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## INSTRUCTIONS TO THE ASSESSOR

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### I. Preparation for the On-Site Assessment

- A.** Contact the Authorized Representative of the laboratory as quickly as possible to introduce yourself and discuss the upcoming assessment. Request that the laboratory send you a copy of its quality manual and related management system documentation, for you to review for adequacy prior to the assessment.

**Note:** If the quality manual has already been provided by the NVLAP office, do **not** request another copy from the laboratory.

- B.** Conduct a review of the laboratory's management system documentation and discuss any nonconformities with the Authorized Representative prior to the on-site assessment. Record the completion date of this review on the **On-Site Assessment Summary** (see part III of these instructions). Finalize the date(s) of the assessment.

**Note:** If you feel that the nonconformities found during the document review are serious enough to recommend not proceeding with the on-site assessment, notify the NVLAP Program Manager immediately. The Program Manager will decide whether or not to proceed with the on-site assessment and will notify the laboratory in writing of the decision.

- C.** Contact the Authorized Representative two to five days prior to the on-site assessment to confirm the assessment date(s).

### II. On-Site Assessment Report

The **On-Site Assessment Report** is comprised of the several parts described below:

- (A) **Signature Sheet with On-Site Assessment Narrative Summary**,  
(B) **NIST Handbook 150 Checklist** (formerly called the General Operations Checklist), and  
(C) **Program-Specific Checklist and/or Test Method Review Summary**.

These are tools for your use in assessing and reporting a laboratory's conformance with the NVLAP accreditation criteria. When completed, they become part of the laboratory's permanent record, are retained by NVLAP, and are used by other assessors during subsequent assessments. Electronic versions of (A) and (B) in Microsoft Word format are available on the NVLAP web site at: <http://ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/210/214/assessors/assessor.htm>. If you do not use the electronic forms, please ensure that you write legibly.

You must identify all of the laboratory's nonconformities (failures to comply with the NVLAP criteria) that you found during the on-site visit. In addition, you must review the last on-site assessment report to verify and document that actions taken by the laboratory to resolve all previously reported nonconformities have been effective. The On-Site Assessment Report includes your comments on the nonconformities and any comments that you wish to make in writing to the laboratory.

If any questions or ambiguities arise during the course of the assessment and you cannot reach a conclusion about a finding, contact your NVLAP Program Manager for clarification.

- A.** The **Signature Sheet** must be signed by you and the Authorized Representative of the laboratory who thereby makes a commitment to respond, as appropriate, to any nonconformities documented in the report. The **On-Site Assessment Narrative Summary** is comprised of sections that are numbered to correspond to the major subclauses of NIST Handbook 150, *NVLAP Procedures and General Requirements*. It is used to report your general overview, evaluation and impressions of the laboratory's quality and competence and to provide the laboratory and NVLAP with a clear understanding of the laboratory's strengths and weaknesses. There is no need to reiterate specific nonconformities previously noted in the checklists.

Space is provided on page 3 of the narrative summary to record changes, additions, and deletions to the laboratory's scope of accreditation. This page may be replaced by a properly annotated copy of the laboratory's scope of accreditation, or equivalent.

- B.** The **NIST Handbook 150 Checklist** is based on Clauses 4 and 5 and Annexes A and B of NIST Handbook 150.
- C.** The **Program-Specific Operations Checklist (NIST Handbook 150-x series checklist) and/or Test Method Review Summary** are based on program-specific criteria defined in the NVLAP Program Handbooks. They address the same areas as the NIST Handbook 150 Checklist, but with greater emphasis on the specific requirements of the laboratory accreditation program.

The following guidelines should be followed when preparing the **On-Site Assessment Report**.

- When you and the Authorized Representative sign the **Signature Sheet**, be certain that the Representative understands that the laboratory must respond in writing to NVLAP, regarding resolution of all nonconformities identified in the checklists and in the On-Site Assessment Narrative Summary.
- Using the checklists, clearly identify and describe each nonconformity,
- Using the Narrative Summary, comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the laboratory.
- Clearly distinguish between nonconformities and comments. The laboratory is only required to respond to nonconformities.

- You are encouraged to send NVLAP additional comments on the assessment of the laboratory that you may not wish to include in the **On-Site Assessment Report**. Specific guidance on the need for monitoring visits will assist NVLAP to ensure that only competent laboratories are accredited.

After the closing meeting with the laboratory, make two copies of the complete On-Site Assessment Report, and:

- leave a copy with the laboratory;
- keep a copy for yourself; and
- send the original to NVLAP within seven working days.

**NOTE: The On-Site Assessment Report shall be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The contents of the report shall not be shared with anyone other than NVLAP staff, the laboratory Authorized Representative, and yourself.**

### III. On-Site Assessment Summary

The **On-Site Assessment Summary** is *not* part of the **On-Site Assessment Report** and is not to be left with the laboratory. It is a one-page status report of your assessment that is to be sent to NVLAP along with the **On-Site Assessment Report**.

### IV. Laboratory Assessment and Related Services Invoice

Use the *Laboratory Assessment and Related Services Invoice* to report the costs you incurred in performing the on-site assessment(s).

Please send the On-Site Assessment Report, On-Site Assessment Summary, and Invoice to NVLAP in the 9 x 12 business reply envelope provided to you.