

**ASCLD/LAB  
LIMITED SCOPE  
INTERIM INSPECTION REPORT**



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**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
DIVISION OF FORENSIC SCIENCE  
CENTRAL LABORATORY**

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APRIL 9, 2005

## INTRODUCTION

This is the report of the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors/Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD/LAB) limited scope interim inspection of the Commonwealth of Virginia Division of Forensic Science Central Laboratory Biology/DNA Unit, located in Richmond, Virginia. This inspection was conducted at the request of the Laboratory System Director, Dr. Paul B. Ferrara, by letter dated October 1, 2004.

The ASCLD/LAB inspection team consisted of the following members:

Rodney H. Andrus, Staff Inspector, ASCLD/LAB, Fresno, CA.  
Pat W. Wojtkiewicz, North Louisiana Criminalistics Laboratory, Shreveport, LA. (October 24-27, 2004 visit).  
James Iverson, Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, St. Paul, MN. (December 13-15, 2004 visit).

The ASCLD/LAB Board of Directors liaisons to the inspection team were:

Robin W. Cotton, PhD, Orchid Cellmark, Germantown, Maryland  
Kenneth E. Melson, Alexandria, Virginia

The on-site inspection was conducted during the periods of October 24-27, 2004, and December 13-15, 2004, at the Virginia Division of Forensic Science (DFS) Central Laboratory in Richmond, Virginia.

This inspection focused on the review of the examination documentation and reports for the Virginia Division of Forensic Science Case File No. 81N-6691, involving a 1982 sexual assault and homicide, and associated laboratory analytical and operational procedures. After an initial on-site visit, a revisit of the laboratory was conducted for the purposes of evaluating and clarifying issues that had not been resolved during the initial inspection. Other material associated with the case, more fully described later in this report, was also reviewed.

## LABORATORY OVERVIEW

The Virginia Division of Forensic Science Central Laboratory provides full services to the central region of the Commonwealth of Virginia as well as specialized services statewide. The Central Laboratory is one of four laboratories in the Virginia Division of Forensic Science Laboratory System, and is located at 700 North 5th Street, Richmond, Virginia. The Laboratory provides services in Controlled Substances, Toxicology, Trace Evidence, Biology, Firearms/Toolmarks, Latent Prints, Questioned Documents and Digital Evidence. The Laboratory has a staff of 88 testifying analysts and 60 support staff. The DFS has been accredited by ASCLD/LAB since January 5, 1989.

## BACKGROUND

Rebecca Williams, a 19 year-old mother of three children, was raped and fatally stabbed in her home in Culpepper, Virginia, on June 4, 1982. Before her demise, she told a policeman that her attacker was a black man acting alone and who was a stranger to her. An autopsy was performed by Dr. James Beyer, Deputy Chief Medical Examiner. It disclosed that the victim suffered 38 stab wounds to the neck, chest, and abdomen, 14 of which penetrated internal organs and could, alone,

