



South Carolina Law Enforcement Division

P.O. Box 21398
Columbia, South Carolina
29221-1398

Henry D. McMaster, Governor

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Tel: (803) 737-9000

SLED Questioned Document Section (803) 896-7298

INSTRUCTIONS FOR HANDWRITING/HAND PRINTING STANDARDS

SLED provides forms for obtaining standards in check and credit card cases.

When taking standards, it is important to **duplicate the conditions** that the original questioned document was written under. The conditions include the type of writing instrument (pencil, ball point pen, gel pen etc.), the paper or form the questioned was written on (lined or unlined paper cut to the approximate size of the questioned, a DMV form, a standard Will form, an application form etc.) as well as the position of the writer (standing, sitting etc.).

CAUTION: DO NOT LET THE WRITER VIEW OR COPY FROM THE QUESTIONED DOCUMENTS WHEN OBTAINING THE STANDARDS

Proceed as Follows:

- One at a time, hand the blank check forms or the blank pages to the suspect (or victim). Instruct the individual to either WRITE or PRINT depending on whether the questioned material is written or printed or is a combination of both.
- Dictate the complete questioned wording and numbers verbatim to the writer. Include any endorsing signatures, addresses, numbers, 'memo' or 'for' portions and other miscellaneous entries.
- In signature cases, have the writer sign the standard as opposed to writing the name in 'normal' handwriting
- Have the writer initial and date each standard as it is completed. Each standard should be numbered as it is completed.
- Remember, standards should be HANDWRITTEN OR HAND PRINTED depending on what is present on the questioned material.
- Obtain at least twenty-five (25) samples (when possible) of the full wording found in the questioned material.
- On two (2) separate sheets of paper, have the writer prepare with the weak (unaccustomed) hand, five (5) or six (6) lines of miscellaneous writing to dictation.
- If the writer displays the ability to write with the weak hand, OR if you suspect the questioned material was prepared with the weak hand, obtain an additional twenty-five (25) standards written to dictation using the weak hand.



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- Be sure to submit the weak-hand writing, even if it is limited to the miscellaneous standards
- Supplement the known standards with preexisting course of business known samples such as might be found on banking related documents, employment related documents, personal correspondence as well as Inmate, Police or Court related Documents.

If possible, submit the ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS (if available) or in the least, good clear first generation copies (not faxes etc.).

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the section at the phone number above.