

Title: Sample Acceptance Criteria
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Pre Qualtrax Revision: 3019-A Sample Acceptance
Criteria Rev. 2

Qualtrax ID 17961 Rev 2
Publish Date: 08/25/2023
Status: Published

Sample Acceptance Criteria Policy

GBRA Regional Laboratory Sample Acceptance Criteria indicates the minimum conditions a sample must meet on receipt at the laboratory. Sample collection personnel are to use water resistant ink, use appropriate sample containers, adhere to holding times, and sample volume requirements. Deviations from the Sample Acceptance Criteria will be documented on a GBRA Non-Conformance form and/or the Chain of Custody (COC), as well as the final report.

The laboratory by checking samples for the following qualities for chemical and bacteriological samples, where appropriate, to evaluate sample acceptance:

1. **Thermal preservation** – The sample temperature must be >0 to $\leq 6^{\circ}\text{C}$. Samples delivered to the lab the same day as they are collected are not likely to have reached a fully chilled temperature. Samples shall be considered acceptable, without qualification, if there is evidence the chilling process has begun. The temperature for a representative sample and presence of ice will be recorded on the COC. For composite samples, the end time becomes the time of collection.
2. **pH check** – The pH of samples requiring acid/base preservation is checked upon receipt and the pH value will be documented on the COC, along with any preservation performed by the laboratory.
3. **Chlorine check** – All (Drinking water, non-potable and construction) bacteriological samples must be submitted to the laboratory in approved sample containers. Containers are available upon request. The client is responsible for recording the Chlorine Residual on the COC. If Chlorine Residual is not indicated a qualifier will be added to the final report. In addition, an internal check of the chlorine residual will be performed by the laboratory upon set up of microbiological samples. The internal check of residual chlorine will be documented on form bench sheets of microbiological samples. If any chlorine residual is found the customer will be called immediately and the sample will be qualified or rejected.
4. **Sample integrity** – All samples are checked for sample integrity with the following criteria:
 - a. Approved container based on the type of analysis requested.
 - b. Cracks, leaks, possible contamination and/or any factors that could affect the integrity of the sample.
 - c. Adequate sample volume and air space.
 - d. Hold times for requested analysis must not be exceeded.
5. **Chain of Custody (COC)** – Information on the COC must be properly and fully completed by the customer. If the checks performed upon sample receipt indicate criteria are not met, the customer must decide whether or not to proceed with testing. Samples may be notated with a qualifier if they do not meet sample receipt criteria.

Reference: NELAP Quality Systems V1M2 Sample Handling Protocols