



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCE

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
A Nationally Accredited Laboratory

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NOTICE OF DFS POLICY CHANGE

To: All Agencies Serviced by the Department of Forensic Science Laboratories
From: Linda C. Jackson, Director 
Date: January 6, 2020
RE: Revised Procedure for Methamphetamine Purity Determinations

The Department of Forensic Science (DFS or the Department) continues to review its controlled substances procedures in an effort to identify and improve efficiency in its analysis of these cases. Under Virginia Code § 18.2-248, a purity determination is required if a minimum mandatory term of imprisonment is sought by the Commonwealth for methamphetamine distribution cases involving specific net weights. Accordingly, DFS has historically determined the purity of methamphetamine in such cases.

Currently, an examiner handling one of these cases may call the customer to inquire whether a purity determination is needed once it is determined that the net weight falls within one of those categories. Often, the process of establishing contact with and obtaining a response from the customer is time consuming, as it often warrants consultation between the investigating officer and the assigned prosecutor. Given the disproportionate number of methamphetamine cases in southwest Virginia, the Western Laboratory sees the greatest impact.

Effective immediately, in an effort to streamline the analytical process for methamphetamine cases, the weight of any methamphetamine mixture will be reported without a purity determination. When the weight falls within an established weight threshold as defined in § 18.2-248, the Certificate of Analysis will clearly indicate that a purity determination was not performed (see example below).

Item 1 12.28 ± 0.57 grams of powder, found to contain Methamphetamine (Schedule II). A purity determination was not performed.

If quantitation of the purity of the methamphetamine mixture is required, the evidence may be resubmitted with a written request from the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney for the purity determination to be performed. Those resubmissions will be given priority by the Department. Should a prosecutor anticipate that the purity determination will be required in advance, a written request may also be submitted at the time of the initial submission of the evidence.

For questions, please contact the Controlled Substances Section Supervisor at the DFS Laboratory that provides service to your agency:

- Central (Richmond) – John Przybylski @ (804) 588-4154
- Eastern (Norfolk) – Brian Meinweiser @ (757) 355-5958
- Northern (Manassas) – Jeana Rodenas @ (703) 334-9736
- Western (Roanoke) – Chris Bryant @ (540) 283-5927