



Central (Richmond)



Northern (Manassas)



Eastern (Norfolk)



Western (Roanoke)

DEPARTMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCE UPDATE

Linda C. Jackson, Director

Presented to the Forensic Science Board

January 7, 2026





Central Laboratory Capital Project

- On schedule and within budget
- Received Temporary Certificate of Occupancy
- New Address:

Virginia Department of Forensic Science
Central Laboratory
8850 Times Dispatch Blvd
Mechanicsville, VA 23116

Phone numbers - TBD





Facility Planning

Moving

- In procurement process for moving services
- Anticipate move beginning late February or early March
- Five-week timeline

Carryover Funding Approved

- To cover maintenance of current facility until it is transferred to new owner
- To cover unknown utility costs at new facility



Retirements & New Personnel

Retirements:

- Brad Jenkins
- Elise Stroble



New Forensic Biology Program
Manager – Elizabeth Ballard

Forensic Training



Forensic Science Academy

- 116th FSA Session graduated Nov. 14, 2025
- **Only two sessions planned in 2026**

Additional short courses to be offered:

- Alternate Light Source (ALS), BLUESTAR and Impression Evidence - Richmond, VA (01/21/2026 - 01/23/2026)
- Crime Scene Sketching
- Special Techniques for Advanced Photographers
- Impression Evidence
- Basic Crime Scene Photography
- Basic Crime Scene Investigation

Potential Legislation – Scientific Advisory Committee



§ 9.1-1112. Meetings and chairman.

The Committee shall meet twice a year in the City of Richmond and at such other times and places as it determines or as directed by the Governor or the Forensic Science Board. A chairman shall be elected from among the members appointed by the Governor. Staff to the Committee shall be provided by the Department of Forensic Science.

- Remove designated meeting location to allow meetings at the new Central Laboratory in Hanover County

Board of Pharmacy Expedited Scheduling



DFS recommended two (2) compounds in October 2025. The compounds were considered at the Board's December 10th meeting and are pending final approval.

Depressant Properties:

- Methylclonazepam
- Ethylbromazolam



New Multidiscipline Dashboards



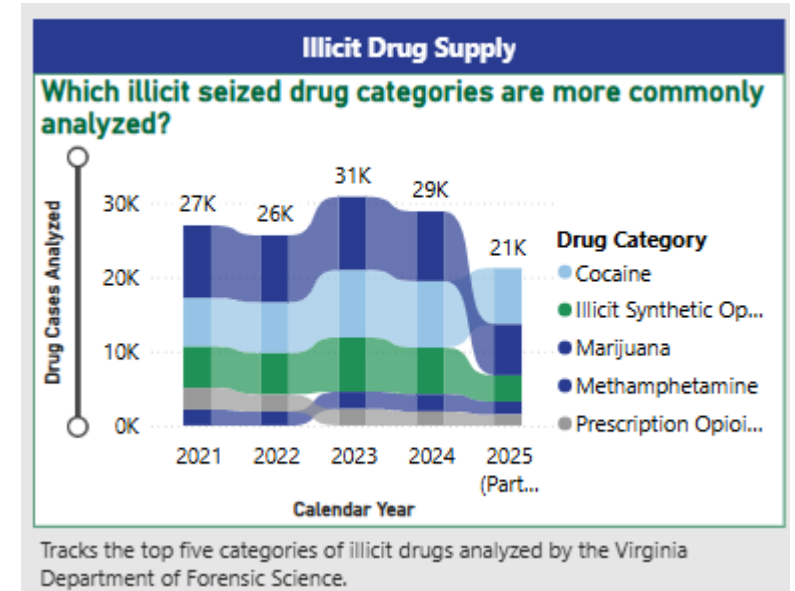
Home

Reports

Sign In

Data-Driven Insights for Virginia's Substance Use Crises

Virginia Substance Use Disorder Analytics (SUDA) is your resource for the latest data and insights to help address opioid and substance use challenges across the Commonwealth.



<https://suda.virginia.gov/reports/public>

Breath Alcohol Update

- Dräger Alcotest® 9510
- Contract fully executed on October 3, 2025
- Breath test operators will need to be trained and licensed on the new instrument
- Will develop and offer training opportunities for attorneys and judges



Request for Laboratory Examination

FS Lab #

Agency Information

Agency Name *
Jurisdiction of Offense

Officers

Type	Name	Phone	Fax	Email
Edit / Delete	Investigating	Smith, M. E.		

Case Information

Agency Case #
Offense Date *
Offense *
Court
Court Date
Return Method

Parties of Interest

Type	First	Middle	Last	DOB	GENDER	RACE	SID
Edit / Delete	Suspect	John		Doe		Male	

Business

Type	Name	Address
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(No Businesses)

Evidence

Agency Item #	Prelog Item #	Description	Exam	Comment
Edit / Delete	2	1 zip lock bag	Drugs	

Statement of Facts

Found suspected drugs.

Prelog Update



- Currently beta testing Prelog for evidence submission
- Refreshing law enforcement training materials based on system updates



Case Transfers and Outsourcing

- Internal case transfers are continuing
 - Firearms (majority from Western)
 - Latent Prints (from Northern)
- Outsourcing
 - Non-persons cases for DNA testing – Bode Technology, Lorton, Virginia
 - OCME Toxicology cases (from Western only)
 - Controlled Substances – THC edibles only – NMS Laboratories, Willow Creek, PA



Western Firearms Review

- Firearms comparisons were halted in April 2025
- Firearms comparisons are not on the Scope of Accreditation for the Western Laboratory
- Corrective Action resulting from proficiency test
- Case reviews by external provider

National Association of Forensic Science Boards



- Type 1 member representing the FSB to the NAFSB
- Attended 3rd annual NAFSB Conference - University of New Haven, Connecticut, October 20-21, 2025
- Key takeaways
 - Different states have different structures for oversight
 - Received legal and federal funding updates
 - Heard presentations on newer technologies



Case Statistics – Calendar Year 2025

Section	Case Submissions	Case Completions	Ending Backlog	Average TAT (in days)
Controlled Substances	26,276	25,350	3,330	39
Digital Multimedia Evidence	101	128	84	276
Firearms & Toolmarks	3,585	3,901	1,460	157
Forensic Biology	5,765	6,076	3,889	245
Latent Prints & Impressions	1,961	2,184	338	86
Toxicology	9,338	9,381	1,527	50
Trace Evidence	566	539	378	203

- All disciplines had a decrease in submissions for CY 2025
- There were both increases and decreases in the ending backlogs
- All disciplines, except Toxicology, had an increase in average TAT (turnaround times)

Budget and Resources



Staffing and Budget

- Maximum Employment Limit: 369 (342 GF + 27 NGF)
- Current Staffing: 329 GF + 19 NGF (all GF positions are in-recruit)
- ~\$5,453,000 remained at the end of FY2025
- DFS approved to carryforward \$5,452,192 for the following purposes:
 - \$3,299,455 for the purchase of replacement Breath Alcohol equipment
 - \$2,152,737 to cover transition costs for the new Central Lab

Governor's Introduced Budget - FY27/FY28



Department of Forensic Science

	Operating Budget Summary			Authorized Position Summary		
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	Personnel Cost	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	Total Positions
2023 Appropriation	\$56,446,890	\$2,680,488	\$40,028,270	341.00	14.00	355.00
2024 Appropriation	\$55,888,025	\$2,680,488	\$40,373,881	345.00	14.00	359.00
2025 Appropriation	\$61,295,876	\$2,780,056	\$44,896,847	342.00	27.00	369.00
2026 Appropriation	\$62,009,944	\$2,780,056	\$45,570,381	347.00	27.00	374.00
2027 Base Budget	\$62,009,944	\$2,780,056	\$45,570,381	347.00	27.00	374.00
2027 Intro Changes	\$2,956,246	\$77,309	\$2,794,224	2.00	0.00	2.00
2027 Total	\$64,966,190	\$2,857,365	\$48,364,605	349.00	27.00	376.00
2028 Base Budget	\$62,009,944	\$2,780,056	\$45,570,381	347.00	27.00	374.00
2028 Intro Changes	\$3,007,282	\$77,309	\$2,844,674	2.00	0.00	2.00
2028 Total	\$65,017,226	\$2,857,365	\$48,415,055	349.00	27.00	376.00



Governor’s Introduced Budget

Introduced Budget Non-Technical Changes

Increase staffing for the Forensic Biology Section (DNA)

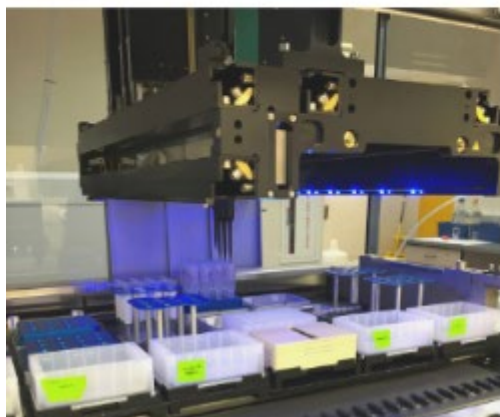
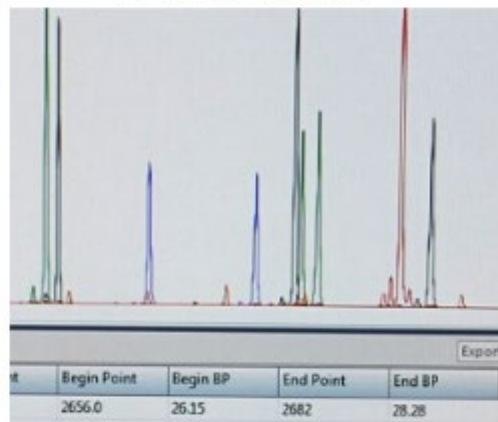
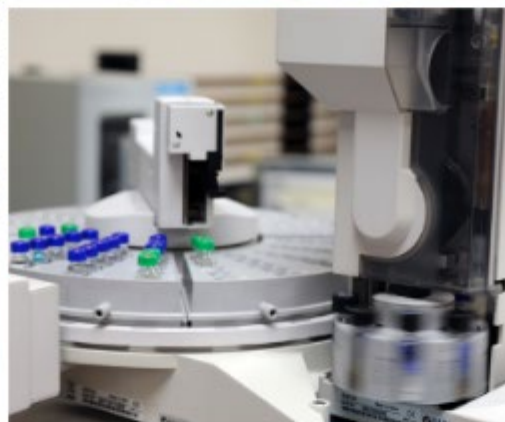
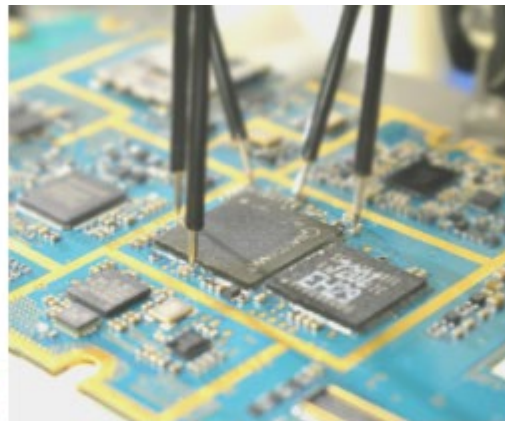
Provides funding and two forensic scientist positions to address workload issues in the Forensic Biology Section. These positions routinely examine items of evidence for the presence of biological material and are qualified to perform the full range of testing provided by the section.

	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>
General Fund	\$255,187	\$306,223
Authorized Positions	2.00	2.00



Compensation Study Conclusions: Forensic Examiners and Evidence Receiving

- All Forensic Examiner-type minimum salaries and most actual employee salaries in the Northern Lab were below market
- Forensic Scientist Trainee starting salaries at all locations were below the average market minimum salary, HOWEVER
- Forensic Examiner-type salaries statewide (excluding Northern) are in line with average market salaries
- Evidence Receiving salaries statewide were below market
 - Salary adjustments were made within current resource allocations to help increase staff retention
- Other changes will need to be funded through the budget process



Thank you!