South Carolina
STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

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FORENSIC SERVICES LABORATORY
CUSTOMER NOTICE 2026-04
June 18, 2026

DISCONTINUATION OF QUESTIONED DOCUMENT SERVICES

Effective immediately, the SLED Forensic Services Laboratory will no longer accept cases submitted for Questioned Document examination due to employee retirement and a decrease in the number of submissions received for these services.

The United States Secret Services (USSS) Laboratory is an accredited laboratory that provides forensic document examination services to local and state law enforcement partners at no cost. To request forensic document examination services for your case and to coordinate submission of the evidence, please contact your local USSS field office.

Please see the attached notification from the USSS regarding forensic documentation services that can be provided.

Every effort will be made to complete all Questioned Document cases currently submitted to the SLED Forensic Services Laboratory. If cases cannot be completed prior to the retirement of the document examiner on July 10, 2026, the submitting agency will be notified, and assistance will be provided to facilitate transfer the case to the USSS Laboratory for examination.

For questions regarding this notice, please contact Captain Wendy Bell at 803-896-7277 or wbell@sled.sc.gov.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE

Forensic Services Division
950 H Street, N.W. Room 4200
Washington, D.C. 20223

January 5, 2026

In the United States, there are almost 18,000 police agencies serving local, state, and federal jurisdictions. There are approximately 400 forensic laboratories serving these jurisdictions; however, less than 7% of these forensic laboratories provide document examination services.[1] Through federal statute, the United States Secret Service (USSS) Forensic Services Division (FSD) laboratory can provide forensic services, including document examinations, to our local and state law enforcement partners at no cost.

FSD Questioned Document Branch (QDB) document analysts conduct examinations to determine:

- who wrote or signed a document (handwriting and signature comparisons)
- how a document was produced (print process examinations including inkjet, toner, typewriters, and other commercial printing methods)
- whether documents contain indented impressions
- whether documents have been changed (alteration, obliteration, and erasure examinations)
- whether documents are genuine or counterfeit (authentication examinations on non-currency documents), and
- compare handwritten threat letters to the USSS database.

The FSD laboratory maintains a suite of specialized instruments and equipment for document examinations as well as being the exclusive home to the USSS handwritten threat letter database. The database includes over 14,000 documents, from both unknown and known writers, and serves as the national repository for handwritten threats for both USSS and other agencies' handwritten threatening documents including letters and associated envelopes.

Document examinations may be conducted in all types of criminal investigations including homicides, threatening or anonymous letters, robbery notes, suicide notes, stalking, stolen or altered checks, car titles or deeds, and identification documents. USSS does not have a minimum loss threshold for financial investigations.

To request forensic document examination services for your case and coordinate submission of evidence to the FSD laboratory in Washington, D.C., please contact your local USSS field office.[2]

For technical questions on evidence to submit or examinations we can conduct for your specific case, please contact the Questioned Document Branch via phone at 202-406-5551 or email Supervisory Document Analyst Mary "Meg" O'Brien at mary.obrien@usss.dhs.gov.

The mission of the FSD laboratory is to provide quality and timely forensic, scientific, intelligence, investigative and protective support services to the USSS and the criminal justice system.

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[1] Forensic document examination services are available with at least 6 local agencies, 9 state agencies, and 9 federal agencies. Most are under the structure of an accredited forensic laboratory. See ANAB Directory Of Accredited Organizations and A2LA Directory of Accredited Organizations.

[2] https://www.secretservice.gov/contact/field-offices