



Industry Updates

New standard released for oral fluid (saliva) workplace drug testing in AUS & NZ

AS/NZ S4760:2019 - This is a new version which was released on the 11 March 2019. Due to the testing regime, on-site testing providers, manufactures and other bodies will need to make changes to reflect the undated standard. This may take a few months for the changes to evolve.

There are a number of significant as well as minor changes required to how an on-site test for drugs of abuse is tested, collected, transported and analysed in a laboratory. You can purchase a copy of the new standards from [HERE](#).



Biggest Changes to be aware of in new standard

New cut-offs for initial testing and laboratory confirmation of THC.

THC (Cannabis or marijuana) has seen a reduction in the threshold required to be considered “non-negative” (ie a positive on-site screening result). For the previous version of AS4760 anything over 25ng/mL was to be referred to a laboratory for confirmation testing, however this cut-off has now been lowered to 15ng/mL.

In addition, the level in the laboratory required to be considered positive for THC has been lowered to 5 ng/mL from the existing 10ng/mL.

Addition of Oxycodone as a mandatory test

Oxycodone is a prescription only, strong pain relief drug. There is a new requirement in the standard for this to be tested on all samples with a cut-off of 40ng/mL, whereas previously this was not required.

At the time of writing there are no devices currently being sold in the Australian market with the new THC cut-off and Oxycodone assays available.

Chain of custody (CoC) form modifications

The existing CoC will need to be modified to include a number of additional consents from the donor (particularly regarding privacy of results and information around dispute resolution). Additionally, more information must be captured on the form (reason for test, recording information on the transport device).

A new requirement is also that any incorrect or missing information on the CoC form will now constitute a ‘fatal error’.

The Chain-of-Custody form cannot be corrected for fatal errors (wrong name/ID; incomplete form, incompletely or un-labelled specimens etc) post collection.

Any case where the Chain-of-Custody is not intact cannot be used as viable evidence in a Court of Law.

Device verification

Apart from including Oxycodone and the new, lower THC cut-offs mentioned above, any device used on site for testing, transport or collection will have to have an external laboratory assess the performance of the device to the strict criteria required in the standard. If the device has the correct cut-offs and test menu, and has passed this assessment, it will be ‘verified’ to AS/NZS4760.

References:

Information was sourced from:

<https://safeworklaboratories.com.au/new-standard-oral-workplace-drug-testing-2019/>

https://infostore.saiglobal.com/preview/417787230137.pdf?sku=1144217_SAIG_AS_AS_2711498

https://infostore.saiglobal.com/en-au/Standards/AS-NZS-4760-2019-1144217_SAIG_AS_AS_2711498/