Department of Veterans Affairs
Washington, DC 20420

VA HANDBOOK 5383.2
Transmittal Sheet
APRIL 11, 1997

URINE DRUG TESTING: Collection and Transportation of Urine Specimens

1. REASON FOR ISSUE: This handbook provides Departmental procedures for collection of urine specimens for drug testing, transportation of specimens to the testing laboratory, and submission of blind samples for the purpose of quality control.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS: This handbook contains:

a. Specimen collection and transportation instructions, including collection of split specimens;

b. Notification of the reduction in the volume of urine required for specimen collection;

c. Collection site supplies information, including information regarding the new collection kit for split specimens;

d. Elimination of the requirement to maintain a permanent record book. The maintenance of a permanent record book is no longer required by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Therefore, field facilities are no longer required to maintain a permanent record book. All references to recording information in the permanent record book have been deleted.

e. Sample of a completed chain of custody form (7 parts);

f. Instructions for submitting blind performance test samples for quality control, including preparation of split specimen blind samples.

3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Human Resources Management (05) and Diagnostic Services (115).

4. RELATED DIRECTIVE: VA Directive 5383, VA Drug-Free Workplace Program.

5. RESCISSIONS: VHA Directive 10-93-080, dated July 7, 1993 and all Supplements are rescinded.

CERTIFIED BY:

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BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE PLAN

CONTENTS

URINE DRUG TESTING:
Collection and Transportation of Urine Specimens

1. PURPOSE. This handbook provides uniform procedures for collection of urine specimens for drug testing, transportation of specimens to the testing laboratory, and submission of blind samples for the purpose of quality control.

2. BACKGROUND. The Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Drug Testing, published by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in the Federal Register on April 11, 1988, established comprehensive standards for laboratory procedures to be used by Federal agencies in implementing a drug testing program as required by Executive Order 12564, Drug-Free Federal Workplace, and Public Law 100-71, Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1987. This handbook is to be used with VA Directive 5383, VA Drug-Free Workplace Program.

3. COLLECTION SITE PROCEDURES

a. **Collection Sites**

(1) A urine collection site will be identified for each VA facility. Although the collection location for non-medical facilities may be located on-site or at another facility, each medical facility will have a urine collection site. Identification of suitable collection site(s) at medical facilities will be the responsibility of the Chief of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service. At non-medical facilities, identification of suitable collection site(s) will be the responsibility of the facility Drug Program Coordinator, with the advice of the Chief of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service at the nearest VA medical facility.

(2) The collection site(s) to be used will meet the following requirements:

(a) The collection site must be able to be secured by the collection site personnel before and during collection so that only the materials and supplies necessary for proper urine collection are at the site. The collection site will remain secure throughout the collection process.

(b) The collection site will provide for individual privacy for the individual during urination. Therefore, the urination area must be partitioned-off from the rest of the collection site. The urination area for the collection site will have only a toilet bowl or a urinal. Facilities for hand washing will be separate from the partitioned-off urination area where the toilet bowl or urinal is located.

(c) Sufficient space will be available for temporary storage of materials necessary for a secure collection and for unnecessary outer garments of the individual.

(3)Designated collection site personnel will be in full control of the collection site as described in paragraph 3b of this Handbook.

b. **Collection Site Personnel**

(1) Collection site personnel will be designated by the Director of each VA medical facility based on the recommendation of the Chief of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service at that facility. At least one male and one female (and alternates for each) will be appointed based on their experience and demonstrated integrity. Certification in laboratory technology is desirable to ensure familiarity with proper specimen collection procedures. If sufficient certified laboratory technologists or technicians are not available, alternates from other disciplines, such as nursing personnel, may be appointed as long as their qualifications demonstrate experience in specimen collection. Regardless of who are appointed as collectors, these individuals must be capable of complying with strict security measures, following chain of custody procedures and maintaining confidentiality.

(2) Collection personnel will be provided and will become thoroughly familiar with the procedures of this Handbook, the Urinalysis Collection Handbook for Federal Drug Testing Programs, published by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and VA Directive 5383. Particular attention should also be paid to the Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Drug Testing Programs. All field facilities should have copies of these documents.

(3) The Chief, Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service, will serve as the collection site supervisor, or with the approval of the facility Director, **designate one of the collection site personnel to act in that capacity.**

(4) Designated collection site personnel, with the guidance of the Chief of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service, will be in control of the collection site, collection kits, chain of custody forms and other required supplies throughout the collection process. Collection supplies should be maintained within the Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service and protected from tampering. Proper chain of custody and security measures will be followed to fully protect the urine specimen. The collection site personnel will be responsible for shipment of the specimen(s) to a pre-designated certified testing laboratory.

c. **Services to Non-Medical Facilities.** Non-medical VA facilities such as cemeteries, regional offices, data processing centers, OA & MM field components, etc., will be provided urine collection services by the nearest VA medical facility. In the event that physical distance precludes easy access to the nearest VA medical center, the medical facility Director, or designee, in consultation with the Director, or designee, of the other facility, will determine whether the individual(s) to be tested will come to the medical center or send collection site personnel to the remote facility.

(1) If collection is done at the other facility, the Chief, Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service, will ensure that the collection site at the other facility meets the specifications described in paragraph 3a of this Handbook. At the Outpatient Clinics in Anchorage and Honolulu, the Clinic Director will be responsible for designating collection site personnel.

(2) Medical facility Directors, or designee, will contact the Director(s) of the non-medical facilities to be served to make arrangements for the provision of collection services.

(3) The Director, Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Service, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources Management, is delegated the authority to make determinations regarding situations not covered by paragraph 3c of this Handbook or where unique circumstances warrant modification. Such deviations will be kept to a minimum and must be authorized in writing.

d. The designated Drug Program Coordinator or Human Resources Management Officer will ensure that the designated MRO (Medical Review Officer) receives a copy of this Handbook and the related material described in paragraph 2 of this Handbook.