



NVLAP

Assessor Training

NVLAP Communications



Communicating with Assessors & Labs

- Communications include those between NVLAP, assessors (who also represent NVLAP to labs), and laboratories.
- Will cover communications from lab assignment through completion of assessment.
- Will also discuss other tools, such as internal database and web-based.



Assigning Assessments

- Labs are assigned based on
 - Availability
 - Convenience (geographic)
 - Test method coverage
 - Assessor's current backlog
 - Workload request
 - History of assessors at lab
- Assignments occur quarterly, in sync with renewal cycles.



Notification of On-site Assignment

- Assessors are initially notified of their assignments by (1) receipt of on-site package, (2) communication prior to sending of package from program manager.
- On-site package contains (mailed on CD)
 - Lab's application package
 - Information from last on-site assessment (on-site report, nonconformity responses & evaluations)
 - Other pertinent information (e.g., PT results, technical issues, important e-mails).



Assessor's Communication to NVLAP

- Decides if he/she can conduct the on-site assessment based on
 - Test method expertise
 - Conflict of interest concerns
- Notifies NVLAP of receipt of package & availability.
- Contacts NVLAP with cost estimate & a target date for the visit.



NVLAP's Communication to Assessors

- NVLAP notifies assessor if cost estimate is approved or further negotiation is required.
 - Based on estimate calculated by NVLAP
- After agreed cost is reached, assessor contacts lab to schedule the on-site date
- On-site should occur at least 30 days from estimate approval – allows for P.O. process



Lab Communications

- Assessor contacts NVLAP with scheduled date.
- Lead assessor is main point of contact with lab in coordinating visit – technical assessors contact lab on TM issues
- Assessor waits for P.O. number from NIST
- Once P.O. is received, assessor begins pre-assessment process.



Pre-assessment Process

- Pre-assessment begins with the evaluation of lab's management system by lead assessor to requirements of HB 150.
 - This is an adequacy assessment; compliance comes on-site
 - This also tells whether lab is ready for visit or corrections are needed to its system
 - On-site may be postponed until system meets (or nearly meets) the requirements – notify NVLAP
 - Results of pre-assessment should be communicated to lab



Pre-assessment Process

- To effectively manage time during visit some items should be requested by lead & technical assessors beforehand.
- Suggestions are: 1) last internal audit, management review, & corrective actions; 2) traceability examples; 3) sample of training record; 4) test report; 5) uncertainty analysis; 6) test procedures; and, 7) policy for use of NVLAP symbol.



Pre-assessment Process

- Should confirm the requested test methods with lab.
- Assessor should visit lab's web site to confirm proper use of NVLAP symbol & references.
- Should also look at any advertisements or promotional materials for proper references to NVLAP.
- Should submit opening meeting agenda to lab in time for suggested revisions.



Completing On-Site Assessment

- Assessor conducts closing meeting to
 - Discuss all findings
 - Go over test methods to include & omit
 - Explain process for lab response
- Assessor sends all on-site materials to NVLAP using envelope supplied in on-site package or e-mail materials as attachments to program manager & NVLAP@nist.gov.



NVLAP Written Communication

- NVLAP communicates with outside parties via
 - Handbook 150 & Program-Specific Handbooks
 - Checklists
 - Policy Guides
 - NVLAP Assessor & Lab Bulletins
 - Proficiency Test Summaries & Technical Briefs



Policy Guides

- Distribution - All labs, assessors, and other interested parties. A guide will be inserted into each NIST HB 150 until 150 is revised, at which time the guide will be incorporated into 150.
- Purpose - To set forth new NVLAP policies, together with guidance, or to clarify existing policy. Policy Guides augment NIST HB 150 in between its formal revisions.
- Examples include - Traceability Policy, Delegation of Authority



Lab Bulletins

- Distribution - Labs and assessors within a specific program. Bulletins for related program-specific handbooks are available at the NVLAP web site. When the handbooks are updated, these bulletins are incorporated into the handbooks.
- Purpose - To inform labs of program additions and changes, and to provide clarification of program-specific requirements.
- Examples - Addition of test method(s) to a LAP, changes in NVLAP program-specific criteria, new editions of standards.



Assessor Bulletins

- Distribution - Assessors (all assessors or assessors within a specific program).
- Purpose - To communicate guidance relative to assessments, training requirements, and interpretation of accreditation requirements.
- Examples - Interpretation of on-site assessment checklist items, definitions, procedures for submitting reports.



NVLAP Web Site

- NVLAP uses web site <http://www.nist.gov/nvlap> to communicate to assessors, labs, lab vendors, and others.
- Assessors most often use Assessor Resources for latest controlled versions of handbooks, checklists, and training materials.



Technology Services

National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program

NIST

National Institute of Standards and Technology

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[Mutual Recognition Arrangements](#)


[Assessor Resources](#)


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Resources for NVLAP Assessors

Welcome, NVLAP Assessors!

This page has been created to provide you with frequently requested forms and documents and other important information pertaining to the on-site assessment of laboratories and assessor training and evaluation.

Documents marked with the  symbol can be viewed and printed using Adobe Acrobat Reader software from Adobe Systems Inc. You may download this software without charge from the [Adobe web site](#).

Documents marked as Microsoft Word forms have been enabled for electronic input. For help with using these forms, visit our link at [Tips for Working with Microsoft Word Forms](#) .

Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat Reader software applications are identified in order to assist users of this web site. In no case does such identification imply recommendation or endorsement by the National Institute of Standards and Technology. If you are unable to use this software and require a copy of a listed document, please request a hard copy from NVLAP@nist.gov, or call NVLAP at (301) 975-4016.

On-Site Assessment Forms

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| NIST Handbook 150 Checklist (2006) | PDF  | Microsoft Word |
| Instructions to the Assessor (2005) | PDF  | |
| On-Site Assessment Report (2008) | PDF  | Microsoft Word |
| On-Site Assessment Summary (2005) | PDF  | Microsoft Word |
| Test Method Review Summary (2008) | PDF  | Microsoft Excel |
| Program-Specific Checklists | Link to latest editions of program checklists | |



Assessor Training

[NVLAP Assessor Manual \(includes assessor training symposium presentations\)](#)

Assessor Bulletins

[AB-1-2001: Calibration LAP - Definition of Best Measurement Capability](#)

[AB-3-2002 \(Rev. 2007-09-14\): Laboratory Policy and Procedure for Referencing NVLAP Accreditation](#)

[AB-6-2004: Contractor Registration and Unsolicited Mail](#)

[AB-7-2006: Document Control On-Site Assessment Forms](#)

[AB-8-2008: Test Method Review Summary](#) **NEW**

[AB-9-2008: On-Site Assessment Report for ECT Laboratories](#) **NEW**

[AB-10-2008: Assessment of Requirements for Measurement Traceability](#) **NEW**

[AB-11-2008: Revision of NVLAP On-Site Assessment Report](#) **NEW**

Other Assessor Forms and Information

| | | |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Assessor Qualifications Summary (used by all programs) NEW | PDF | Microsoft Word |
| Template for Assessor Biographical Sketch NEW | PDF | Microsoft Word |
| NVLAP Assessor Declaration | PDF | |
| Instructions for Preparing an Invoice for Laboratory Assessment and Related Services NEW | PDF | |
| Laboratory Assessment and Related Services Invoice | PDF | Microsoft Word |
| Assessor Performance Evaluation Form | PDF | Microsoft Word |
| Evaluation of On-Site Report Form | PDF | Microsoft Word |

<http://ts.nist.gov/standards/accreditation/assessor.cfm>

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NVLAP Interactive Web Site (NIWS)

- NVLAP currently has a web site (<http://ts.nist.gov/standards/accreditation/NVLA-P-NIWS.cfm/>) where labs can apply on-line and upload materials (e.g., management manual, facility description, org. chart)
- This web site is synchronized with our NIS internal database to provide application information without having to manually enter data.
- Labs can select test methods from the current available list or request new methods by designation.



Development of Internal Web Site

- NVLAP would like to develop a web site for use by NVLAP & assessors
- It would allow assessors to share information – technical and 17025
- Could be used to facilitate more consistent assessments – forum for interpretations by NVLAP, common assessor findings & problems at labs, suggestions for process improvement, etc.



Development of Internal Web Site

- Think about ideas for uses of this web site – security considerations will be a constraint.
- Give suggestions during the break-out sessions for NVLAP to your program manager.