



VETERINARY & BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT (VBSD)
Animal Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (ADRDL)

Quality Management

Client Confidentiality

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1. Introduction and Purpose:

This document describes the ADRDL policy to protect client confidentiality and electronic storage and transmission of results.

2. General Requirements/Definitions:

- 2.1. **Client:** An entity (e.g. person or customer, company, agency, organization, etc.) that receives test result done according to specified requirements.
- 2.2. **LIMS:** An electronic password protected system (e.g. VADDS/SANDI) that maintains and stores the client database, diagnostic test results and reports, and associated documents / data.
- 2.3. **Identifiable Test Data:** Any test report, generated during the course of testing and related activities, with client name and address on it.

3. Policy or Procedure:

- 3.1. Each submission is given a unique identification number, called the case accession number. Diagnostic worksheets carry the unique accession number given to the submission.
- 3.2. Unwanted identifiable test records are shredded or otherwise destroyed before being discarded or recycled.
- 3.3. The official test reports are sent only to the client (*animal owner / submitting veterinarian or clinic staff*) or other client-authorized recipients.
 - 3.3.1. However, such test reports are submitted to the state veterinarian or Area Veterinarian In-Charge (AVIC) or other official governmental agencies as required by state and federal laws and rules (e.g. select agents, reportable diseases or arranged by contract).
 - 3.3.2. No other entity (e.g. general public, private organizations, other veterinarians), without authorization from the client (verbal or written), shall receive any information pertaining to a client or a test. In case the client gives such authorization to ADRDL/VBSD, records of such communication(s) shall be maintained along with case records (e.g. the original submission form or under staff comments in LIMS (internal)).
 - 3.3.3. Sharing the test data outside of the above situations requires a court subpoena. The ADRDL director is the official and authorized “gate keeper” in such matters and is responsible to verify the validity of subpoenas or other requests via university attorney.

3.3.4. If a client report is accidentally distributed to the wrong client, the error is corrected by notifying the offended client about the mistake and instructing the receiving client to destroy any errant report they have received.

3.4. The clients have limited access to web results and e-submissions. They are given a username and password for such access upon completion of appropriate form which is kept on file with office supervisor. They can access only those cases that they are affiliated with.

3.5. It is the client's responsibility to furnish correct addresses or contact information, phone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses.

3.6. The ADRDL retains paper and electronic records as per the current ADRDL protocol on Records Management.

3.7. Use of cameras or other personal digital devices such as cell phones to take pictures of samples or other diagnostic workups for a purpose other than diagnostic activity (e.g. sharing it with friends and family members) is strictly prohibited at the ADRDL and is against the client confidentiality policy.

3.8. Client complaints are kept confidential.

3.9. Client confidentiality policy is extended to external personnel who have access to confidential client information.

4. Other Related Policies /Forms:

4.1. Employee integrity and confidentiality, POL.QUA.0001.XX

4.2. Records Management, SOP.QUA.0013.XX

5. References:

5.1. Current AAVLD Requirements

6. Revision History

6.1. Client definition updated.

6.2. Made semantic changes.

6.3. Updated 3.4.

6.4. Added 3.9.