboratory Not Specified	No Forensic Analysis	Dismissed
24.59	X		11/7/2024	Austin Forensic Science Department		Evidence Storage	No Further Action
25.06	X		1/16/2025	Bexar County Criminal Investigation Laboratory		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
25.10	X		3/4/2025	Quality Forensic Toxicology		Toxicology (Blood Alcohol)	No Further Action
25.11	X		3/3/2025	Houston Forensic Science Center		Forensic Biology/DNA	No Further Action
25.12	X		3/3/2025	Houston Forensic Science Center		Crime Scene Investigation	No Further Action
25.13	X		3/10/2025	Corpus Christi Police Department Crime Laboratory		Latent Prints/Friction Ridge	No Further Action
25.14	X		3/13/2025	Dallas Police Department Crime Laboratory		Crime Scene Investigation	No Further Action
25.05	X		1/14/2025	DPS Midland		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
25.07		X	2/10/2025	Wraymon, Hill	Polaris Forensics	Environmental Testing	Dismissed
25.08		X	2/24/2025	Vela, Alvaro	Harris County Institute of Forensic Science	Autopsy	Dismissed
25.15		X	3/17/2025	Taylor, Rhonda	Southwestern Institute of Forensic Science	Autopsy	Dismissed
24.56	X		12/11/2024	Sorenson Forensics		Forensic Biology/DNA	No Further Action
24.57	X		12/16/2024	NMS Labs		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
25.18	X		1/23/2025	Center for Human Identification		Forensic Biology/DNA	No Further Action
25.12	X		3/3/2025	Houston Forensic Science Center		Crime Scene Investigation	No Further Action
25.23	X		4/23/2025	Serological Research Institute		Forensic Biology/DNA	No Further Action
25.24	X		5/28/2025	Serological Research Institute		Forensic Biology/DNA	No Further Action
25.25	X		5/29/2025	Signature Science, LLC		Forensic Biology/DNA	No Further Action
25.26	X		6/4/2025	Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences		Forensic Biology/DNA	No Further Action
25.30	X		3/26/2025	Fort Worth Police Department Crime Laboratory		Toxicology (Blood Alcohol)	No Further Action
25.32	X		6/17/2025	DPS Lubbock		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
25.35	X		4/15/2025	Bexar County Criminal Investigation Laboratory		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
25.36	X		7/2/2025	Bexar County Criminal Investigation Laboratory		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
25.37	X		7/1/2025	Brazoria County Crime Laboratory		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
25.38	X		7/3/2025	Brazoria County Crime Laboratory		Toxicology (Blood Alcohol)	No Further Action
25.39	X		7/3/2025	Brazoria County Crime Laboratory		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
25.19	X		4/23/2025	DPS Houston		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
25.31	X		6/13/2025	DPS Crime Laboratory System		Seized Drugs and Toxicology Evidence	No Further Action
25.33	X		6/26/2025	DPS Weslaco		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
25.16	X		3/21/2025	Center for Human Identification		Forensic Biology/DNA (Qiagen Manufacturing Issue)	No Further Action
25.17	X		3/4/2025	Signature Science, LLC		Forensic Biology/DNA (Qiagen Manufacturing Issue)	No Further Action
25.28		X	6/10/2025	Parker, Amber	Alere Toxicology Services	Toxicology	Dismissed
25.29		X	6/9/2025	Sween, Gretchen	Houston Forensic Science Center	Latent Prints	Tabled
25.40		X	7/7/2025	Swiergula, Jennae	Southwestern Institute of Forensic Science	Forensic Biology/DNA	Dismissed
25.20		X	5/7/2025	Rosario, Richard	Austin State Hospital/DNA Reference Laboratory	Forensic Biology/DNA	Dismissed
24.60	X		12/19/2024	Center for Human Identification		Forensic Biology/DNA	No Further Action
25.27	X		6/5/2025	DPS Lubbock		Seized Drugs	No Further Action
25.43	X		7/28/2025	Signature Science, LLC		Forensic Biology/DNA	No Further Action
25.44	X		7/24/2025	Jefferson County Regional Crime Laboratory		Toxicology (Blood Alcohol)	No Further Action
25.55	X		10/2/2025	Dallas Police Department Crime Scene Division		Crime Scene	No Further Action
25.58	X		10/6/2025	Plano Police Department Crime Scene Investigation Unit		Crime Scene	No Further Action
25.59	X		10/6/2025	Plano Police Department Crime Scene Investigation Unit		Crime Scene	No Further Action
25.50	X		9/3/2025	Austin Forensic Science Department		Evidence/Sexual Assault Kit	No Further Action

25.42	X		7/14/2025	DPS Crime Laboratory Division		Evidence/Toxicology	No Further Action
25.46	X		8/28/2025	Othram		Evidence/Forensic Biology/DNA	No Further Action
25.41		X	7/14/2025	Moorehouse, Martha	Texas Tech Univeristy Health Science Center on	Sexual Assault Nurse Examination	Dismissed
25.48		X	8/28/2025	Schuette, Kevin	DPS Lubbock	Seized Drugs	Dismissed
25.52		X	9/15/2025	Cale, Cynthia	Southwesern Institute of Forensic Science	Forensic Biology/DNA	Dismissed
25.54		X	10/2/2025	Featherston, Robert	Bexar County Criminal Investigation Laboratory	Seized Drugs	Dismissed
25.57		X	10/3/2025	Loudon, Kevin	NMS Willow Grove	Seized Drugs	Dismissed
25.47		X	8/25/2025	Anonymous	Center for Human Identification	No Forensic Analysis	Dismissed
25.49		X	9/4/2025	Rogers, Chaz	Harris County Institute of Forensic Science	Autopsy/Firearms/Toolmarks	Dismissed
25.56		X	10/3/2025	Cheney, Lindsey	Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office Crime	Autopsy	Dismissed