

## NDSLGL FAQ

1. Can urine specimens be hand carried to the lab?

Yes. Navy Drug Screening Lab, Great Lakes (NDSL GL) is located at Great Lakes Naval Base, Great Lakes at 2500 Rodgers St., Bldg. 5501. Specimens can be dropped off from 0600 – 1700, Monday – Friday, excluding holidays.

2. How long does it take for results to be released?

The results for negative specimens are typically released within 3 business days and positive results are typically released within five business days from when they are accessioned at the laboratory. There are many factors that can impact the release time, including the workload at the laboratory and delivery times.

3. Is every specimen tested?

Yes, unless there is too little to test, nothing to test or if the specimen was adulterated with an agent that might harm personnel or damage the testing equipment.

4. How are urine specimens tested?

Every package that arrives at NDSL GL is inspected for the appropriate markings and damage before it is opened. After each package is opened, a technician signs and dates the submitting chain of custody, formally taking possession of the specimen(s). Then every bottle is examined for the appropriate seals, initials and other data and matched to the chain of custody and any other paperwork. If there are any discrepancies or inaccuracies, they are noted to be reported to the command.

A small sample from each specimen is then poured into individual test tubes and delivered to the Screening Division where they are run through an immunoassay – based analyzer. The analyzer quickly screens for specimens that have no potential presence or may have the potential presence of drugs or drug metabolites. Those specimens that screen for no presence of drugs or metabolites are discarded and a “NEGATIVE” report is issued. If a specimen screens for the potential of drugs or drug metabolites, the specimen is considered ‘presumptively positive’ and is isolated for further testing.

A second sample is poured into a new test tube for those specimens that screen presumptively positive and it is delivered to the Confirmation Department, where the drug or drug metabolite detected in the Screening Division is extracted. The extraction is then analyzed by gas chromatography (GC) / mass spectrometry (MS) or liquid chromatography (LC) / MS / MS. These instruments detect the specific molecule of interest. If the molecule is detected, it is also quantified. If the drug or drug metabolite is not detected, the result is reported as “NEGATIVE.”

The Department of Defense has established specific values, known as ‘cutoff values’ for the drugs tested. If the drug or drug metabolite quantifies below the established cutoff value, the specimen is reported as “NEGATIVE.” If it quantifies at or above the cutoff value, a “POSITIVE” report is released to the command.