

# Montana Department of Justice Forensic Science Division



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## transferring accreditation

Case Study

The Montana Department of Justice's Forensic Science Division is the only forensic laboratory in the state with facilities in Missoula and Billings. With about 40 scientists, the division serves law enforcement agencies throughout the state along with the medical examiner's office. The laboratory offers a wide range of forensic testing services, including biological and chemical testing, toxicology, firearms and toolmarks, and latent prints.

The biology section includes serology, Y-screening, and DNA, and participates in CODIS, the FBI's national DNA database program. Their chemistry section analyzes seized drugs and primer gunshot residue, and the toxicology section analyzes biological samples and includes the Breath Alcohol System, which is responsible for maintaining, calibrating, and certifying Intoxilyzers.

Stacey Wilson is the Quality Assurance Manager of the Forensic Science Division and has worked in forensic science for about 20 years. She oversees the organization's laboratory testing and calibration accreditation, as well as the accreditation of the medical examiner's office. She is also the safety manager and assists with primer gunshot residue casework.

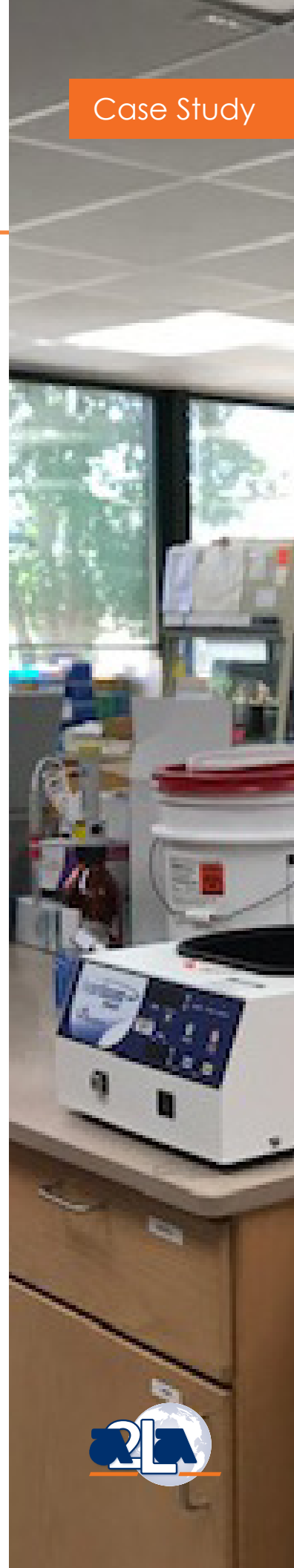
"The Forensic Science Division is voluntarily accredited," said Stacey, "Accreditation gives us a solid foundation, and allows us to provide our customers with accurate results and apply for grant funding for our larger projects."

### Transferring Accreditation to A2LA

The Forensic Science Division began the transfer process in October of 2024, and before then, was accredited with another accreditation body (AB). Unfortunately, the division's administrator was not satisfied with their former AB. Compliance software caused frustrations and they had hoped for a more personalized and responsive customer service experience.

"It was just time for a change," said Stacey. "The process to transfer was quite easy and we had a lot of support from A2LA staff. They checked in often enough, but not too often, and our questions were promptly answered."

A2LA has a streamlined transfer policy that allows organizations to stay in their current accreditation cycle. We request your last, full,



on-site assessment report and correlating corrective actions to determine your anniversary date and prorate the annual fee—so you won't pay more than you have to. Your application and required documentation will be submitted to the Accreditation Council for a vote and returned within 15 days.

"It happened so quickly," added Stacey. "Our former AB also provided us with a clear timeline for withdrawal so that everything could fall into place at the right time."

### Personalized Customer Service

A2LA offers a personalized customer service experience to conformity assessment bodies (CABs) at every step of the transfer process, from application to accreditation. When processes or requirements seem unclear or ambiguous, the customer care team and accreditation officers can provide clear answers in a timely manner.

When requirements are objectively unclear, unnecessary, or conflicting, the A2LA [Forensic Examination Advisory Committee](#) will convene to address concerns and work to reach a consensus on how relevant technical methods, procedures, protocols, techniques, and/or guidelines are to be interpreted and assessed.

A2LA's simple transfer process means maintaining your current accreditation timeline and working with accreditation experts who understand the nuance of conformity assessment.

### Interested in Transferring Your Accreditation to A2LA?

Established in 1978, A2LA offers excellent customer care with the numbers to prove it. Our customer retention rate stands strong at 97% with our team of Customer Care Reps available at extended hours to address any questions or concerns that may arise.



### Get the Accreditation Process Started Today

Scan the QR code to visit our [Forensic Examination Accreditation Program](#) page at [A2LA.org](#). Next, fill out the "[Accreditation Estimate Request Form](#)" at the top.