



are found on a three-dimensional surface, such as a body, depth-of-field *is* important. If a print is to be documented on a curved portion of the body, like the ankle or the arm, it is important for the photographer to select an aperture that will give sufficient depth-of-field to the photograph. This will ensure that the entire print will appear in acceptably sharp focus in the finished photograph. Failure to do so will result in a photograph where part of the print is in-focus and part is out-of-focus. If the minutiae needed for identification are located in the out-of-focus area of the print, the photograph is useless. The use of smaller apertures increases depth-of-field. This also leads to slower shutter speeds when ambient or constant intensity light is being used. In these cases refer to the above information on camera and subject stabilization.

When we process a human body for fingerprint evidence, we are normally doing so in the investigation of a very serious crime. The evidence we discover in this process can be cru-

cial to the successful outcome of these investigations. For this reason, it is extremely important that latent fingerprint evidence that is processed on the human body be documented and preserved properly to include photography of the print. These photographs should be composed, focused, and exposed correctly. By following the listed guidelines, you can be assured of evidentiary photographs that are of the highest quality. ■

Footnotes:

¹ TTL is a type of electronic flash mode. In this mode, the camera is in communication with the flash unit. The camera activates the electronic flash when the shutter is open, senses the intensity of the flash illumination entering "through the lens," and "turns the flash off" when enough illumination to properly expose the scene is sensed.

Study: DNA Tests for All Arrestees Probably Legal

By: Richard Willing USA TODAY

Performing DNA tests on everyone arrested and charged with a crime probably is permitted under the Constitution, a federal DNA study group has concluded.

That finding made by a committee of the National Commission on the Future of DNA Evidence, will be debated by the full 22-member panel at its summer meeting in Boston.

If approved by the panel, the finding will be forwarded to Attorney General Janet Reno, who will use it to set Justice Department policy and provide nonbinding guidelines to state law enforcement officials.

Broad-based use of DNA test on all people who are arrested is unlikely to begin soon. But the committee's findings provide ammunition for police and others who argue that widespread testing will help link people arrested for nonviolent crimes to many unsolved murders, rapes and other violent crimes. "In New York City, we find that a substantial portion of (violent felons) had also been arrested for much smaller offenses (before) they were caught for the big ones," Police Commissioner Howard Safir says.

Earlier this month, the DNA commission urged Reno to oppose immediate testing of all arrestees because it

would over tax the system.

Nationally, states already are laboring to analyze and add to a federal database the DNA of all 1.4 million people who have been convicted of serious crimes. Testing all arrestees, more than 15 million people a year according to FBI estimates would greatly increase that backlog.

But the commission left open the question of whether such test should be permitted once the backlog is cleared up.

Privacy advocates argue that the test would violate constitutional protections against unreasonable searches and would give authorities access to personal genetic information.

A draft report says establishing DNA databases likely would pass federal court scrutiny, provided they are "highly secure" and the procedures for taking DNA are "minimally invasive."

"As we move from (taking DNA from) blood samples to lifting it right off of fingerprints, the invasiveness issue is going to be resolved," says Jeffrey Thoma, a Ukiah, Calif., prosecutor who worked on the report. "Resolving privacy concerns, like how to keep the (DNA) data from being used to deny insurance or something, is something we have to move much further on."

DNA databases work by extracting DNA, a unique set of genetic markers, and comparing it via computer with DNA left at crime scenes in blood, semen and even perspiration.

From 1992 to 1998, state crime laboratories and the FBI made DNA matches in more than 425 crimes. ■

(This story originally appeared in the July 26, 1999 issue of USA TODAY on page 3A and was submitted by Patricia Murphy of the Miami-Dade Police Department.)

Submitting Articles

If you would like to submit an article you have found to be of interest, or if you would like to write one yourself, please send them to the editor before the end of December so they can be reviewed and ready for possible publication in the January – March issue of the Newsletter.