



### **Policy Overview**

The Houston Forensic Science Center (HFSC) strives to provide timely, high-quality results for all end users. The Multimedia section can best optimize its policies and procedures, resulting in better service to clients, if they have all the information needed to begin analysis at the time of request. The intent of this policy is to provide clients with what is needed to be able to work requests in regard to search authority, what is needed in large item cases, and expectations around analysis for court. The Multimedia section's goal is to serve its community and provide high quality forensic services by working with clients to best understand and balance needs with the section's limited resources.

### **Search Authority**

Cases that are received without documented search authority will be rejected. Search authority documentation should be uploaded at the time of request in HFSC's Portal system. If the search authority document is too large to upload it should be emailed to [triage@hfsctx.gov](mailto:triage@hfsctx.gov) at the time the request is being made.

### **Priority Requests**

The Multimedia section prioritizes requests where consent for analysis may be revoked in the near future. This is a common occurrence with cell phones. The section also considers court dates, age of the case, and offense type when managing active casework.

### **Large item requests**

The Multimedia section considers requests with more than 3 computer devices to be a large item request. Large item requests may be broken down into 3 items per request. If a request is a large item request, then the requestor should place the request through Portal and then reach out to [triage@hfsctx.gov](mailto:triage@hfsctx.gov) to collaborate with the section on which items are the highest priority and should be analyzed in the first request. Items beyond this will be worked in a separate request, if needed. This helps the section serve you in the timeliest manner. If there is no contact with the section within 10 business days after the large request is received, the request will be canceled.

### **Analysis for Court**

The Multimedia section needs 90 - day notice to do the analysis required for court. This includes re-analysis of evidence items of former analysts that are not available to testify. If the client has lost derivative items provided during analysis, then there will be a fee charged on a case-by-case basis to perform re-analysis of the original evidence, if it is still available.

### **Policy exceptions**

To request an exception to this policy, contact HFSC's triage staff at [triage@hfsctx.gov](mailto:triage@hfsctx.gov) or 713-929-6760, and provide the following information: name, email, phone number, case number, items needing testing, type of testing requested, and reason for exception.