OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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FORCE RESILIENCY

June 20, 2018

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, ARMY SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM
DIRECTOR, NAVY DRUG DETECTION AND DETERRENCE BRANCH
ARMY DRUG TESTING PROGRAM MANAGER
NAVY DRUG TESTING PROGRAM MANAGER
AIR FORCE DRUG TESTING PROGRAM MANAGER
MARINE CORPS DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION PROGRAM MANAGER
ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM MANAGER
CHIEF, DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION PROGRAM, AIR NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
CHIEF, ARMY RESERVE SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM
CHIEF, DIVISION OF FORENSIC TOXICOLOGY, ARMED FORCES MEDICAL EXAMINER SYSTEM
COMMANDER, U.S. MILITARY ENTRANCE PROCESSING COMMAND

SUBJECT: Standards for Specimen Shipment Preparation and Leakage

DoD Instruction (DoDI) 1010.16, *Technical Procedures for the Military Personnel Drug Abuse Testing Program (MPDATP)*, requires that, "[t]he lids of all specimen bottles forwarded for [drug] testing are securely tightened, properly sealed and the bottles are enclosed in a leak-proof secondary container. The secondary container(s) must contain sufficient absorbent material to absorb the entire specimen contents in case of leakage."

These standards are established to prevent specimen leakage and to contain leakage properly when it does occur. The integrity of the MPDATP depends on strict compliance with these standards. Accordingly, effective immediately, a Military Service Forensic Toxicology Drug Testing Laboratory (FTDTL) will carefully inspect for leakage any package or container holding one or more specimens submitted for drug testing, immediately upon receipt.

As to those packages and containers enclosing more than one specimen, the inspecting official will decline to test any specimen contained in a package or secondary container that shows signs of current or past leakage. Detecting signs of current or past leakage may require keen observation and assessment by the inspecting official. Signs of current or past leakage include wetness on any specimen bottle or label, and/or wetness on the box or other packing materials; the discoloration or distortion (e.g., wrinkling or smearing) of a label, box, or packing materials; or signs of crystallization from minerals/urea on the outside of a specimen bottle, the box, or other packing materials. On determining that a package or container shows signs of

current or past leakage, the inspecting official will assign and document the fatal discrepancy code "PL" for "Package - Leakage noted - NOT TESTED" to each specimen it holds. No specimen coded as PL will be tested for purposes of determining Service member drug use.

Specimens submitted individually, or in an individually-sealed secondary container (e.g., a single specimen bottle enclosed in a sealed plastic bag), that show signs of current or past leakage, as defined above, within the secondary container, will not be tested. Inspecting officials will assign and document the fatal discrepancy code "BB" for "Bottle leaked in shipment - NOT TESTED" to the specimen. Should the inspecting official determine that signs of current or past leakage are present outside an individually-sealed secondary container, the "PL" fatal discrepancy will be assigned and documented for all specimens in the same package, as set forth above.

Whenever a fatal discrepancy is assigned, the FTDTL will report that discrepancy to the submitting unit, such that retesting of affected Service members may be accomplished, at unit discretion, and to permit appropriate corrective actions to ensure compliance with established standards for specimen collection and shipment preparation.

Compliance with the application of leakage discrepancy codes will be verified and documented by quality assurance oversight. This includes evaluations as part of the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System quality assurance inspection and proficiency programs. Compliance will also be monitored on an ongoing basis as part of routine laboratory quality assurance audits conducted by laboratory Quality Assurance Officers.

The standards set forth in DoDI 1010.16 and in this memorandum are the minimum to be applied. The Military Services may impose more stringent standards.

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