

§ 28.25 Exceptions based on a defendant's conduct.

Subsection (c) of section 3600A makes the biological evidence preservation requirement inapplicable in two circumstances relating to action (or inaction) by the defendant:

(a) *Waiver by defendant.* Section 3600A(c)(2) makes the biological evidence preservation requirement inapplicable if the defendant knowingly and voluntarily waived DNA testing in a court proceeding conducted after the date of enactment, *i.e.*, after October 30, 2004. Hence, for example, if a defendant waives DNA testing in the context of a plea agreement, in a pretrial colloquy with the court, in the course of discovery in pretrial proceedings, or in a postconviction proceeding, and the proceeding in which the waiver occurs takes place after October 30, 2004, the biological evidence preservation requirement of section 3600A does not apply.

(b) *Notice to defendant.* (1) Section 3600A(c)(3) makes the biological evidence preservation requirement inapplicable if the defendant is notified that the biological evidence may be destroyed “after a conviction becomes final and the defendant has exhausted all opportunities for direct review of the conviction,” and “the defendant does not file a motion under section 3600 within 180 days of receipt of the notice.”

(2) Effective notice concerning the possible destruction of biological evidence for purposes of section 3600A(c)(3) cannot be given if the case is pending on direct review of the conviction before a court of appeals or the Supreme Court, if time remains for the defendant to file a notice of appeal from the judgment of conviction in the court of appeals, or if time remains for the defendant to file a petition for certiorari to the Supreme Court following the court of appeals' determination of an appeal of the conviction.

(3) Once direct review has been completed, or the time for seeking direct review has expired, section 3600A(c)(3) allows notice to the defendant that biological evidence may be destroyed. The biological evidence preservation requirement of section 3600A thereafter does not apply, unless the defendant

files a motion under 18 U.S.C. 3600 within 180 days of receipt of the notice. Notice to a defendant that biological evidence may be destroyed may be provided by certified mail, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons shall create a record concerning the delivery of such mail to an inmate. To determine whether a defendant has filed a motion under 18 U.S.C. 3600 within 180 days of receipt of such a notice, the agency providing the notice may obtain confirmation of delivery and the date of delivery by inquiry with the Federal Bureau of Prisons, and may ascertain whether the defendant has filed a motion under 18 U.S.C. 3600 within 180 days of that date by checking the records of the district court which entered the judgment of conviction of the defendant for the offense or asking the United States Attorney's office in that district.

§ 28.26 Exceptions based on the nature of the evidence.

Subsection (c)(4) of section 3600A provides that the section's biological evidence preservation requirement does not apply if “the evidence must be returned to its rightful owner, or is of such a size, bulk, or physical character as to render retention impracticable.” This exception is subject to the condition that the Government must “take[] reasonable measures to remove and preserve portions of the material evidence sufficient to permit future DNA testing.”

(a) *Evidence not retained beyond the investigative stage.* Section 3600A(c)(4) has no application if items of the sort it describes—*e.g.*, items that must be returned to the rightful owner, or items that are so large that their retention is impracticable—are not kept until the time when a defendant is convicted and sentenced to imprisonment. Investigative agents may take samples from such items during the investigative stage of the case, in accordance with their judgment about what is needed for purposes of DNA testing or other evidentiary use, or may conclude that the nature of the items does not warrant taking such samples, and the items themselves may then be returned to the owners or otherwise disposed of prior to the trial, conviction, or sentencing of any defendant. In such