



**713 FW 4**  
**Aquatic Animal Health Assistance**  
**to**  
**Non-Service Entities**

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**4.1 What is the purpose of this chapter?** This chapter contains guidance on providing aquatic animal diagnostics and viral inspection services to non-Service entities.

**4.2 What are the procedures, conditions, and restrictions placed on non-Service entities requesting aquatic animal health services from Service Fish Health Centers (FHC)?**

**A.** Diagnostic services and viral inspections are provided at the discretion of the FHC Director and are limited:

- (1) By the FHC's budget and staffing constraints.
- (2) By the FHC's capabilities to detect and identify the pathogen.
- (3) To pathogens listed in the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Handbook of Aquatic Animal Health Procedures and Protocols](#).
- (4) To one viral inspection per year per facility or feral population, unless a requester can document a specific need for semiannual virology testing.

**B.** All non-Service entities must request aquatic animal health assistance from the FHC responsible for the aquatic animal health services in the geographic area where the aquatic animals to be examined are located. Requests for diagnostic services may be made onsite at the appropriate FHC at the time of need. The responsible FHC must receive requests for viral inspections no less than 45 days prior to the requested sample collection date.

**C.** The requestor agrees that:

- (1) Service concern extends beyond the immediate condition of his/her aquatic animals and the results of the laboratory service will be routinely reported to the requestor and the appropriate agencies.
- (2) Under the Freedom of Information Act, the results of these services must be available upon request.
- (3) The requestor's entire facility and all aquatic animals must be available for inspection-related testing.
- (4) Use of laboratory results for advertising purposes or to gain competitive advantage is prohibited and that interpretation of the results by various agencies or concerned individuals may vary as to meaning, extent, and time in effect.
- (5) If the Service is acting at the request of other parties, to indemnify, save, and hold harmless, and defend the United States, its agents, and employees from and against all fines, claims, damages, losses, judgments, and expenses arising out of or resulting from any act, omission, or activity in connection with the activities undertaken in furtherance of this agreement.

**(6)** Service reports of laboratory results may not, in themselves, meet foreign, Federal, State, or tribal requirements for importation. Importation or transport permits must be obtained from appropriate jurisdictions.

**D.** Stocks at non-Service entities must be sampled by an individual designated by the Service or the State agency with jurisdiction over aquatic animal pathogen control at the site from which the samples are taken. The designated sampler must have no vested interest in the results of the subsequent analysis.

**E.** No other health services (e.g., complete health inspections) will be performed for non-Service entities, unless arrangements have been made such as: fee-for-services, memoranda of understanding or any other formal agreements signed by all parties involved.

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