

SWGFAST

Standards for Conclusions

1. Individualization (Identification):

The standard for individualization is agreement of sufficient friction ridge details in sequence.

1.1 Conditions that shall be satisfied:

1.1.1 Determined by a competent¹ examiner, and

1.1.2 Applied to a common area in both impressions, and

1.1.3 Based on quantity and quality of the friction ridge details, and

1.1.4 Absent any discrepancy, and

1.1.5 Reproducible conclusion.

1.2 Basic principles:

1.2.1 There is no scientific basis for requiring that a predetermined number of corresponding friction ridge details be present in two impressions in order to effect individualization.²

1.2.2 Individualization is supported by the theories of biological uniqueness and permanence, probability modeling, and empirical data gained through more than one hundred years of operational experience.

2. Exclusion:

The standard for exclusion is disagreement of friction ridge details.

2.1 Conditions that must be satisfied:

¹ See SWGFAST Guideline for “Training to Competency”.

² See SWGFAST Guideline for “Quality Assurance Guidelines for Latent Print Examiners”.

- 2.1.1 Determined by a competent¹ examiner, and
 - 2.1.2 Applied to all comparable anatomical areas, and
 - 2.1.3 Presence of a discrepancy², and
 - 2.1.4 Based on sufficient quantity and quality of the friction ridge details, and
 - 2.1.5 Reproducible conclusion.
- 2.2 Basic principles:
- 2.2.1 The presence of one discrepancy is sufficient to exclude.
 - 2.2.2 Distortion³ is not a discrepancy and is not a basis for exclusion.
 - 2.2.3 Exclusion is supported by the theories of biological uniqueness and permanence, probability modeling, and empirical data gained through more than one hundred years of operational experience.

3. Inconclusive:

The standard for an inconclusive finding is the absence of sufficient friction ridge details to effect a conclusion of individualization or exclusion.

3.1 Conditions that must be satisfied:

- 3.1.1 Determined by a competent¹ examiner, and
- 3.1.2 Based on quantity and quality of the friction ridge details, and
- 3.1.3 Insufficient agreement or disagreement in the friction ridge details, and
- 3.1.4 Reproducible conclusion.

¹ See SWGFAST Guideline for “Training to Competency”.

² See SWGFAST Glossary for “discrepancy”.

³ See SWGFAST Glossary for “distortion”.