

Tex. Code Crim. Proc. art. 38.01 (2009)

Art. 38.01. Texas Forensic Science Commission

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

Sec. 2. Definition. In this article, "forensic analysis" has the meaning assigned by Article 38.35(a).

Sec. 3. Composition. (a) The commission is composed of the following nine members:

(1) four members appointed by the governor:

(A) two of whom must have expertise in the field of forensic science;

(B) one of whom must be a prosecuting attorney that the governor selects from a list of 10 names submitted by the Texas District and County Attorneys Association; and

(C) one of whom must be a defense attorney that the governor selects from a list of 10 names submitted by the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association;

(2) three members appointed by the lieutenant governor:

(A) one of whom must be a faculty member or staff member of The University of Texas who specializes in clinical laboratory medicine selected from a list of 10 names submitted to the lieutenant governor by the chancellor of The University of Texas System;

(B) one of whom must be a faculty member or staff member of Texas A&M University who specializes in clinical laboratory medicine selected from a list of 10 names submitted to the lieutenant governor by the chancellor of The Texas A&M University System;

(C) one of whom must be a faculty member or staff member of Texas Southern University who has expertise in pharmaceutical laboratory research selected from a list of 10 names submitted to the lieutenant governor by the chancellor of Texas Southern University; and

(3) two members appointed by the attorney general:

(A) one of whom must be a director or division head of the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth Missing Persons DNA Database; and

(B) one of whom 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 selected from a list of 10 names submitted to the lieutenant governor by the chancellor of Texas State University System.

(b) Each member of the commission serves a two-year term. The term of the members appointed under Subsections (a)(1) and (2) expires on September 1 of each odd-numbered year. The term of the members appointed under Subsection (a)(3) expires on September 1 of each even-numbered year.

(c) The governor shall designate a member of the commission to serve as the presiding officer.

Sec. 4. Duties. (a) The commission shall:

(1) develop and implement a reporting system through which accredited laboratories, facilities, or entities report professional negligence or misconduct;

(2) require all laboratories, facilities, or entities that conduct forensic analyses to report professional negligence or misconduct to the commission; and

(3) investigate, in a timely manner, any allegation of professional negligence or misconduct that would substantially affect the integrity of the results of a forensic analysis conducted by an accredited laboratory, facility, or entity.

(b) An investigation under Subsection (a)(3):

(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; and

(C) any corrective action required of the laboratory, facility, or entity; 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).

(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 laboratory, facility, or entity investigated under this section pay any costs incurred to ensure compliance with Subsection (b)(1).

(e) The commission shall make all investigation reports completed under Subsection (b)(1) available to the public. A report completed under Subsection (b)(1), in a subsequent civil or criminal proceeding, is not prima facie evidence of the information or findings contained in the report.

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.

Texas Forensic Science Commission

Justice Through Science

Sam Houston State University

Skip to content

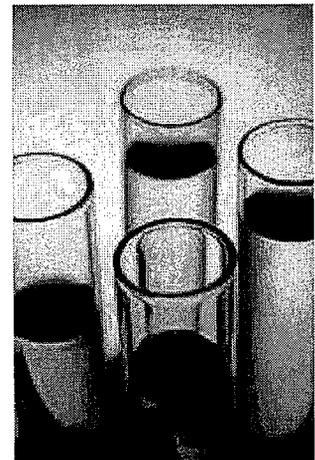
Nav

- [Home](#)
- [About Us](#)
- [Meeting Information](#)
- [Commission Members](#)
- [Reporting Form](#)
- [Texas Register](#)
- [NAS Report](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [PIA Requests](#)
- [Editorials](#)

Mission

The Texas Forensic Science Commission was created by the Texas Legislature in 2005 for the purpose of:

- A. Developing & implementing a reporting system through which accredited laboratories, facilities, or entities report professional negligence or misconduct
- B. Requiring all laboratories, facilities, or entities that conduct forensic analyses to report professional negligence or misconduct to the commission
- C. Investigating, in a timely manner, any allegation of professional negligence or misconduct that would substantially affect the integrity of the results of a forensic analysis conducted by an accredited laboratory, facility or entity.



Announcements

Please click on the [Editorials](#) link for a press release from the Commission.

Texas Forensic Science Commission
Minutes from May 15, 2009 Meeting in Dallas, Texas

Members Present: Bassett, Kerrigan, Hampton, Adams, Eisenberg

Members Absent: Hamilton, Natarajan, Watts, Levy

(Additional attendees included: Veena Mohan, Assistant Attorney General, Administrative Law Division; Leigh Tomlin, TFSC Coordinator; Gabriel Oberfield, Innocence Project; Mark Adams, Office of the Governor; Erin Spargo, SWIFS; Stacy McDonald, SWIFS; Timothy Sliter, Dallas County, SWIFS; Elizabeth Todd, SWIFS; Manuel Valadez, Jr., DPS Garland; Lorna Beasley, DPS Garland)

The meeting began with an approval of the March 2009 meeting minutes. The Commission approved the minutes with revisions by Motion from Kerrigan. The Motion was seconded by Hampton. Bassett announced that the March 2009 meeting minutes will be posted on the Commission's website on Monday.

The meeting continued with an update on office activities from Tomlin. Tomlin reminded commission members to submit any outstanding reimbursement requests and/or personal financial statements. The personal financial statement extended deadline is June 29th for those who requested an extension before the April 30th deadline. Tomlin reviewed the TFSC complaint list and reviewed the status of each case with Commission members. No new complaints have been received by the Commission other than the revised complaint form from the anonymous complainant. Tomlin indicated that the Anonymous complaint form and the individual complaint forms have been modified with the Commission's revisions and also posted on the website. In addition, the website has also been updated with a short press release from the Commission on the NAS report. A link to the summary of the NAS report is also provided. Tomlin also mentioned her communications with Dr. Shaler, the expert to review the Moon case. Tomlin informed Dr. Shaler that he was selected by the Commission to conduct the investigation. Dr. Shaler indicated his availability for the investigation. Tomlin indicated that Eisenberg would provide more information about communications with Dr. Shaler later in the meeting.

The Willis/Willingham case was then discussed by the Commission. Bassett indicated that the Commission should expect something for Dr. Beyler the first half of June. The Fire Marshal's Office has communicated to Bassett that they will be providing a more detailed response to the complaint before the Commission's July meeting. Bassett explained that he expects that the Commission will be able to come up with their own report sometime in the fall, after the July meeting.

The status of the Moon case was then discussed by the Commission. Eisenberg took the lead in this discussion, commenting on his conversations with Dr. Shaler, the expert to review the Moon case. Dr. Shaler conveyed what his hourly rates were and what his availability looked like in the upcoming months. Eisenberg explained that the

Commission would need to obtain more information about the case to provide to Dr. Shaler, before he can provide the Commission with a concrete estimate on the cost of the investigation. In order to obtain that information, the Commission will send a letter to DPS requesting any information available on the case. The Commission will also send a similar letter to the El Paso DA's office.

The meeting continued with a discussion of current legislation (HB4143 and SB1909) involving the Commission. Bassett explained that if the bills pass without funding, it will be a future agenda item to discuss how we would like to proceed in contacting the appropriate committees for funding the activities proposed in the bills. Bassett indicated he had some conversation with Senator Gallegos' Chief of Staff. Bassett explained to him that we were open to the idea of the bills being put under our jurisdiction, but will need the funding and the time. From what Bassett understood, it is intended that the program will be approved first and funding logistics will come later. Kerrigan indicated that there is significant concern for any mobile testing of samples for an audit, as any mobile retesting of samples could completely compromise the outcome of any investigation involving the samples. Commission members discussed that a paper audit protocol seems more plausible than audits involving random retesting of samples. Bassett indicated that the Commission could, over the next couple of years, come up with ideas on how we would implement a paper audit program as opposed to actually retesting samples.

The next agenda item discussed was the NAS Report in Comparison to Texas Forensic Laboratory Procedures and also the Proposal for Open Meeting on Development/Expansion of TFSC's Oversight. Kerrigan indicated that she was able to get in touch with some people about potential meeting locations in which stakeholders would be invited to bring their ideas. Stakeholders in the field of forensic science would be invited to look at ideas concerning the 13 recommendations in the NAS report and put together a comparison to the State of Texas' current practices. The meeting would consist of a series of roundtable discussions in which stakeholders could put together some solutions to the current problems in Texas. Kerrigan indicated that the four meeting locations would probably be Houston, Austin, Dallas and possibly San Antonio. Adams recommended that the Commission should conduct a similar meeting in El Paso or in Lubbock also, to reach that part of the state. Kerrigan explained that DPS would host us a site for the meeting in Austin. Kerrigan will work on the logistics of the meetings if approved. The meetings would be conducted over a year. The Commission indicated they would like to include as many agencies as possible. Several topic ideas for the roundtable discussions were presented by Commission members.

It was decided that Kerrigan will work on setting up specific dates, locations, cost estimates, timeframes, registration forms, roundtable topics, a rough agenda and potential meeting facilitators that may work best for the meetings. Kerrigan will provide the Commission with an update at the July meeting in Houston.

At this time, Bassett and Commission members discussed the best location and date for the next Texas Forensic Science Commission meeting. It was decided that the next meeting will be held in Houston, July 24th, 2009.

Distribution of information on the TFSC was discussed next. A list of potential Commission outreach activities was reviewed by Commission members. Commission members would like to attend each meeting and give a short informative presentation on the Commission to inform stakeholders of the Commission's activities. Commission members made some assignments to appear at certain meetings throughout the state. Bassett is to contact Ed Salazar regarding the Fire Marshal's annual meeting in October. Bassett will give a presentation on the Commission at that meeting if possible.

The TFSC poster to be placed in all DPS labs was discussed. Tomlin is to get with CJ publications at Sam Houston State University regarding revisions to the design of the poster. Tomlin and Kerrigan will work on distribution of the poster. Tomlin is to keep track of where the poster goes and the response received from labs.

The Commission also discussed lab visits for Commission members. For those Commission members that are less familiar with lab environment, it was discussed that it may be useful in conjunction with the town hall forums for them to visit the labs.

The meeting continued with a review of any complaint forms received. It was decided that for one pending case more information would be requested from the agency the complaint is against. For a new complaint received by the Commission, it was decided that all of the complaint materials would be sent to the agency the complaint is against, along with a request for a response to the complaint. It was also decided that the complaint would be forwarded to the corresponding accrediting agency. The Commission will review any updates on these cases at the July meeting in Houston.

Legislative budgeting was then addressed by Bassett. Bassett indicated that his expectation is that the budget will remain unchanged for the next two years. Sam Houston State University has been taking care of any calls to testify as far as Bassett knows.

The meeting continued with a public comment period in which meeting attendees were invited to comment on the Commission's activities. Tim Sliter reiterated the stress and the problems that would be involved in retesting samples as part of an audit process. He indicated that it would be highly problematic for labs. Manuel Valadez, Jr. also offered similar comments.

The Commission then conducted a short review of any agenda items or assignments to be completed before the next meeting. After a brief closing discussion, the meeting was adjourned by Motion from Bassett and seconded by Kerrigan.

The Commission reviewed any agenda items to be completed before the next meeting.

The next meeting for the Commission is to be held in Houston on July 24th, 2009, beginning at 9:30 a.m.

The meeting following the July 2009 meeting shall take place in September 2009, and the date and location will be determined at the July 24th, 2009 meeting.

**TEXAS FORENSIC SCIENCE COMMISSION
COMPLAINT FORM
-INDIVIDUAL-**

Please complete this form and return to:

Texas Forensic Science Commission
Sam Houston State University
College of Criminal Justice - CL17
PO Box 2296
816 17th Street
Huntsville, TX 77341-2296
Phone: 1(888) 296-4232
Fax: 1(888) 305-2432

The Texas Forensic Science Commission investigates complaints that allege professional negligence or misconduct by a laboratory, facility or entity that has been accredited by the Director of the Texas Department of Public Safety that would substantially affect the integrity of the results of a forensic analysis.

The term "forensic analysis" means a medical, chemical, toxicological, ballistic, or other examination or test performed on physical evidence, including DNA evidence, for the purpose of determining the connection of the evidence to a criminal action. The term does not include: latent fingerprint examinations; a breath test specimen or the portion of an autopsy conducted by a medical examiner or licensed physician.

The Commission will examine the details of your complaint to determine what level of investigation to perform. All complaints are taken seriously. Because of the complex nature and number of complaints received by the Texas Forensic Science Commission, we cannot give you any specific date by which that review may be completed.

If the criteria for an investigation are met, the Commission will send a letter to the complainant, laboratory/facility and/or individual(s) named in the complaint indicating that the Commission has received the complaint. The Commission will then request a response from the entity and/or individual who is the subject of the complaint. We may also need to obtain additional information from you.

If the criteria for an investigation are not met or the Commission declines to investigate further, you will receive a letter from the Commission.

All information and complaints are subject to the Texas Public Information Act (Texas Government Code Chapter 552).

Your cooperation, patience and understanding are appreciated.

1. PERSON COMPLETING THIS FORM

Name:
Address:
City: State:
Zip Code:
Home Phone: Work Phone:
Email Address (if any):

2. SUBJECT OF COMPLAINT

List the full name, address of the laboratory, facility or individual that is the subject of this complaint (if known):

Individual/Laboratory:

Address:

City: State:

Date of Examination, Analysis, or Report:

Type of forensic analysis:

Laboratory Case Number (if known):

Is the forensic analysis associated with any law enforcement investigation, prosecution or criminal litigation? Yes No

*If you answered "Yes" above, provide the following information (if possible):

*Name of Defendant:

*Case Number/Cause Number:

(if unknown, leave blank)

*Nature of Case:

(e.g burglary, murder, etc.)

*The county where case was investigated, prosecuted or filed:

*The court:

*The outcome of case:

*Names of attorneys in case (if known):

*Your relationship with the defendant:

- Self Family Member Parent
 Friend Attorney None

Other (please specify):

*If you are not the defendant, please provide us with the following information

regarding the defendant:

Name:

Address (if known):

Home phone number: Work phone number:

3. WITNESSES

Provide the following about any person with factual knowledge or expertise regarding the alleged professional negligence or misconduct which is the subject of this complaint. Attach separate sheet(s), if necessary.

First witness (if any):

Name:

Address:

Daytime phone: Evening phone:

Fax : Email Address:

Second witness (if any):

Name:

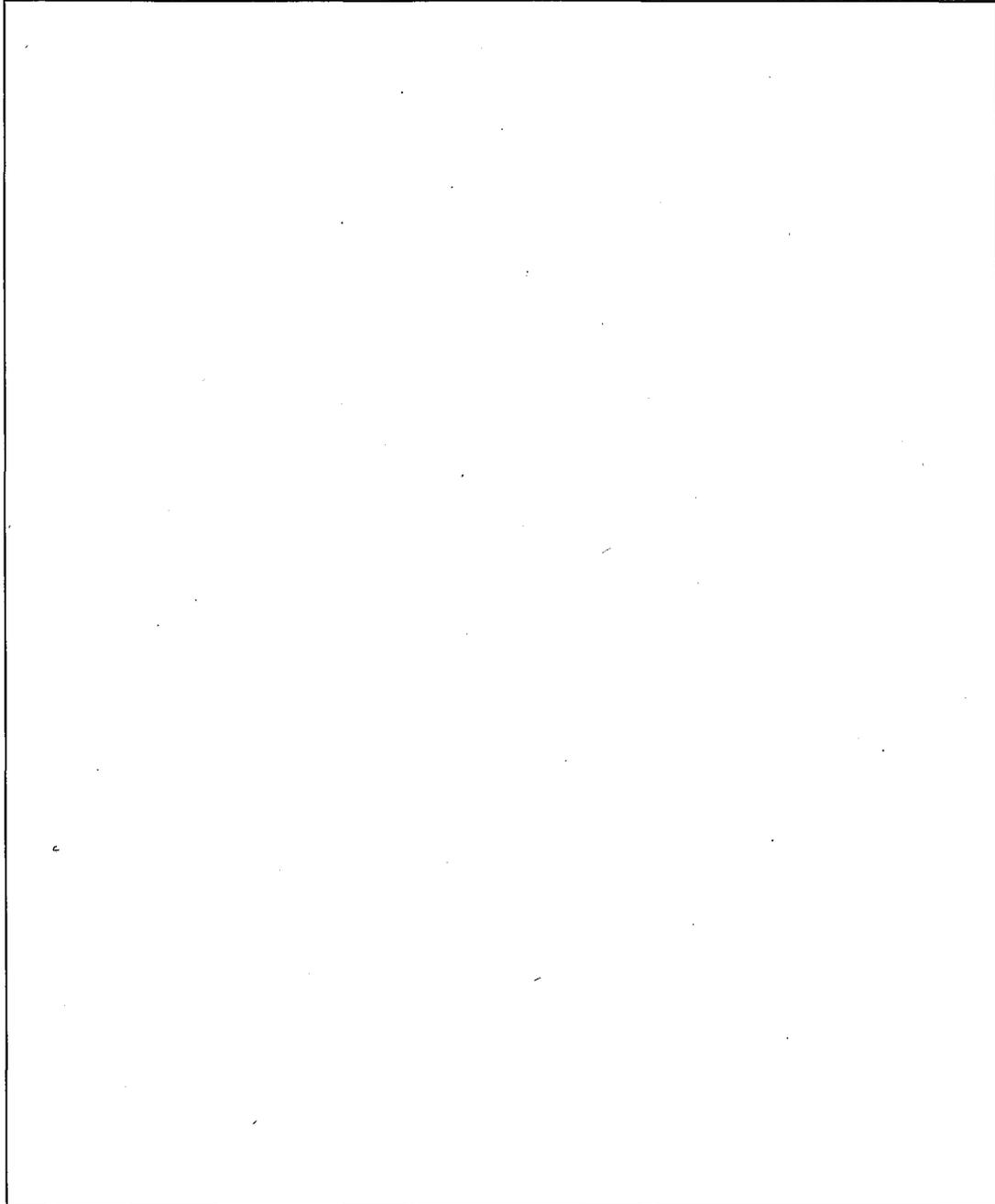
Address:

Daytime phone: Evening phone:

Fax : Email Address:

4. DESCRIPTION OF COMPLAINT

Please write a *brief* statement of event(s), acts or omissions you believe show that an accredited laboratory, facility or other entity committed professional negligence or misconduct that substantially affected the integrity of the results of a forensic analysis. You may use additional paper, if necessary.



5. EXHIBITS AND ATTACHMENT(S)

Whenever possible, complaints should be accompanied by readable copies (NO ORIGINALS) of any laboratory reports, relevant witness testimony, affidavits of experts about the forensic analysis, or other documents related to your complaint. Please list and attach any documents that might assist the Commission to evaluate your complaint.

Documents provided will NOT be returned.

List of attachments:

6. YOUR SIGNATURE AND VERIFICATION

You must sign below:

By signing below, I certify that the statements made by me in this complaint are true. I also certify that any documents or exhibits attached are true and correct copies, to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Date signed:

TEXAS FORENSIC SCIENCE COMMISSION ANONYMOUS COMPLAINT FORM

Please complete this form and return to:

Texas Forensic Science Commission
Sam Houston State University
College of Criminal Justice - CL17
PO Box 2296
816 17th Street
Huntsville, TX 77341-2296
Phone: 1(888) 296-4232
Fax: 1(888) 305-2432

The Texas Forensic Science Commission investigates complaints that allege professional negligence or misconduct by a laboratory, facility or entity that has been accredited by the Director of the Texas Department of Public Safety that would substantially affect the integrity of the results of a forensic analysis.

The term "forensic analysis" means a medical, chemical, toxicological, ballistic, or other examination or test performed on physical evidence, including DNA evidence, for the purpose of determining the connection of the evidence to a criminal action. The term does not include: latent fingerprint examinations; a breath test specimen or the portion of an autopsy conducted by a medical examiner or licensed physician.

The Commission will examine the details of your complaint to determine what level of investigation to perform. All complaints are taken seriously. Because of the complex nature and number of complaints received by the Texas Forensic Science Commission, we cannot give you any specific date by which that review may be completed.

If the criteria for an investigation are met, the Commission will send a letter to the complainant, laboratory/facility and/or individual(s) named in the complaint indicating that the Commission has received the complaint. The Commission will then request a response from the entity and/or individual who is the subject of the complaint. We may also need to obtain additional information from you.

If the criteria for an investigation are not met or the Commission declines to investigate further, you will receive a letter from the Commission.

Your cooperation, patience and understanding are appreciated.

Note: this form should only be used if the complaint originates from a laboratory employee or an individual affiliated with a laboratory.

Routine complaints filed by individuals should use the form entitled "TEXAS FORENSIC SCIENCE COMMISSION COMPLAINT FORM - INDIVIDUAL". To download this form, go to www.fsc.state.tx.us.

Filing an anonymous complaint may impede the investigation process since we may not be able to communicate with you.

While the Texas Forensic Science Commission encourages all persons alleging professional negligence or misconduct to sign and verify the complaint, we provide this form in cases where the person submitting the original complaint wishes to do so anonymously.

The Texas Forensic Science Commission cannot guarantee your anonymity despite the use of this form.

All information and complaints are subject to the Texas Public Information Act (Texas Government Code Chapter 552).

1. ANONYMOUS COMPLAINT ORIGINATING FROM A LABORATORY

If you are submitting an anonymous complaint but are willing to provide us with a way to contact you (e.g. email), please provide details below:

2. SUBJECT OF COMPLAINT

List the full name, address of the laboratory, facility or individual that is the subject of this complaint (if known):

Individual/Laboratory:

Address:

City: State:

Applicable dates or date of examination, analysis, or report:

Type of forensic analysis:

Laboratory Case Number(s) (if known):

Is the forensic analysis associated with any law enforcement investigation, prosecution or criminal litigation? Yes No

If the subject of your complaint pertains to a specific case, please provide the information below. Otherwise, please proceed to Section 3.

*If you answered "Yes" above, provide the following information (if possible):

*Name of Defendant:

*Case Number/Cause Number:

(if unknown, leave blank)

*Nature of Case:

(e.g burglary, murder, etc.)

*The county where case was investigated, prosecuted or filed:

*The court:

*The outcome of case:

*Names of attorneys in case (if known):

*Your role in the case (if any):

Examiner/Scientist Laboratory Employee Other

Other (please specify):

3. WITNESSES

Provide the following about any person with factual knowledge or expertise regarding the alleged professional negligence or misconduct which is the subject of this complaint. Attach separate sheet(s), if necessary. If there are none, please proceed to Section 4.

First witness (if any):

Name:

Address:

Daytime phone: Evening phone:

Fax : Email Address:

Second witness (if any):

Name:

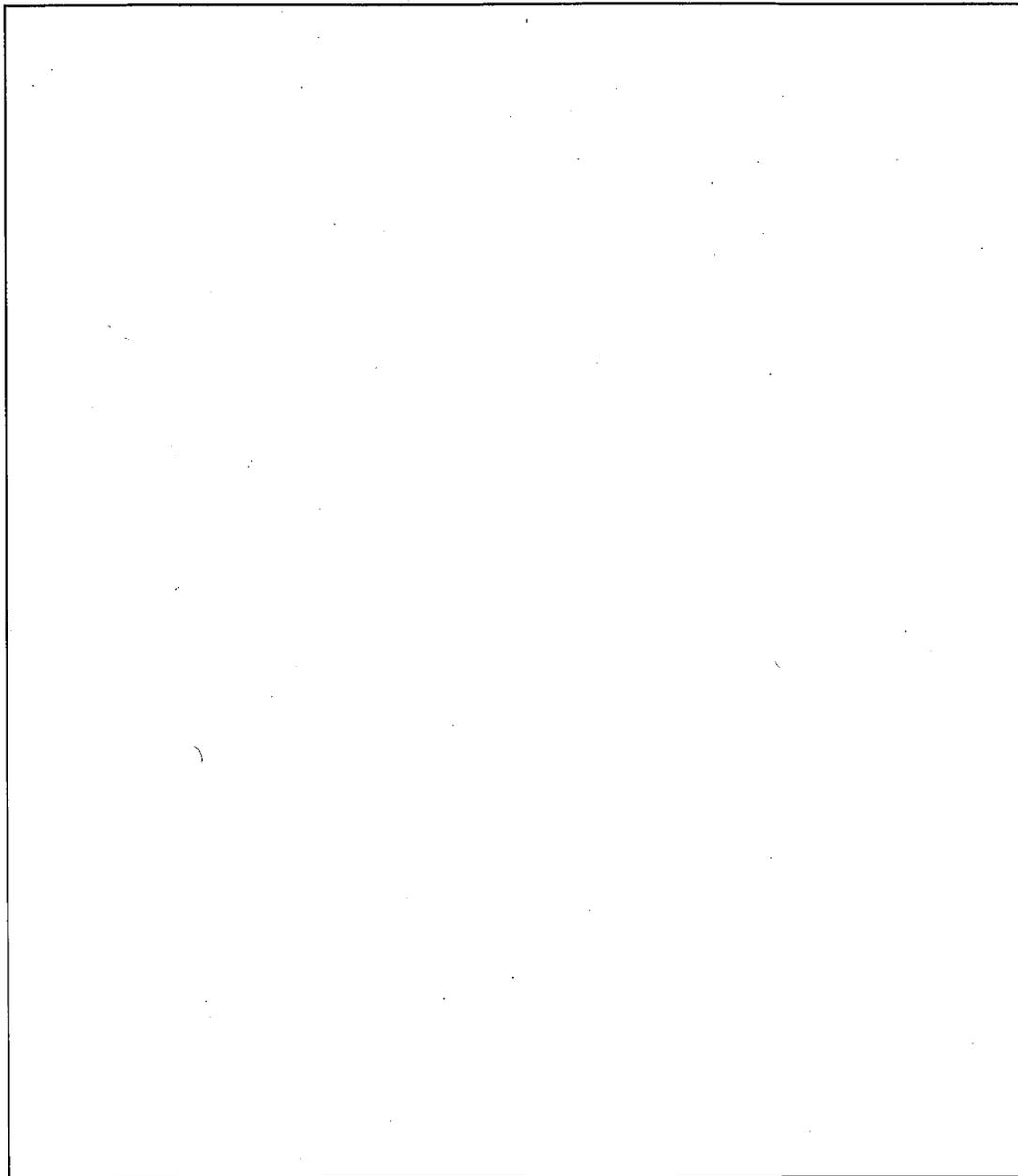
Address:

Daytime phone: Evening phone:

Fax : Email Address:

4. DESCRIPTION OF COMPLAINT

Please write a *brief* statement of event(s), acts or omissions you believe show that an accredited laboratory, facility or other entity committed professional negligence or misconduct that substantially affected the integrity of the results of a forensic analysis. You may use additional paper, if necessary.



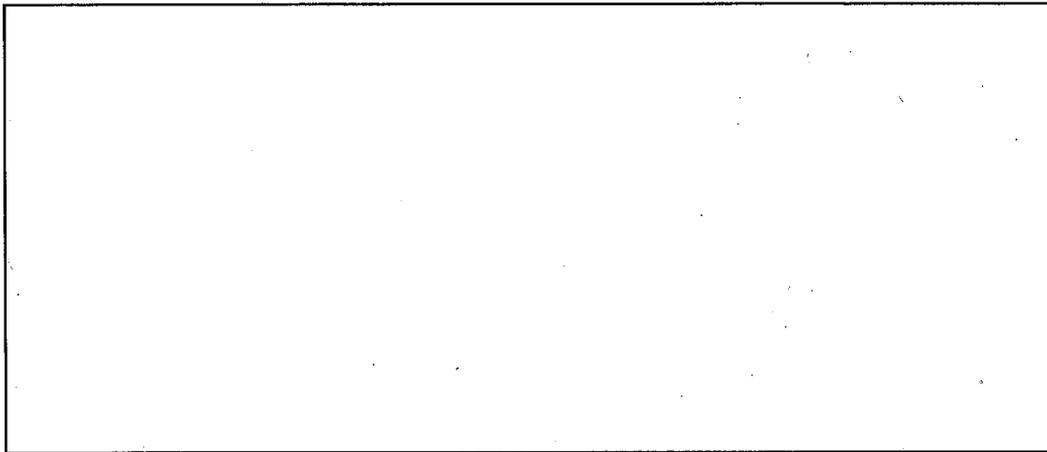
5. EXHIBITS AND ATTACHMENT(S)

Whenever possible, complaints should be accompanied by readable copies (NO ORIGINALS) of any laboratory reports, relevant witness testimony, affidavits of experts about the forensic analysis, or other documents related to your complaint. Please list and attach any documents that might assist the Commission to evaluate your complaint.

Please bear in mind that anonymous complaints are more difficult to investigate and should be accompanied by supporting documents wherever possible.

Documents provided will NOT be returned.

List of attachments:



6. SUBMISSION OF THE COMPLAINT

By submitting this anonymous complaint form to the Texas Forensic Science Commission, the individual submitting the complaint acknowledges that the statements made in the complaint are true and that any documents or exhibits attached are true and correct copies, to the best of their knowledge.

Texas Forensic Science Commission

Justice Through Science



Texas Forensic Science Commission: A Work in Progress

by John Bradley

I am John Bradley, the elected District Attorney in Williamson County and the new presiding officer of the nine-member Texas Forensic Science Commission. I am writing to introduce myself, explain the purpose of the Commission and inform you about the work the Commission now faces.

The Commission wants to reassure you that the Willingham case, involving a study of the application of the forensic science of arson, will be completed. However, pending the release of a final report by the Commission, you should be skeptical of media reports, personal pronouncements and editorials on that case. Those with agendas separate from the advancement of forensic science have made exaggerated claims and drawn premature conclusions about the case. The Commission can only ask that the public be patient and permit the Commission to apply a disciplined, scientific approach to the investigation. That kind of hard work takes time, careful deliberation and is not likely to result in a simplistic report.

You also need to know that the Commission was created to determine only whether there was negligence or misconduct by an accredited laboratory conducting forensic analyses of certain kinds of evidence in specific cases. The Commission does not decide whether persons are guilty or innocent of criminal offenses. The Commission also is not a forum for the debate of social issues, such as the appropriateness of the death penalty. Such discussions are better suited for our court system and the legislative process.

The Commission was created in 2005 but still is in its infancy. Actual work by the Commission began only two years ago. After several weeks of educating myself about the brief history of the Commission, I have learned there is still significant work to be done before decisions by the Commission can be treated as authoritative.

John M. Bradley
Presiding Officer

Commission Office
Leigh Tomlin
Commission Coordinator

*Texas Forensic Science Commission
Sam Houston State University
College of Criminal Justice
Box 2296
816 17th Street
Huntsville, TX 77341-2296*

Phone: 1 (888) 296-4232
Fax: 1 (888) 305-2432

First, no state agency should operate without clear written policies and procedures. Those policies and procedures help public servants apply consistent standards and avoid accusations of making up the rules as they go along. The Commission does not have any written policies and procedures; there are no consistent standards currently being applied to the work of the Commission. For example, there are no definitions of what constitutes negligence or misconduct by a forensic scientist. There is not even a written standard for deciding what cases should be accepted for review or how the Commission reviews, investigates and draws conclusions in such cases. For a state agency with a mission to improve the application of forensic science, the absence of such definitions and standards is unacceptable. And that is why I have reached out to the Director of the Office of Court Administration of the Judicial Branch for assistance in drafting policies and procedures to be adopted by the Commission.

Second, any investigative process should be handled under professional investigative standards that maintain the highest level of integrity. Currently, the Commission simply delegates an investigation to a person outside the Commission through a competitive bid process. Once an investigator is assigned to a case, there is no established process for and oversight of the investigation, leaving the complainant, the person subject to investigation and the Commission subject to accusations of inappropriate outside influence and the damaging effects of the premature release of sensitive information; these gaps in process could create doubts about the integrity of final reports even before they are issued. At my request, the Director of the Department of Public Safety has offered the assistance of the Texas Rangers in drafting investigative standards that will reassure you of the integrity of Commission investigations.

Third, most state agencies with investigative and deliberate functions are protected by laws designed to keep such information confidential until a final decision is released. Unfortunately, the law creating the Commission does not include those protections. While the Commission's work should remain ultimately transparent, the sensitive process of receiving a complaint, investigating that complaint, deliberating on a case and preparing a final report, must be protected from interference and improper outside influence until a final report is issued. I have asked lawyers with the Attorney General's Office, who have expertise in such matters, to advise the Commission on how it can make improvements.

Fourth, the Commission must have sufficient resources to create an independent, authoritative presence in the forensic science field. Commission members all have full-time jobs that prevent them from meeting frequently and conducting the detailed sort of study required by these cases. The Commission currently has one employee to handle all of the administrative, legal and public contact work of the Commission. That simply is insufficient. I will be talking to the Legislature about future funding so the Commission can grow into a mature, well-respected entity.

Finally, the Commission should also have a positive role in the development of best practices in the various fields of forensic science. Through better training, the Commission can help raise the standards for the application of forensic science in our courtrooms. But there is nothing in the law authorizing such work by the Commission. I will be asking the Legislature to expand the legal authority of the Commission to provide such leadership.

This will not all be done overnight. Working together, the Commission may need several years to complete all of these goals. But, I can assure you that the members of the Commission take their appointments seriously and are excited to be involved in the advancement of forensic science in Texas courts. You can do your part in supporting this process by exercising patience and telling anyone who will listen that good work takes time.