



MINISTRY OF INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY
DEPARTMENT OF STANDARDS MALAYSIA

SKIM AKREDITASI MAKMAL MALAYSIA (SAMM)
SAMM CIRCULAR 2/2023

**REQUIREMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION RELATED TO SAMPLE PRESERVATION
AND HOLDING TIME FOR CHEMICAL PARAMETERS / ANALYTES IN WATER
AND WASTEWATER**

1 Introduction & Objective

This circular is to inform SAMM laboratories and assessors on the requirements and implementation related to sample preservation, transportation and holding time in accordance to the respective test methods concerned.

This requirement is applicable to the analysis of parameters / analytes in samples required to be preserved or transported to the laboratory within a certain holding time such as but not limited to chlorine, pH, temperature and dissolved oxygen (DO). The delay may affect the integrity of the sample and accuracy of the test results.

In cases where such requirements are not mentioned in the test method, reference may be made to APHA 1060 Collection and Preservation of Samples, Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater.

2 Effective date

This circular will be effective beginning 1st November 2023.

3 JSM requirement and implementation by the laboratory

- i) **Situation 1:** If a sampling activity is not included in scope of accreditation. (Laboratory is not responsible for sampling stage e.g. the sample has been provided by the customer, and the laboratory analyses the sample as received).
 - a) The laboratory is obligated to verify and maintain records that the sample received by the laboratory has been properly preserved or added a preservative (if necessary) and transported to the laboratory within the holding time.

Upon receipt of the sample, the laboratory shall perform its laboratory activities immediately or as soon as possible to avoid exceeding the holding time.

- b) If the sample was not properly preserved and/or transported to the laboratory within the holding time, the sample shall be rejected by the laboratory and the customer shall be informed through written communication on the proper way to preserve and transport the sample.
- c) In cases where the customer insists on proceeding with testing the sample that was not properly preserved and/or has exceeded the holding time, the laboratory is required to include a relevant disclaimer as specified in **MS ISO/IEC 17025**;

*“**Clause 7.4.3** Upon receipt of the test or calibration item, deviations from specified conditions shall be recorded. When there is doubt about the suitability of an item for test or calibration, or when an item does not conform to the description provided, the laboratory shall consult the customer for further instructions before proceeding and shall record the results of this consultation. When the customer requires the item to be tested or calibrated acknowledging a deviation from specified conditions, the laboratory shall include a disclaimer in the report indicating which results may be affected by the deviation.”*

- d) Failure to comply with the above conditions will result in the assessment team raising a non-conformity and the laboratory shall provide corrective action. If the laboratory is unable to satisfactorily close the non-conformity, laboratory shall be required to withdraw the test e.g. chlorine from the scope of accreditation or categorise as site testing during the next assessment.
 - e) The assessment by the assessor shall cover the implementation and records on the abovementioned requirements such as sample preservation, transportation and holding time as in example of reference APHA 1060.
- ii) **Situation 2:** If sampling is included in the scope of accreditation.
- a) The laboratory and assessment team shall cover, in addition to MS ISO/IEC 17025 clause 7.3, the aspect on sample preservation (if applicable) and ensuring the testing is performed within the required holding time.
 - b) The sampling shall be indicated in the scope of accreditation.

THANK YOU

Director of Accreditation