



South Carolina

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FORENSIC SERVICES LABORATORY CUSTOMER SERVICE NOTICE 2025-04 August 1, 2025

TOXICOLOGY DEPARTMENT POSTMORTEM CANNABINOID REPORTING

Effective August 1st, 2025, the SLED Toxicology Department will be reporting all positive cannabinoid findings qualitatively in postmortem (PM) specimens. The existing reporting thresholds of 1.0 ng/mL for Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and 11-hydroxy-Tetrahydrocannabinol, and 5.0 ng/mL for 11-carboxy-Tetrahydrocannabinol will still be used, but all compounds will be reported as Positive if their quantitative value is found to be above the reporting threshold.

Interpretation of cannabinoid concentrations in PM samples is complicated and affected by multiple factors. Due to the fat-soluble nature of cannabinoids, significant PM redistribution is possible, leading to artificially elevated measured concentrations that do not accurately reflect the concentration at the time of death. Additionally, other factors, including tolerance, make it difficult to correlate concentration to actual effects of the drugs. This change in policy is in agreement with current literature.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we implement these improvements. Should you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact Lt. Dustin Smith (803-896-7385).



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