



# Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward

*Committee on Identifying the Needs of the Forensic Sciences Community, Technology, and Law Committee on Science, Policy and Global Affairs, Committee on Applied and Theoretical Statistics, Division on Engineering and Physical Sciences, National Research Council*

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**Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward** Committee on Identifying the Needs of the Forensic Sciences Community, Technology, and Law Committee on Science, Policy and Global Affairs, Committee on Applied and Theoretical Statistics, Division on Engineering and Physical Sciences, National Research Council

Scores of talented and dedicated people serve the forensic science community, performing vitally important work. However, they are often constrained by lack of adequate resources, sound policies, and national support. It is clear that change and advancements, both systematic and scientific, are needed in a number of forensic science disciplines to ensure the reliability of work, establish enforceable standards, and promote best practices with consistent application. *Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward* provides a detailed plan for addressing these needs and suggests the creation of a new government entity, the National Institute of Forensic Science, to establish and enforce standards within the forensic science community.

The benefits of improving and regulating the forensic science disciplines are clear: assisting law enforcement officials, enhancing homeland security, and reducing the risk of wrongful conviction and exoneration. *Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States* gives a full account of what is needed to advance the forensic science disciplines, including upgrading of systems and organizational structures, better training, widespread adoption of uniform and enforceable best practices, and mandatory certification and accreditation programs.

While this book provides an essential call-to-action for congress and policy makers, it also serves as a vital tool for law enforcement agencies, criminal prosecutors and attorneys, and forensic science educators.

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