US EPA Region 3 Laboratory, Ft. Meade, Maryland
Analytical Request Form Instructions (ARF 2.1)
Version: 04/01/2021

Laboratory Services and Applied Sciences Division (LSASD)
Laboratory and Technical Services Branch (LTSB)
Laboratory Section (LS)

These are instructions for populating and submitting the PDF version of the Analytical Request Form, ARF 2.1, for the request of Region 3 Laboratory analytical services. This form was originally created in 04/16/2016 as ARF 2.0. In 2018, a new version with significant improvements was launched as ARF 2.1. As of this writing, ARF 2.1:version e, is now available. This version has been updated to make the form totally editable and help reduce submission errors.

The completed ARF is emailed to the Region 3 Laboratory and Technical Services Branch (LTSB) at **R3_Clients@epa.gov.** LTSB may contact the request preparer if clarification or additional information is required to complete the ARF. Once all analytical services have been assigned, a Final Lab Assignment Report will be emailed showing all RAS, DAS, and other non-Superfund Lab assignments.

Laboratories are assigned though the Laboratory Services and Applied Sciences Division (LSASD) FASTAC strategy which applies a decision tree to determine which analytical service would be the most cost effective, but, still meet the needs of the project. The individual parameters are considered for analysis first by the Region 3 Laboratory, Those that are not accepted are either sent out to a CLP laboratory (Tier II), another EPA regional/program lab or commercial laboratory (Tier III), or a lab is obtained through the Tier IV process where the sampling contractors themselves, locate and contract with a lab. (Note: if the request is for Tier IV services, each sample delivery group must contain no more than 20 samples.) Based on the lab assignment for each parameter, a DAS, RAS, PES or NSF # is assigned.

Please note, when submitting a request, all analysis for a single site/event should be entered on one ARF form. All analyses will be assigned to the appropriate laboratory(s). But, if there are separate sampling events for the same site, separate ARFs will need to be submitted.

1.0 Clearing the Form

To clear all information from the form, click the "Reset Form" button ` Reset Form ` at the top of the page.

2.0 Printing the Form

To print, click the "Print Form" button ` Print Form ` at the top of the page, and follow instructions.

3.0 Submitting the Form

Select the "Submit" button ` Submit Form ` at the top of the page.

The completed PDF form is emailed to the Region 3's Laboratory and Technical Services Branch (LTSB) at **R3_Clients@epa.gov** .

4.0 Sampling Site Information Section

All fields on the form must be completed using the dropdown options, or by manually typing in the required information. Some fields may be auto-filled in "NA" when not applicable. If there are questions concerning what information will be required in a field, please contact LTSB for clarification.

NOTE: Most fields are required to be filled in. If they are missed, an error message will be displayed when the "Submit" button is pressed.

Date Submitted - This automatically updates when the form is submitted and cannot be changed by the user.

Site Name
Select the **facility/site name** from the dropdown menu. When a site is selected, the street address, city, state, zip code and CERCLIS number fields will be populated automatically. Only NPL sites will be available in the dropdown menu. If a site name is not listed, this information will need to be entered manually.

Note: When entering site information manually do not use any abbreviations which are not outlined in the QA documents or program-specific tracking system.

Street Address / City / State / Zip Code
If not automatically filled in, manually enter this information for the sampling site.

Division or Office / Site Activity / Program
Use the dropdown menus to populate the EPA **organization**, **site activity**, and **program** information. This information allows the laboratory to clarify sampling details and to contact the samplers and project managers in the event of problems.

EPA ID (a.k.a. CERCLIS Number) / Account Number / Spill ID (SSID) / Operable Unit

This critical information is used **only** for a Superfund (RAS and/or DAS) site. The **account numbers** are required for applying costs to specific areas of the Superfund site- and site-specific invoicing. The EPA Project Lead should be contacted for this information.

5.0 QA Document Information Section

Provide the QA Document **DCN#**, EPA personnel who it was **Approved By**, and **Date** the document was approved. In cases where the document is currently in review and is expected to be signed for this project, click on the **Expedited Review** box and enter the **Expected Completion Date**.

Note: EPA Order CIO 2105.0 (formerly 5360.1 A2) Section 6.a.(7), states that "Approved Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs), or equivalent documents defined by the QMP, for all applicable projects and tasks involving environmental data with review and approval having been made by the EPA QAM (or authorized representative defined in the QMP). QAPPs must be approved prior to any data gathering work or use, except under circumstances requiring immediate action to protect human health and the environment or operations conducted under police powers".

An approved QAPP or equivalent document should be submitted to Region 3's Applied Science and Quality Assurance Branch (ASQAB) QA Document Review group at R3_QA@epa.gov, prior to or along with the ARF.

For additional information and guidance on preparing and submitting QAPPs, SAPs or other QA documents, contact ASQAB at this website: https://intranet.epa.gov/r3intran/qa/.

6.0 Contact Information Section

Proper contact information is required for the **EPA Project Lead** (RPM/OSC, etc), **Site Leader** and/or **Analytical Request Preparer** so the laboratory will know who to contact and who to send the reports/data. For each contact, enter the name, phone number, cell number and email address. **Contractor** and **EPA CO/PO** should be left as "NA" for non-Superfund sites. Site Leader is a contract employee for Superfund sites and an EPA employee for non-Superfund sites.

7.0 Analysis Information Section

Complete this section for analysis requested for each matrix/parameter/method requested. If additional rows are needed, click the "Add a New Row" button at the top of the table. To delete a row, click the "X" button to the left of the row.

> **Equivalent Method substitution**
> Click on the box labeled   *Is equivalent method substitution allowed?   and select Yes or No.
>
>
>
> Select Yes if you would be amenable to Region 3 substituting your request with an equivalent method which will still meet your required QLs and analyte list requirements. For example, we may substitute EPA 200.7 and 200.8 for your request for metals by the CLP SOW. ***This should help reduce email traffic required for negotiations***. But, if there are any special circumstances or requirements, please be sure to add an explanation in the Special Instructions.

QTY (Quantity)

Enter the **total** number of samples <u>by matrix</u> (e.g., air, aqueous, solid, etc.) and <u>by parameter</u> to be analyzed. Field QC samples (trip blank, rinse blank, field reference blank and field duplicate) should be included in the number of samples. Other QC (laboratory duplicate, matrix spike and matrix spike duplicate) should not be counted as separate from the parent sample. NOTE: MS/MSD are not required for Volatiles, Semi-volatiles, 209 PCB Congeners or Dioxins/Furans, when analyzed by a CLP Laboratory.

Matrix, Parameter and Method – *need to turn on CAP LOCK to search drop-down lists*
Select from the dropdown list, or manually enter matrix, parameter and method. Only enter one matrix, parameter, and method per row. <u>Note: the list of available methods will be filtered for the selected parameter. Any changes can be entered manually</u>. Note: if you want to edit the Parameter, choose the Method first, then go back and edit. Otherwise, you will need to type the Method in manually. Add as many rows as necessary; the form will expand.

Validation Levels

All CLP data automatically undergoes data review and assessment via [Electronic Data Exchange](#) [and Evaluation System (EXES)](#).

The following table shows current nomenclature, which was derived from the National Contract Laboratory Program's Guidance for Labeling Externally Validated Laboratory Analytical Data for Superfund Use.

Data Validation Levels*			
Fraction	Level	Summary	Superfund Stage
Inorganic	EXES (Zero Level)	CLP Data Review and assessment via EXES	
	IM-1	Above + QC, false negatives, detection limits CLP National Functional Guidelines with Region 3 Modification	Stage 3 Validation Electronic and Manual (S3VEM)
	IM-2	Above + Raw data/Instrument Outputs	Stage 4 Validation Electronic and Manual (S4VEM)
Organic	EXES (Zero Level)	CLP Data Review and assessment via EXES	
	M-2	Above + QC, false negatives, detection limits CLP National Functional Guidelines with Region 3 Modification	Stage 3 Validation Electronic and Manual (S3VEM)
	M-3	Above + Raw data/Instrument Outputs	Stage 4 Validation Electronic and Manual (S4VEM)

*NOTE: Defaults for Region 3 work are IM2 and M3

Unvalidated Data TAT (number of days)

The turn-around-time (TAT) in days, after samples are received by the laboratory, you can expect to receive unvalidated/preliminary data. The default option is NA (not requested).

> **Region 3 SEMD policy** is that any request for unvalidated/preliminary data (analytical TATs) less than 21 days requires Branch Chief (or higher) approval prior to processing. This is a cost saving measure as laboratories often apply a surcharge of up to 75% per analysis for TATs less than 21days.

Final Report Due (number of days from last sample shipped)

The number of days, after samples are received by the laboratory, you can expect to receive the Final Report. The default option is 45 days.

> Please note, the Unvalidated Data TAT must be a subset of the Final Report Due value. Both are a measure of days from when the laboratory has received all samples. It is not additive.

Sample(s) Ship Dates

Start Date: The first date samples are scheduled to be shipped to the laboratory for analysis.
End Date: The final date samples are scheduled to be shipped to the laboratory for analysis.

Note: The Region 3 laboratory does not accept weekend deliveries.

Electronic Data Deliverables (EDD)

All EDDs will be provided in the Region 3 format unless otherwise specified. Select 'Yes' or 'No' from the drop-down box.

Split Sampling Event

Select this box if the sample analysis will be split between two different laboratories. At least two weeks lead time is required for "Split Sampling Events" in order to provide Proficiency Evaluation Samples for each participating laboratory.

Quantitation Limits (QLs) are:

- Select one of the following to let LTSB know where the Quantitation Limits (QLs), are located for this sampling event. NOTE: Our document, EPA Region 3 Laboratory Sample Submission Procedures, includes our Region 3 routine quantitation limits.

The limits can be:
1) Attached in the email to R3 Clients with the ARF 2.1; **or**
2) Included in the Special Instructions of the ARF 2.1; **or**
3) Included in both the email and the Special Instructions.

Special Instructions

Any special requirements, comments, or information should be noted in this section. This includes, but not limited to, the following:

- Special data review requirements
- Indicate if requesting Data Validation only (Tier 4)
- Indicate if samples are potable if not specified by matrix selected
- Quick turnaround times for completion of analysis
- If activity is part of a Criminal Investigation or Confidential Business Information (CBI)
- Project Quantitation Limits (QLs)
- Modified Analysis (MA) information
- Equipment required for sampling (e.g., summa canisters, regulators, filters, etc.)
- Address and contact information for sending equipment to the field
- Requests for specific laboratory by the RPM

NOTE: This section is limited to 5000 characters. If the information is larger than that, it should be attached as a separate document in the email.

8.0 Common Errors

Following are common errors that result in delays in processing the submitted ARF and ultimately, delays in final laboratory assignments:

- Insufficient lead time to process request.
- Analyte list(s) or table(s), along with the project Quantitation Limits (QLs) not included. Lists, tables, and limits should be either 1) included in ARF's Special Instruction section, or 2) attached with ARF in email submitted to LTSB.
- Incorrect or missing Sampling Site Information (e.g., Site Name, Account no., EPA ID, Address, etc.).

- QA Document not submitted, approved or dated prior to sampling event.

- Information on ARF does not match requirements in QA document.

- Analytical method requested in the ARF not correct based on matrix or parameter.

- Validation levels not specified.

- Missing turnaround time (days) for Unvalidated Data and/or Final Report.

If, at any time, the ARF preparer has questions on how to properly complete the ARF, please contact the LTSB at R3 Clients@epa.gov. or Jay Burman (burman.jarmael@epa.gov) at 410-305-2743.

If you experience any technical problems accessing or using the form, contact Yingtao Chai (chai.yingtao@epa.gov) at (410) 305-3175.

Information on how to request the ARF 2.1 form and the instructions on filling it out are available on the EPA Region 3 Internet at:

https://www.epa.gov/regionallabs/epa-region-3-laboratory-sample-submission-process-0#instructions