

Incident / Corrective Action Plan Form **Unauthorized Access to Back Lab**

Incident/Corrective Action Number: 2023-01

Date of Discovery: Initial - April 26, 2023/Updated - October 2, 2023

Incident Date(s): April 26, 2023

Section: All

Reported By: Seized Drugs Analyst

Classification: Incident

Incident Type: Procedural

Description of Non-Conformity:

Sometimes between 11:20 AM and 12:20 PM on April 26, 2023, two unknown personnel entered the Laboratory. It was at this time that the evidence Technician was out for lunch, the Quality Assurance Manager was out sick, the Seized drug Analyst was at his desk towards the back of the Laboratory, and the Laboratory Director was in the back lab working cases. There was no one in the front area of the Laboratory. When there is no one in the front area, a sign is normally placed on the main door stating "personnel are in the back lab and to knock hard" or "personnel are gone from the lab". No present Laboratory personnel heard anyone knock. Upon entering and not finding anyone in the front area, the unknown personnel proceeded to walk to the back of the Laboratory without signing in. The doorway prior to entering the rest of the Laboratory has a sign-in sheet with a statement saying that any visitor past that point must sign in. The unknown personnel continued until the Seized Drug analyst was encountered. That analyst was not able to identify the personnel but did recall the personnel were there to invite certain Laboratory employees to the administrative luncheon.

The Evidence Technician reached out to the Administrative Captain and asked if it would be possible to get video footage because at this point no one in the Laboratory knew who the two people were or how access was gained into the Laboratory. Investigation revealed that both persons were employees of the Sheriff's Office. Their names and titles are Lt. Stephen Bailey, the Internal Affairs Lieutenant and Suzanne Kincheloe, the Administrative Assistant to the Sheriff. It was unknown to Laboratory personnel that the Lieutenant had badge access to the front door.

Root Cause Analysis:

Laboratory management did not realize that other than Laboratory personnel, the Sheriff, the Chief Deputy, and the Administrative Captain, anyone else had badge access to Laboratory.

Level of Non-Conformity: N/A

Level of Non-Conformity Determination and its Impact on Casework:

Fortunately, this appears to be a one-time occurrence with no impact on Laboratory function; however, the security of the Laboratory was compromised. Investigation revealed a list of Departmental personnel who have badge access including the Sheriff's Office building maintenance Lieutenant and the Brazoria County electronics foreman. Fortunately, the Laboratory is secured by a parameter alarm system when no one is present in the Laboratory. This alarm would be triggered if not unarmed with the proper passcode. The triggered alarm is monitored by Patrol dispatch who in turn reach out to tiered Laboratory personnel for response. To the Laboratory's knowledge, no one other than direct Laboratory personnel has an unarming passcode.

Preventive Action(s):

1. Obtain signatures of all Brazoria County personnel who have badge access to the Laboratory's main door.
2. Update the Access Log (LOG-08) with all personnel who have Laboratory access.
3. Due to this nonconformance being reclassified as an incident from a corrective action, the CAR generated during the original documentation will be withdrawn. This CAR will however remain a part of the history of the Laboratory's response and be included in requests for information concerning this nonconformance. This revised CAP reflects the use of the new CAP form that was updated after the Laboratory's 2023 ANAB assessment. The new CAP form better highlights the root cause analysis and impact on casework of the nonconformance.


Proposed Corrective Action(s): N/A

Timeframe for Corrective Action(s): Hopefully, less than a month, but depending on how quickly the Laboratory can obtain signatures of the required individuals, possibly longer.



Lab Quality Manager

20 Nov. 2023
Date



Laboratory Director

11 Oct 2023
Date