

The 2009 TNI Standard specifies requirements under which a NELAP accredited laboratory will accept or reject samples. Upon receipt of samples at the facility, laboratory sample control staff will assess all samples based upon the below criteria. The purpose of such criteria is to maintain the integrity of all samples submitted for laboratory analyses.

All samples submitted must have:

- Proper, full, and complete chain-of-custody (COC) documentation, which shall include: unique sample identification, the sampling location, date and time of sample collection, sample collector's name, sample analysis requested, sample matrix type and any special remarks concerning the sample;
- Sample containers marked with readable unique sample identification written in indelible ink and sufficient to link the sample to the identification on the COC;
- Appropriate sample containers for the requested tests;
- Sufficient sample volume to perform the requested tests; and
- Been collected and received such that laboratory can complete analysis within holding time.

In addition to the above requirements, samples will be considered “nonconforming” if the following conditions are observed upon samples receipt. Any nonconforming sample that cannot be resolved, shall be logged-in as a **rejected** sample into Element LIMS with the **rejection category** listed below. For instances where the nonconforming sample is analyzed, the required data qualifier is included in parenthesis e.g., (Pt).

Thermal Preservation Rejection:

- Cooler and/or samples are received outside of TNI Standard’s thermal preservation requirements of:
For samples with a specified temperature of 4°C, the acceptable temperature is from just above freezing to 6°C. Samples received on ice on the same day of collection or samples delivered to the lab within 15 minutes of collection do not have to meet the temperature requirement. (Pt). *

*per the IEPA, drinking water compliance monitoring samples **shall be rejected** by the laboratory upon receipt.

Compromised Sample Rejection:

- Samples are received broken or leaking.
- Seepage of extraneous water or materials into samples.
- Apparent tampering with cooler and/or samples.
- Breakage of any Custody Seal (if used).
- Samples are received in inappropriate containers for the requested tests (Sc).
- Headspace in volatile water samples (i.e., larger than pea size) (HS).
- Inadequate sample volume/amount to perform analyses requested. **

** Per the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR), drinking water compliance monitoring samples for lead and copper analysis **shall be rejected** if <900 mL is in the sample container upon receipt by the laboratory.

Inadequate Documentation Rejection:

- COC does not match samples received (i.e., discrepancies).
- COC not received or properly completed.
- Illegible, impermanent or non-unique sample identification on sample container.



Holding Time Rejection:

- Samples are received outside holding time (Ht).

Sample Preservation Rejection:

- Samples are received without appropriate preservation (Pc).

The condition of a sample considered nonconforming shall be noted on the accompanying COC. If the nonconformance is due to incomplete COC documentation (i.e. no date collected), sample control staff will promptly contact the client for the missing information. For any other nonconformance, sample control staff will promptly contact client services. Client services must promptly communicate with the client to obtain a decision on whether to reject or to proceed with the analysis of a nonconforming sample or have a written communication from the client on file regarding how to proceed with a nonconforming sample. This communication and decision must be documented by client services in a way that it is included in the final report (i.e. on the COC or in a case narrative)

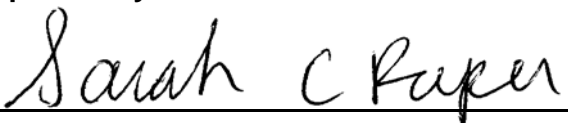
Until the final decision is made to reject or proceed with the analysis, the nonconforming sample must be stored by sample control staff in an appropriate cooler or storage location to maintain its integrity. An exception to storing a sample, is in the case of samples with a short hold time (i.e., ≤ 48 /hrs.) or samples designated as a RUSH. For short hold time or RUSH samples, analysis can proceed directly after sample receipt and log-in.

For short hold time or a RUSH sample for which analysis is proceeding, the client services must communicate back to sample control and the laboratory if analysis is to be halted/stopped. The COC, and all communications and/or records pertaining to the client's decision to reject the sample or proceed with analysis shall be scanned and retained within Element LIMS. If the condition of a sample considered to be nonconforming cannot be determined by client services, or if there has been no instruction from the client to proceed with the analysis, then the sample will be rejected.

All analytical test results from nonconforming samples which the client indicated to proceed with the analysis shall be appropriately qualified, by the client services, in the final test report. Any data qualifier used shall have a descriptor for it in the final test report. The descriptor shall clearly indicate what sample acceptance criteria were not met. A copy of the COC shall be included in all final test reports sent to the client.

This policy shall be included in the Quality Manual and be included or referenced in applicable SOPs. It is applicable to all departments within the Chicago facility. **This policy is to be made available to all PDC Laboratories, Inc. – Chicago's clients.**

Approved by:



Laboratory Manager and Quality Assurance Officer

05/17/2019
Date

