



# TEXAS FORENSIC SCIENCE COMMISSION

*1701 North Congress Ave., Suite 6-700  
Austin, Texas 78701*

## TEXAS FORENSIC SCIENCE COMMISSION QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES

**The Texas Forensic Science Commission (Commission) met in person and by videoconference on July 31, 2026, at the Barbara Jordan State Office Building at 1601 Congress Avenue, Room 2.035, Austin, Texas 78701.**

**Members Present:** Jeffrey Barnard, MD, Presiding Officer  
Michael Coble, PhD  
Patrick Buzzini, PhD  
Stacey Mitchell, DNP  
Jasmine Drake, PhD  
Sarah Kerrigan, PhD  
Erika Ziemak, MS  
Jarvis Parsons, JD

**The following members attended the meeting via Zoom video conference: Dr. Patrick Buzzini, Dr. Jasmine Drake, Mr. Jarvis Parsons, Dr. Sarah Kerrigan**

**Members Absent:** Mark Daniel, JD

**Staff Present:** Lynn Garcia, General Counsel  
Chelsea Estes, Commission Coordinator  
Leigh Tomlin, Associate General Counsel  
Robert Smith, Senior Staff Attorney  
Jarrah Kennedy, Scientific Program Coordinator  
Veena Mohan, Assistant General Counsel  
Steve Miller, Multimedia Producer

**During this meeting, the Commission considered and acted on the following items. The Commission took breaks as necessary.**

**1. Call meeting to order. Roll call for members. Excuse any absent board members.**

Barnard called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. Commissioners were present as indicated above.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Parsons moved to excuse Daniel's absence. Drake seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**2. Review and adopt minutes from the April 24, 2026, quarterly commission meeting.**

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Mitchell moved to approve the April 24, 2026, minutes draft. Drake seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**3. Office administrative update (including, but not limited to, the following administrative items: FY2026 budget status report; implementation of ALiS licensing platform; and office construction). (General Counsel Garcia/Associate General Counsel Tomlin)**

Staff provided a projected budget for FY2026. Staff expects to move into its newly remodeled office space this August 2026 in the William B. Travis state office building.

Staff reported fully migrating licensee and other data into ALiS, the new licensing application system. Staff has launched the crime laboratory director and quality manager function, which allows laboratories to submit forms, including licensee change and proficiency monitoring forms.

**4. Discuss and consider complaints and laboratory self-disclosures pending from the April 24, 2026, quarterly commission meeting and new complaints and laboratory self-disclosures received through July 10, 2026, as detailed below. (Commission Staff)**

**Self-Disclosures Pending from April 24, 2026, meeting:**

**1. No. 26.14; Bode Technology, Inc. (Forensic Biology/DNA)**

A self-disclosure by Bode Technology, Inc. reporting their resolution of questions raised by legal stakeholders about DNA testimony regarding: 1) the assignment of the number of contributors (NOC) and complex DNA mixture interpretation involving related individuals; and 2) the analyst's explanation of the likelihood ratio (LR).

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Kerrigan moved to table the self-disclosure pending the conclusion of the laboratory's Texas casework review. Buzzini seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**Received through July 10, 2026:**

**2. No. 26.09; Center for Human Identification (Forensic Biology/DNA)**

A self-disclosure by the Center for Human Identification's forensic biology/DNA section reporting an incident in its missing persons section where the laboratory initiated a quality investigation for an STR amplification of family reference samples and the representations made by the processing analyst.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Parsons moved to accept the disclosure for staff investigation under 37 TAC Section 651.307(d) to determine whether the analyst's conduct constitutes negligence or misconduct and to assess whether the conduct merits any disciplinary action by the Commission. Drake seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**RECUSALS:** Coble, Ziemak

**3. No. 26.10; Corpus Christi Police Department Crime Laboratory (Firearms/Toolmarks)**

A self-disclosure by Corpus Christi Police Department Crime Laboratory reporting an erroneous false positive identification of fired cartridge cases by an analyst in an aggravated assault case that led to the discovery of additional quality concerns resulting in the voluntary withdrawal of the laboratory's firearms accreditation and the initiation of a full investigation including retroactive case review.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Buzzini moved to table the self-disclosure pending the conclusion of the ongoing laboratory investigation and case review. Kerrigan seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**4. No. 26.17; Bexar County Criminal Investigation Laboratory (Seized Drugs)**

A self-disclosure by the Bexar County Criminal Investigation Laboratory reporting an incident in its seized drugs section where an analyst documented macroscopic and microscopic examinations of green plant-like material without performing the required examination.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Parsons moved to accept the disclosure for staff investigation under 37 TAC Section 651.307(d) to determine whether the analyst's conduct constitutes negligence or misconduct and to assess whether the conduct merits any disciplinary action by the Commission. Drake seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**5. No. 26.19; Southwestern Institute of Forensic Sciences (Forensic Biology/DNA)**

A self-disclosure by the Southwestern Institute of Forensic Sciences reporting an incident in its forensic biology/DNA section where an analyst failed to notify the technical leader of a reagent blank contamination and failed to properly document the event on the required form that triggers steps for investigating a contamination event.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Coble moved to accept the self-disclosure for staff investigation under 37 TAC Section 651.307(d) to determine whether the laboratory's finding of professional misconduct for failing to include the reagent blank contamination in the case file warrants disciplinary action by the Commission. Buzzini seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**RECUSAL:** Barnard

**6. No. 26.39; Bexar County Criminal Investigation Laboratory (Materials (Trace))**

A self-disclosure by the Bexar County Criminal Investigation Laboratory reporting an incident in its materials (trace) section where an evidence technician mislabeled and switched the evidence in two cases.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Drake moved to take no further action on the self-disclosure based on the root cause analysis and corrective actions by the laboratory. Parsons seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**7. No. 26.45; Serological Research Institute (Forensic Biology/DNA)**

A self-disclosure by Serological Research Institute (SERI) reporting ongoing instances of DNA contamination in combined reagent blanks for the laboratory's fired shell casings analysis procedures.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Drake moved to take no further action on the self-disclosure given the root cause analysis, corrective actions, and case monitoring performed by the laboratory. Buzzini seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**8. No. 26.20; Harris County Institute for Forensic Sciences (Firearms/Toolmarks)**

A self-disclosure by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences (HCIFS) reporting a small fire in the laboratory's firearms section that activated its sprinkler system and caused extensive water damage to paper case records.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Buzzini moved to take no further action on the self-disclosure based on the root cause analysis, case record review, and other corrective actions by the laboratory. Drake seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**9. No. 26.28; Department of Public Safety – Weslaco (Evidence; Forensic Biology/DNA)**

A self-disclosure by DPS Weslaco reporting the failure of a DNA evidence/extract walk-in freezer for less than 72 hours.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Coble moved to take no further action on the self-disclosure based on the cause investigation, corrective actions, and associated case record documentation of the laboratory. Parsons seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**10. No. 26.29; Department of Public Safety – Austin (Evidence; Toxicology)**

A self-disclosure by the Department of Public Safety – Austin reporting an evidence technician destroyed toxicological evidence (a blood kit) before its authorized destruction date.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Buzzini moved to take no further action on the self-disclosure based on the root cause analysis and corrective actions by the laboratory. Drake seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**11. No. 26.32; Department of Public Safety – Lubbock (Evidence; Firearms/Toolmarks)**

A self-disclosure by the Department of Public Safety – Lubbock reporting a lost item of evidence (projectile fragment).

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Mitchell moved to take no further action based on root cause analysis and the appropriate documentation of the missing item of evidence. Drake seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**12. No. 26.42; Austin Forensic Science (Seized Drugs)**

A self-disclosure by Austin Forensic Science reporting an incident in its seized drugs section where an analyst, during a 2026 biennial audit of seized drugs reference materials, identified discrepancies involving the reference standard methenolone acetate (Steraloids Lot H986) and determined the laboratory lost the standard.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Parsons moved to take no further action on the self-disclosure based on the root cause analysis and corrective actions by the laboratory. Coble seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**Complaints Pending from April 24, 2026, commission meeting:**

**13. No. 26.01; Narrative Project (Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences; Forensic Biology/DNA)**

A complaint filed by the Narrative Project on behalf of defendant Luis Luna requesting the Commission reconsider the allegations that include a “supplemental statement” alleging a failure of the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences to perform differential extraction on semen-positive items, asking whether the laboratory entered a profile into CODIS, and requesting the basis for a “limited support” conclusion.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Ziemak moved to reject the complainant’s request to reconsider the allegations, as the supplemental information provided for the self-disclosure fails to identify any information regarding alleged professional negligence or misconduct not previously considered by the Commission. Drake seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**14. No. 26.12; Innocence Project (Nurse Lori Long, Dr. Ruda, Dr. Phatak; Bitemark Evidence, Autopsy)**

A complaint filed by the National Innocence Project alleging bitemark evidence and “shaken baby syndrome” contributed to a defendant's conviction.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Kerrigan moved to dismiss the complaint, because the bitemark evidence did not include an attempt to compare the patterned injuries to the known dentition of any party. Parsons seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**Complaints Received through July 10, 2026:**

**15. No. 26.22; Wesley, Kendrick (Houston Forensic Science Center; Toxicology (Blood Alcohol))**

A complaint filed by defendant Kendrick Wesley alleging the blood alcohol results obtained by the Houston Forensic Science Center conflict with the blood alcohol results obtained by Ben Taub Hospital and/or the Harris County Jail Medical staff.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Mitchell moved to dismiss the complaint for failure to allege professional negligence or misconduct related to the forensic analysis of physical evidence. Kerrigan seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**16. No. 26.23; Steen, Gregory (Austin Forensic Science; Forensic Biology/DNA)**

A complaint filed by Gregory Steen alleging a DNA mixture analysis reported by the Austin Police Department crime laboratory may have adversely impacted his case and that neither his attorney nor the State notified him of the issue before he agreed to accept a plea.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Ziemak moved to dismiss the complaint because the DNA Review Project (Travis County) evaluated the case and determined the DNA results were not material to the conviction. Buzzini seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**17. No. 26.24; Velyvis, Melissanne (Austin Forensic Science; S.A.N.E., Forensic Biology/DNA)**

A complaint filed by Melissanne Velyvis alleging the Austin Police Department and Austin Forensic Science failed to order a sexual assault kit as part of her daughter's autopsy in June 2024.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Buzzini moved to dismiss the complaint because the law enforcement agency has not requested testing of the evidence, and the Commission has no jurisdiction to compel the agency to request testing of the evidence. Coble seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**18. No. 26.26; Office of Capital and Forensic Writs (San Antonio Police Department; Digital/Multimedia Evidence)**

A complaint filed by the Office of Capital and Forensic Writs on behalf of Otis McKane, a defendant convicted and sentenced to death for the 2021 murder of a San Antonio police officer, alleging a San Antonio Police Department detective failed to properly explain the limitations of cell phone data (cached images and Google searches) obtained from the defendant's phone in his testimony at trial.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Buzzini moved to accept the complaint for investigation and issue a report that contains observations regarding the integrity and reliability of the forensic testing, best practices identified by the Commission, and other relevant recommendations. Drake seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**19. No. 26.38; Burnam, Timothy (Department of Public Safety; Materials (Trace))**

A complaint by convicted defendant Timothy Barnum alleging a Department of Public Safety – Austin materials (trace) analyst conducted a scientifically insupportable forensic analysis on GSR stubs collected from two masks recovered from a suspect’s residence because the laboratory conducted the analysis two years after collection in violation of its own policies for GSR testing.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Drake moved to dismiss the complaint because the Department of Public Safety “four-hour” policy limitation cited in the complaint only applies to hand stubs collected from living individuals, not inanimate objects. Ziemak seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**20. No. 26.41; Mount, Gary (Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences; Forensic Biology/DNA)**

A complaint by convicted defendant Gary Mount alleging flawed testimony and analytical methods by a Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences forensic biology/DNA analyst.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Ziemak moved to dismiss the complaint because a review of the relevant laboratory records by the Commission’s Scientific Program Coordinator revealed no issues, and the scientific reporting statements are supported by the record. Buzzini seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**21. No. 26.47; Backstrom, Steven (Unnamed Expert; Sexual Assault Nurse Examination)**

A complaint by defendant Steven Backstrom alleging the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner’s testimony in his case is contrary to current consensus standards.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Kerrigan moved to table the complaint pending staff review of the trial transcript. Ziemak seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**22. No. 26.49; Wilson, Donald (Tarrant County Medical Examiner’s Office; Firearms/Toolmarks)**

A complaint by defendant Donald Wilson alleging false testimony by a Tarrant County Medical Examiner’s Office analyst and an incomplete record regarding the comparison of a bullet recovered from autopsy and the submitted reference weapon test fires.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Ziemak moved to table the complaint to allow staff time to obtain and review the technical record and related testimony transcripts. Drake seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**Dismissals Recommended by Staff:**

**23. No. 26.21; Blair, Diane (Nueces County Medical Examiner; Autopsy)**

A complaint by Diane Blair alleging several errors with respect to the suicide determination in her son's autopsy. She requests the manner of death be changed to undetermined.

**24. No. 26.25; Schweizer, Susan (Nueces County Medical Examiner; Autopsy)**

A complaint filed by Susan Schweizer alleging the autopsy by Forensic Testing Laboratory, Inc. (Corpus Christi) was incorrect and not done in a professional manner. She points out several details in the autopsy report that she believes are wrong and alleges the laboratory did not conduct certain tests.

**25. No. 26.30; Moten, Latonja (Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences; Autopsy)**

A complaint filed by Latonja Moten regarding the autopsy of her grandchild whom she alleges passed away at Texas Children's Hospital in Houston under "questionable circumstances." She complains that she is still waiting on the autopsy results and that the child died in October 2025 while in the care of her daughter's boyfriend. She requests the Commission ensure the final report is accurate and complete.

**26. No. 26.31; Fore, Charlene (Houston Forensic Science Center; Digital/Multimedia Evidence)**

A complaint filed by Charlene Fore on behalf of defendant Alberto Gillespie. Gillespie was convicted of aggravated robbery in 2003. His case was affirmed on appeal (Anders brief). The complaint requests the Commission review a video tape associated with the case and evaluate whether the person on the video is in fact Alberto Gillespie. The appellate opinion recounts that the victim selected Gillespie from a photo lineup and the license plate of the car involved in the offense was linked to Gillespie.

**27. No. 26.33; Hicks, Mary (Department of Public Safety – Tyler; General Allegations)**

A complaint filed by Mary Hicks regarding her son's case in Gregg County, Texas, requesting the Commission determine whether investigators handled the case in a scientifically sound, unbiased, and legally compliant manner. The initial complaint was followed by another anonymous complaint concerning the same case. The complaints appear to relate to the December 2025 arrest of Christopher Wayne Hicks for the capital murder of his girlfriend and her father, Shawn Glen Blake. (Shawn Blake is specifically mentioned in the anonymous complaint). The anonymous complaint alleges the Gregg County judiciary is marked by "concentrated power, limited transparency, and internal relationships that override public

safety.” The case appears to be pending in Gregg County. Neither complaint alleges any professional negligence or misconduct relating to the forensic analysis of physical evidence.

**28. No. 26.34; Waymire, Victoria (Department of Public Safety – Austin, Bexar County Medical Examiner’s Office; Autopsy)**

A complaint by Victoria Waymire (and three other individuals) involving complex facts with multiple defendants and murder victims in *Davis v. State*, 276 SW3d 491 (Tex. App. Waco 2009). The complaint alleges that current “trajectory reconstruction and ballistic modeling” demonstrates the fatal gunshot wound was an accidental discharge rather than a homicide, and therefore the autopsy findings were incorrect.

**29. No. 26.35; Waymire, Victoria (Bexar County Medical Examiner’s Office; Autopsy)**

A complaint identical to No. 26.34 above, but naming DPS Austin for reasons that are not clear as it is a complaint about autopsy findings.

**30. No. 26.36; Nalley, James (Tarrant County, No Specific Laboratory Identified; General Allegations)**

A complaint filed by James Nalley regarding the 2011 capital murder conviction of Thomas Olivas for the murder of Mechelle Gandy and her infant son. The complaint seeks a general “review regarding forensic evidence and laboratory practices” associated with the case (DNA, trace, crime scene processing). The complaint requests the Commission determine whether forensic standards were met and determine “if additional forensic materials exist that have not been produced.” The complaint does not allege any professional negligence or misconduct related to any forensic analysis of physical evidence but rather seeks a general review.

**31. No. 26.37; Johnson, Carey (No Specific Laboratory Identified; Hair Follicle Drug Testing)**

A complaint filed by Carey Johnson regarding allegations related to family court drug testing evidence.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Drake moved to accept staff’s recommendation to dismiss complaint No. 26.37 because the testing in question was performed principally for the purpose or use in a civil litigation and is outside the jurisdiction of the Commission. Ziemak seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

Kerrigan suggested providing education around this area, as the issue has been raised a few times before. Garcia said she will follow up with colleagues at OCA.

**32. No. 26.40; Downs, James (Department of Public Safety – El Paso; Forensic Biology/DNA)**

A complaint filed by James Downs regarding testimony by the S.A.N.E. nurse and a forensic analyst from DPS—El Paso at his trial. The complaint does not allege professional negligence

or misconduct by either witness. Rather, it alleges the prosecution improperly referred to evidence of vaginal sexual assault even though it was not alleged in the indictment. The same complaint was considered and rejected by the El Paso Court of Appeals in a 2010 unpublished opinion affirming Downs' conviction. The opinion is in your meeting materials. This case was previously reviewed by the DNA Mixture Review team, and they determined the DNA mixture interpretation was not material given the overall case context.

**33. No. 26.46; Hale, Gary (Laboratory Unspecified; Forensic Biology/DNA)**

A complaint filed by defendant Gary Hale requesting the blood of the victim in his case be tested to establish it was menstrual blood. Hale claims the results would be exculpatory.

**34. No. 26.48; Lyon, Richard (Southwestern Institute of Forensic Sciences; Autopsy)**

A complaint filed by defendant Richard Lyon alleging the medical examiner at SWIFS mislabeled his wife's death as a homicide resulting in his murder conviction when newer scientific facts establish his wife's death was due to chronic exposure to arsenic in treated lumber rather than ingestion.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Buzzini moved to accept staff's recommendation to dismiss complaint No. 26.48 due to lack of jurisdiction because the term "forensic analysis" does not include the portion of an autopsy conducted by a medical examiner or other forensic pathologist who is a licensed physician. Kerrigan seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**RECUSAL:** Barnard

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Mitchell moved to accept staff's recommendation to dismiss complaint Nos. 26.21, 26.25, 26.30, 26.34, and 26.35 due to lack of jurisdiction because the term "forensic analysis" does not include the portion of an autopsy conducted by a medical examiner or other forensic pathologist who is a licensed physician. Drake seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Drake moved to accept staff's recommendation to dismiss complaint Nos. 26.31, 26.33, 26.36, 26.40, 26.46, for failure to allege professional negligence or misconduct related to the forensic analysis of physical evidence. Mitchell seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**5. Discuss status of crime laboratory accreditation program (Tomlin), including:**

**a. Summary of accreditation activities, communications, and reports received since the April 24, 2026, quarterly commission meeting; and**

Tomlin reported 7 accreditation related events for consideration by the Commission this quarter. None of the events required follow-up.

**b. Summary of reported non-consensus proficiency testing results from accredited crime laboratories.**

Staff reported 19 proficiency monitoring non-consensus communications from laboratories this quarter. None of the proficiency tests required any further follow-up.

**6. Discuss updates from the Licensing Advisory Committee (Tomlin), including:**

**a. Report on licenses issued and renewed;**

Tomlin reported there are currently 1,392 total licenses. Staff has issued 115 new licenses so far this year.

**b. Report and discuss items from the July 30, 2026, committee meeting;**

Tomlin reported the Licensing Advisory Committee (LAC) met on April 23, 2026. The LAC reviewed the status of Committee member appointments. The Committee also discussed the potential parameters for a Rapid DNA operator/collector license.

The Committee has formed seven domain-based working groups that are developing objectives and study materials to revise and update the General Forensic Analyst and Technician licensing exams. The groups have conducted reviews of each domain tested on the exam for relevancy and updated reading and video materials accordingly. Each group has held meetings to finalize the revised exam study materials. The groups will soon begin drafting new questions with assistance from a psychometrician service (ACS Ventures) that will provide training on question drafting and evaluate the content of the new exam. Staff expect the new exam to be complete within the next year.

**c. Discuss General Forensic Analyst Licensing Exam II audit and final corrective action report;**

Garcia explained that staff discovered an issue with 7 licensee exam grades. To achieve a passing grade on the GFALE II, one must receive a score of at least 70 and reach certain minimums in each of the domain categories. A former employee issued a passing grade for 7 test takers who did not meet the 70-point threshold. Three (3) of these individuals received a license in a mandatory discipline, one (1) of which was not performing criminal case work. Four (4) of the individuals were licensed in voluntary categories. The three mandatory licensees and one voluntary licensee have retaken and passed the exam. The remaining three volunteer licensees will take the exam by December 1, 2026.

Staff completed a root cause analysis and determined the root cause of the grading errors was in part due to a time intensive, manual grading process. Additionally, the grading process did not include a second reviewer for the grades. Kennedy developed an automated, Excel-based formula, and all exam grades are receiving a second review. The review methodology is split into three levels of rigor, determined by the score that is listed in Blackboard.

Staff will release the final corrective action in this matter after the remaining three licensees retake the exam.

- d. Review the Committee's recommended appointments and re-appoint eligible members expiring on August 31, 2026, and appoint new members;

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Ziemak moved to reappoint members Deion Christophe, Lauren Woolridge, and Jessica Frazier. Mitchell seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Ziemak moved to appoint Texas Criminal Defense Lawyer's Association nominee, Nicolas Hughes. Kerrigan seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

- e. Review and possibly adopt any coursework and/or criminal history evaluation recommendations from the Committee;

There were no coursework evaluations this quarter.

- f. Discuss and vote on recommended rule changes by the Committee including, but not limited to amendments to Section 651.207, Forensic Analyst and Forensic Technician Licensing Requirements, Including Initial License Term and Fee, Minimum Education and Coursework, General Forensic Examination, Proficiency Monitoring, and Mandatory Legal and Professional Responsibility Training, to reduce the number of work experience years required for firearms/toolmarks examiners from 5 to 3, to qualify for a waiver of coursework or minimum education requirements;

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Ziemak moved to adopt rule amendments as discussed, subject to suggested non-substantive revisions from the Office of the Governor, Texas Register, and Commission staff. Parsons seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

- g. Discuss and vote on rule changes including, but not limited to amendments to Section 651.219, Code of Professional Responsibility, to clarify Section 651.219(b)(15), requires license holders to communicate honestly and fully with all parties, including the Forensic Science Commission; and

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Kerrigan moved to propose rule amendments as discussed, subject to suggested non-substantive revisions from the Office of the Governor, Texas Register, and Commission staff. Ziemak seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

- h. Report on licensing issues identified by laboratories.

There were no licensing issues to report this quarter.

7. Discuss and vote on recommended rule changes including, but not limited to, amendments to Section 651.307, Investigative Panels, to revise the rule heading from "Investigative Panels" to "Investigative Procedures," to accurately reflect investigative processes may be conducted by an investigative panel of commissioners or commission staff. (Tomlin)

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Parsons moved to adopt rule amendments as discussed, subject to suggested non-substantive revisions from the Office of the Governor, Texas Register, and Commission staff. Drake seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

8. Discuss and vote on rule changes including, but not limited to, new Subchapter F, Department of Public Safety Crime Laboratory Portal Compliance, pursuant to Government Code Section 411.163(b), which authorizes the Commission to take disciplinary action against laboratories that do not comply with the requirement to participate in CLR Connect. (Tomlin)

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Coble moved to propose rule amendments as discussed, subject to suggested non-substantive revisions from the Office of the Governor, Texas Register, and Commission staff. Parsons seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

9. Review and possible adoption of final investigation report from investigative panel in complaint No. 25.77; Federal Public Defender's Office (Houston Police Department/Houston Forensic Science Center; Firearms/Toolmarks); review and adopt minutes from May 27, 2026, investigative panel meeting. (Garcia)

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Barnard moved to adopt the May 27, 2026, investigative panel meeting minutes. Buzzini seconded the motion. The panel unanimously adopted the motion.*

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Ziemak moved to direct staff to retain a firearms/toolmarks subject matter expert to assist the investigative panel with a final investigative report including recommendations. Parsons seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

10. Review and possible adoption of final investigative report from investigative panel in self-disclosure No. 26.07; Southwestern Institute of Forensic Sciences (Seized Drugs). (Smith)

Garcia provided a summary of the disclosure.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Kerrigan moved to adopt the draft investigative report subject to non-substantive revisions by staff. Buzzini seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**RECUSAL:** Barnard

Drake took the motion and mistakenly said 26.18, not 26.07.

11. Review and possible adoption of final investigative report from investigative panel in self-disclosure No. 26.18; Department of Public Safety Waco (Forensic Biology/DNA). (Smith)

Garcia gave a summary of the disclosure.

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Parsons moved to adopt the draft investigative report subject to non-substantive revisions by staff. Kerrigan seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**RECUSAL:** Barnard

**12. Update regarding Statewide Firearms Working Group. (Garcia/Smith)**

Smith shared that group met in June and July. The group is creating a one-page executive summary of VAST tool outputs. The group is also reviewing laboratory firearms standard operating procedures to identify whether laboratories are utilizing the same methods and whether there are any gaps between procedures and current applicable OSAC Registry standards.

**13. Update regarding Statewide Working Group on Rapid DNA, including June 12, 2026, meeting. (Kennedy)**

Kennedy provided an update on the work of the statewide Rapid DNA Working Group. The group developed a revised version of the FBI's Memorandum of Understanding (between accredited laboratories and law enforcement agencies). The group is also creating guidance on which sample types are suitable for this technology, and well as infographics for end-users. The group intends to work with the Department of Public Safety to develop a curriculum to train Rapid DNA operators. The Licensing Advisory Committee is considering what level of licensure to require for Rapid DNA operators. The Rapid DNA Working Group will meet again on September 4, 2026.

**14. Update regarding Texas Forensic Analyst Apprenticeship Pilot (TFAAPP) Program including status of program development and applicable interim charge. (Garcia)**

Garcia shared that the group is developing curriculum to support new forensic analysts in the areas of seized drugs, alcohol toxicology and DNA analysis with input from the Texas Association of Crime Laboratory Directors (TACLD), the Center for Human Identification and the Institute for Forensic Research, Training and Innovation. Staff sent a survey to laboratories to evaluate which disciplines have the greatest demand for apprentices. Staff is seeking a university partner to develop an apprenticeship program for firearms.

**15. Discuss recent and upcoming forensic development training and education projects. (Garcia)**

Staff is also planning for a program focusing on DNA training for lawyers and judges to be held at the Capitol Auditorium in August pursuant to a Court of Criminal Appeals grant in collaboration with the Center for American and International Law.

**16. Report from the DNA Technical Leader Working Group on reporting and testimony (Kennedy)**

Kennedy reported the group continued work on testimony guidance including how to address common questions asked by investigators or in court. The guidance also includes

resources to review including published literature pertaining to Forensic Biology/DNA activity level evaluations.

**17. Update from the Texas Association of Crime Laboratory Directors (TACLD) July 30, 2026, meeting. (Dr. Peter Stout, Texas Association of Crime Laboratory Directors)**

Stout provided an update from the TACLD. At the group's July 30, 2026, meeting, TACLD voted on new officers. The group is preparing for the upcoming legislative session.

**18. Consider possible agenda items for next quarterly meeting.**

Parsons requests that the Commission discuss recently implemented rules related to Delta 8 and Delta 9 THC.

**19. Schedule and location of future panel and quarterly commission meetings including, but not limited, to October 23, 2026; January 29, 2027; April 30, 2027; July 30, 2027; and October 22, 2027.**

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Ziemak moved to direct staff to schedule these meetings. Mitchell seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adopted the motion.*

**20. Public comment.**

There was no public comment other than that noted above.

**21. Adjourn.**

**MOTION AND VOTE:** *Parsons moved to adjourn the meeting. Drake seconded the motion. The Commission unanimously adjourned the meeting at 11:49 AM.*