

Best Practices for Urine Collectors— Why CPC, CPCT and Accreditation?



What are the best practices for urine specimen collectors for drug testing? Training, training and training! When did you last have refresher training for urine drug screen collections? As you know, the Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations require refresher training and proficiency demonstration every five years. This should not be considered a best practice; it should be a minimum requirement. Once your collectors have the right training to be DATIA certified as Certified Professional Collectors (CPC) and Certified Professional Collector Trainers (CPCT), then you can work toward setting your company apart even further as a DATIA Accredited Facility.

There are some best practices to cover when training urine specimen collectors for DOT and non-DOT drug testing. Here is a list of important things to remember:

- Always perform one collection at a time from start to finish; never work on two or more collections simultaneously, with the exception of a shy bladder collection.
- Shortcuts don't work; they lead to errors. Complete the collection in the proper order; follow the appropriate steps laid out on the Custody and Control Form (CCF); Steps 1, 2, 3, 5 and 4.
- Always prepare your restroom facility and check the facility before the donor goes in and after the donor provides the specimen.
- The employer name and address, phone and fax should be in Step 1 A of the CCF, not the clinic or TPA name.
- Step 1 Section G should include the address of where you are doing the collection along the collector phone number and fax number.
- Always write legibly on the CCF and press hard to make sure the form is filled out on all five copies. Ask the donor when filling out Step 5 copy 2 to also write legibly on the CCF and press hard to make sure the form is filled out on all remaining four copies.
- Learn 'what is a refusal to test' and take the appropriate action when you have a refusal; use the CCF form to document the activity that leads to the refusal. When you have a refusal, no specimen and no paperwork go to the lab but always distribute the MRO copy 2 and employer copy 4 of the CCF. If you have a refusal to test, always call and notify the DER afterwards. Your documentation as the collector is critical to the employer and the MRO so they can make the appropriate official determination that the test is a refusal.
- If the donor does not initial the seal or refuses to sign step 5 on copy 2 of the CCF, the collector must indicate it on the CCF in the "Remarks" section. This is not a refusal to test, but must be properly documented by the collector.
- As a collector you will receive a Memorandum for Record or an Affidavit from the lab for you to sign off on a correctable flaw. Complete this Memorandum for Record or an Affidavit from the lab immediately, if the lab does not receive it back within five business days; the test will be canceled and reported as "Rejected for Testing."
- DOT has a document called "DOT's Direct Observation Procedures" available to address when a direct observation is to be conducted and including the instructions for this direct observed collection. Have this document available when conducting a

direct observation specimen collection so that the donor is aware of the DOT requirements. This and other important documents for DOT drug and alcohol testing can be found at: <http://www.dot.gov/odapc/documents>.

- Use a Shy Bladder log to record the details of a shy bladder procedure. Remember that once an unsuccessful attempt is made this starts the shy bladder process.



Certified Professional Collector Program

The above is certainly not an all-inclusive list of collector best practices but includes some items that should be underlined when conducting collector training. Of course, the #1 best practice is to use well trained and qualified collectors. DOT does not certify collectors but does have requirements for training and proficiency demonstration.

As an industry organization, similar to many industry organizations, the Drug & Alcohol Testing Industry Association (DATIA) offers training and certification for those looking to stand out in our industry as Certified Professional Collectors (CPC). When looking for a collector to do a job for your clients you could look for a DATIA CPC on datia.org so you can be sure the individual has been properly trained and has the certification to verify understanding of the DOT urine specimen collector requirements.

As a best practice, it is recommended that collectors take advantage of the DATIA CPC training and certification. The DATIA Certified Professional Collector® (CPC) program aims to ensure that the collection is performed in a professional and consistent manner, maintaining confidentiality for the donor and security, integrity and control of the specimen. Over the years, many RFPs for drug and alcohol testing services include a requirement that

collectors have the Certified Professional Collector® (CPC) status to perform collections for a particular contract.

Many industry professionals then take the next step and become Certified Professional Collector Trainers® (CPCTs). For organizations with multiple collectors on the team, this is a best practice so that the CPCT can train the other collectors in their organization as CPCs. Certification as a CPCT requires additional experience and training in both specimen collections and the aspects of providing comprehensive training to fellow collectors. CPCT training courses are held regionally approximately six times a year, in the spring and fall months and surrounding the DATIA Annual Conference. The DATIA CPCT instructor does a fantastic job with this training program sharing her experiences as a collector and trainer for 20+ years.

Certifications demonstrate your commitment to your profession. Receiving your certification shows your peers, supervisors and, in turn, the general public your commitment to your chosen career and your ability to perform to set standards. Certification sets you apart as a leader in your field. As a certified professional you can expect increased recognition from your peers for taking that extra step in your professional development.



Collection site facilities have an opportunity to go above and beyond and show the industry that they are indeed highly qualified by becoming a DATIA Accredited Collection Facility. The Accredited Collection Facility Program ensures that Accredited Collection Facilities employ highly trained collectors and helps laboratories, MROs, C/TPAs, and employers identify collection facilities that are committed to offering high quality collection services. The accreditation program requires a full day of comprehensive

collector training, as well as periodic re-training. Use of an Accredited Collection Facility staffed with well-trained collectors should reduce the number of rejected specimens, thereby saving everyone time and resources.

All DATIA Accredited Collection Facilities are required to maintain a staff of CPCs and a CPCT. To obtain accredited status, collection facilities are also required to adhere to strict standards in areas such as regulatory compliance, company services standards, specimen handling, operational practices, business ethics, and facility equipment.

The DATIA directory lists 180 collection facilities that are accredited for specimen collections and proudly display the Accredited Collection Facility logo. Make it your best practice to join this elite group of collection sites that have taken the steps to become the best of the best while upholding the highest professional standards in two main areas: 1) the collection facility and its operation, and 2) the collection facility's personnel. The Accredited Collection Facility Program will enable your collection facility to assure your clients that you are committed to offering superior collection services. This is a best practice for collection sites. ■



Joe Reilly entered the world of drug testing in 1993. He is well-known throughout the industry and considered a leading expert on workplace drug testing issues. Joe served for nine years on the DATIA Board of Directors and served as Chairman of the Board from 2004-2008. Joe is currently again serving as a DATIA Board member and is also a Regional Certified Professional Collector Trainer (R-CPCT) for DATIA and is available for DATIA CPC training in all areas of Florida. He is also active in assisting buyers and sellers in the drug testing industry work through the merger and/or acquisition process and provides various other consulting and training services.