

A. PURPOSE:

Customer service is of utmost importance to the Division of Scientific Services; as such, requests, contracts and tenders are reviewed to ensure continued compliance with their requirements. The purpose of this procedure is to describe and define the process by which such review occurs.

B. RESPONSIBILITY:

Director: responsible to manage the overall application of contracts by the DSS and to review them annually for suitability. .

Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors: responsible to ensure that all Units within their Section follow contracts as set up with customers. Contracts must be reviewed at least annually to ensure the needs of the customer are being met.

Quality Managers: ensures that contracts are reviewed at least annually or more frequently as needed.

Supervisors: responsible for ensuring that the guidance of this SOP is followed by the Units they supervise. Additionally they are responsible for ensuring that the customer contracts are followed and that deviations from contracts are appropriately approved and documented prior to implementation.

Unit Leads: responsible to ensure that the Unit they lead follows the guidance of this SOP.

Additionally they are responsible to ensure contracts are followed and that deviations from contracts are appropriately approved and documented prior to implementation.

Analysts (however titled): must follow SOPs and inform their Supervisor or Lead if major deviations from defined procedures/contractual agreements are required.

C. PROCEDURE:**1. Contracts/Tenders/Requests:**

- a. As part of the annual Management System Review the customer contract will be reviewed to determine if it still meets the needs of the customers. Each Unit is responsible for contractual obligations applicable to that Unit, under the general authority and responsibility of the Director.
- b. If there are any specialized contracts, these will be similarly reviewed to ensure the customer's needs are continued to be met.
- c. If contracts for outsourcing of testing (sub-contracting) are obtained, the Quality Section will maintain a list of the acceptable contracted vendors. The contracts will be reviewed annually. This annual review can be performed during the Management System Review but may occur earlier within the year based on the needs of the contract.

2. Evidence Submission to the Laboratories:

- a. When an agency/customer submits evidence to the Division for examination a Request for Analysis form is used. This form is reviewed for appropriateness following Evidence

Receiving SOPs. Requested analysis will be reviewed to ensure it is appropriate to the analysis the DSS offers.

Note: When iPrelog is used an RFA is not required and the iPrelog receipt can be used in its place.

- b. When the evidence is entered into JusticeTrax, a receipt is generated. The receipt lists what was submitted and has the contract between the Division and the submitting agency printed on it.
- c. Each specific Unit shall, as a function of the contractual agreement with the customer, specify and use appropriate procedures which meet the needs of the customer and which are appropriate for the examination/testing required.
- d. If a request is found to be inappropriate, such as the requested testing is outdated, then the customer will be contacted to clarify what is needed. This communication will be documented in the case file.
- e. The contract between the Division and submitting agency states:

Agencies submitting evidence to the Division of Scientific Services for specific analysis agree to allow the Division to determine the appropriate methodology for the evidence submitted and agree to the use of either handwritten or electronic signatures on Division reports. Descriptions of analyses offered by the Division are detailed on our website. If the Division needs to deviate from standard test methodologies you or your agency will be contacted prior to the analysis being performed. The Division reserves the right to use contract laboratories to perform case analysis as needed. This contract serves to inform you as the client of this potential event. In the event a contract laboratory is used the name and address of the contract laboratory will be stated on the laboratory report to the submitting agency. Any concerns or specific requests about the required testing can be discussed with the section Deputy Director or Director prior to case analysis.

- f. By submitting evidence to the DSS the customer agrees to the contract as printed on the evidence receipt.
- g. The DSS's agreement with the customer includes the capability and resources to meet the requirement of the contract.
- h. If an amendment to the contract is required at any stage within the DSS, the customer will be contacted, the amended contract will be documented, the amended contract will be reviewed and appropriate personnel will be notified.
- i. The evidence receipt will be maintained in the administrative case file maintained by the Evidence Receiving Unit.

- j. When an agency has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the DSS this MOU will supersede the above contract or work in conjunction with that contract based on the details of the MOU.
 - i. For these cases, evidence receipts may not be generated; other methods of documenting the evidence transfer from the customer to the laboratory may be acceptable.
3. Deviations/Changes to Contracts (before or after work begins):
- a. When a major deviation to a contract must be made, it must be approved by the customer prior to the work being performed. This approval can be obtained verbally, however the information must be documented in the case file. This should include a description of the change, the name of the person (customer) accepting the change, the date and the DSS employee that contacted the customer.
 - b. When the DSS purposes a deviation the deviation must be such that it will not impact the integrity of the casework/validity of the results.
 - i. A major deviation is the use of a non-standard method or anything that causes work to be performed other than that in which the case was originally submitted for.

Example: A case was submitted for FB/DNA analysis; during the initial examination materials having the appearance of drugs are found. The customer would be contacted to determine if they wanted drug analysis performed on the found materials.
 - ii. Additionally, a major deviation includes the Division sending the sample to a reference/contract laboratory for a procedure that is not part of the Division's normal scope of testing.
 - iii. A major deviation does not include changes such as instrument of choice or solvent of choice as long as the customer's needs are still met by the change.
 - iv. A major deviation does not include sending the case to a contracted vendor, if the contract vendor is analyzing the case materials for the same type of analysis the evidence was submitted to the Division for.
 - v. Deviation requests are entered into Qualtrax using the Deviation Request workflow. This is used to document the internal approval of a deviation.
4. Contact with Customers:
- a. Any employee who is contacted by or contacts a customer concerning changes to a contract of a case (whether verbal or written) must note the following in the case file:
 - i. date of contact
 - ii. the name of the customer
 - iii. contact information

Approved by Director: Dr. Guy Vallaro

- iv. brief overview of the discussion
- v. what was agreed to
- b. These records will be maintained in the case file for the life of the case file. If the change to the contract is documented as a major change, a copy of the information should also be filed in the administrative file with evidence receiving.

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