

	<b>DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE</b> National Institute of Standards and Technology National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program	<b>ISSUE DATE:</b> October 20, 2023
	<b>ASSESSOR BULLETIN</b>	<b>NUMBER:</b> AB-38-2023 <b>LAP:</b> ECT
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Policy clarifications and guidance for ECT LAP international travel expenses		

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide clarification and guidance regarding the quoting and invoicing of international travel for assessments of laboratories in the ECT LAP. While Assessor Bulletin AB-23-2018 addresses the NVLAP policy for invoicing when combining multiple assessments (applicable to combining both domestic and international assessments), further written clarification is needed for quoting and invoicing solo and combined international assessments in the ECT LAP.

Quotes for assessment work must be submitted on the basis of the costs for the individual assessment. As a result, contracts are issued under *Not to Exceed* (NTE) terms. All international assessment quotes for the ECT LAP are not to exceed 40\* hours of travel time.

\*For all international assessments performed based on contracts approved prior to the issuance of this Assessor Bulletin, the long-standing ECT policy of **32 hours** of travel time applies.

However, if assessments are combined, resulting in lower travel expenses, the assessor must follow Assessor Bulletin AB-23-2018 and invoice accordingly. To clarify for the ECT LAP, the following travel expenses are to be split evenly between the number of laboratories combined in the one trip:

- 40 hours travel time to/from the destination country
- Total airfare to/from the destination country
- Transportation costs between home/office and the home airport, i.e. taxi/ride-share **OR** mileage/parking fee

As stated in AB-23-2018, “when preparing the assessment invoices, the assessor must distribute the travel costs appropriately for the combined assessments.” Based on the current process, invoices shall reflect actual expenses, which are not to exceed the amounts approved in the contract. The assessor may charge in-country travel time and expenses as appropriate for each laboratory. For example, when performing combined assessments in China, the invoice for the first laboratory will include travel time and transportation expenses when utilizing another form of transportation to arrive (e.g. 3-hour ferry ride and fare from Hong Kong airport to Shenzhen). For the second laboratory, the invoice will include travel time and transportation expenses to travel from the first laboratory to the second laboratory (e.g. 3 hours travel and fare to fly from Shenzhen to Shanghai). It is expected that the cost savings in the split costs itemized above to/from the destination country will allow the additional in-country expenses to remain below the contract amount.

When combining assessments, the invoices from the laboratory assessments may be reviewed together after the last laboratory assessment in the trip is completed.

This policy is effective immediately upon publication for all estimates/quotes received from this date forward.

Please note that any concerns arising from the review of assessment invoices can lead to delays in payment for services. Please contact your Program Manager or the Administrative Staff if you have any questions regarding the appropriate invoicing.