



# NAVY AND MARINE CORPS PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

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## Specimen Submission FAQs

### **What are common problems with specimen collection and preparation of documents?**

Common problems include:

- Missing, mismatched, or illegible information on the bottle and / or the specimen custody and control document
- Specimen listed on the specimen custody and control document but not received by the laboratory
- Failure to include locally assigned four digit batch number and two digit specimen number on the bottle label and/or specimen custody and control document
- Failure to sign and date the chain of custody on the specimen custody and control document
- Missing initials on the bottle label (Service member or the observer/collector)
- Broken / missing tamper evident seal
- Improperly packaged specimen
- Specimen custody control document(s) within the package that do not match the submitted specimens

Strategies to avoid some of these discrepancies are included in this document. You may also contact the NDSLs for additional guidance

### **Where can I find a list of discrepancy codes?**

A list of all laboratory discrepancy codes can be found under Key Resources on this website.

### **Can I use a single specimen custody and control document for specimens collected on different days?**

No. Each specimen custody and control document should reflect the specific date of specimen collection.

### **What is the Base/Area Code and why do I need to put it on my specimen custody and control document?**

Base Area Codes are assigned to Marine Corps Units to differentiate between units using the same RUC. This the same number as the Unit's Material Control Code (MCC).

### **How can I prevent receiving a UIC/BAC Discrepant code?**

Ensure that the address and UIC/RUC listed on the specimen custody and control document are concordant. If the UIC/RUC or the message address where you receive your naval messages has changed, please contact the laboratory to update the entry in the Laboratory Information Management System.

### **I entered a DODID incorrectly on the specimen custody and control document or specimen bottle label. What is the best way to correct it?**

Draw a single line through the error, place your initials and the date next to the line, and handwrite the correct information.



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## **I broke the tamper evident tape, how can I correct it?**

Place a second tamper evident seal on the specimen bottle and provide a signed certificate of correction that documents why a second seal was applied.

## **How does the laboratory determine whether a bottle was properly packaged?**

The laboratory verifies that each bottle is enclosed in an individual leak-proof secondary container (*e.g.*, sealable plastic bag) with absorbent material.

## **After I seal the bag, should I put tape around it to secure it?**

No, do not place tape around the bag after it is sealed.

## **Can I send the urinalysis ledger with my specimen submission?**

No, the Drug Testing Program Urinalysis Register has confidential information and should not be submitted with the specimens. A discrepancy code will be assigned if the urinalysis ledger is submitted to the laboratory.

## **If a member is not available for testing but their information is listed on the specimen custody and control document, what should I do to remove the member from the list?**

Draw a single line through the missing member's information, place your initials and the date next to the line. This indicates to laboratory personnel that you did not send a specimen for that individual.

## **How long can I store specimens before shipping/carrying them to the laboratory?**

Commands should send specimens as soon as possible. If specimens are stored, secure refrigerated/frozen storage is recommended. Ensure that the storage of the specimens is documented on the custody and control document.

## **How do I request non-standard "special" drug testing?**

To request testing for drugs that are not on the DOD testing panel, attach a request on Command letterhead to the specimen custody and control document. The request should include the batch number, specimen number, and the DODID for the specimen(s) requiring additional testing. The laboratory will prepare an aliquot of the original specimen for shipment to the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System (AFMES). You will receive the DOD panel test results through the iFTDTL portal when the Navy Drug Screening Laboratory has completed testing and a separate result from the respective Service Representative when the AFMES testing is complete.

## **How do I request steroid testing?**

Refer to the Steroid Testing document under Key Resources on this website.

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