Standard Operating Procedure for Tracking Priority Projects

1. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

The purpose of this document is to formalize the mechanism for tracking priority projects submitted to the Central Laboratory and to outline policy for communicating with clients whenever requested reporting deadlines cannot be met for priority projects. For the purposes of this document, priority projects are defined as those projects assigned Priority 1 or 2 (defined below). The priority is assigned when the event is scheduled and would require prior knowledge of the need for expedited data turn around.

2. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR PROJECTS

Projects can be assigned various priorities when they are scheduled with the laboratory. The priorities are arranged on a numeric scale from 1 to 25. Priority 1 projects require immediate attention and that priority is *generally* reserved for samples collected in response to immediate health or environmental threats, criminal investigations, or whenever results are needed for immediate decision making.

Deadlines ***targeted*** for completion of analyses and posting of results to the laboratory's database (LIMS) can be calculated from the following formula:

$$\text{Target Analysis Completion Date} = \text{Login Date} + (7 \times \text{Priority})$$

Deadlines ***targeted*** for authorization of all data and certification/submission of an analytical report to the client is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Target Reporting Date} = \text{Login Date} + (7 \times \text{Priority}) + 7$$

3. CLIENT NOTIFICATION POLICY

Managers (and their subordinate supervisors) responsible for laboratory analytical workgroups will regularly review and track the status of projects submitted for analysis. Prior to the target reporting date for projects scheduled as Priority 1 or 2, whenever it is anticipated that results cannot be reported by the requested date, the client will be notified. In those cases, the responsible manager will determine the reason for the delay and the anticipated reporting date. The manager will communicate (preferably via e-mail) that information to the laboratory's Project Manager, and to the Program Administrator. The laboratory's Project Manager (or delegate) will forward this information to the client.

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