Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting
Monday, March 27, 2026, 2026 12:30 pm Eastern

1. Welcome and Introductions

Kristin Brown, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting at 1:30pm Eastern. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1 – a quorum was met.

The agenda was reviewed and an update regarding the Houston meeting was added. The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

2. Dispute SOP

Ilona sent a copy of the Dispute SOP to everyone. Most participants only had a chance to skim the document. It was agreed to add discussion to the next meeting agenda to allow adequate time for review.

Cathy provided explained that the SOP was originally focused on disputes between a laboratory and its accreditation body (AB), but has since been broadened to encompass a wider range of disputes, including disagreements between ABs or technical interpretations that cannot be resolved internally. People were asked to review the document with this broader intent in mind and consider additional scenarios it should address.

3. NELAP EC Update

An update was provided on recent leadership and membership changes. New leadership roles have been filled (Chair – Shari Pfalmer and Vice-Chair – Patty Carvajal), and several new members have joined, alongside the return of previous members as voting participants. Current efforts are focused on updating the Standards Review SOP, with input from consensus standards leadership to streamline processes and ensure continued relevance. Additional updates are expected over the coming months.

4. Technical Specialist Discussion

Ilona noted that during the previous Quality Management Systems Expert Committee Meeting (Module 2) it was noted that Texas was asking labs to limit the number of technical directors. Steve Gibson noted that they were concerned about some labs having 10 technical directors.

While some concerns had been raised about limiting the number, the general consensus was that no strict limit should be imposed in the Standard. Examples from various states highlighted differing approaches:

- Some states designate a **"**lead Technical Specialist" primarily for communication purposes. Notices are sent to the lead who then distribute them appropriately to all Technical Specialists in the lab.
- Others allow a primary contact who may or may not be technically qualified.
- Flexibility is maintained for laboratories to structure roles based on operational needs.

Concerns about excessive numbers (e.g., very large teams of Technical Specialists) were acknowledged, particularly regarding communication and accountability. However, the group generally supported maintaining flexibility in standards while allowing individual states to manage logistical concerns. No changes to current draft language were deemed necessary at this time, and feedback will be provided to the Quality Management Systems (QMS) group accordingly.

5. Ethics Language in Standard

This will be added to the April agenda. Ilona forwarded related language from the Standard to Council members. The issue centers on whether current standards sufficiently address situations involving data integrity issues and whether laboratories should be required to report certain corrective actions to accreditation bodies.

6. Summer Meeting

People planning to attend the summer meeting: OK – 0-2, KS 1-2, MN 0-2, IL – 4
Not attending: NJ, VA

The timing of the summer conference is harder for states to attend due to budgets.

Possible agenda items:

- General updates
- Continued SOP development work
- Review of standards and potential comments
- Discussion of Standard Interpretation Requests (SIRs)
- Open forum for questions

The meeting will be more of a working meeting, rather than focused on presentations.

7. Roundtable Discussions

Round tables are continuing to be well received and helpful. Topics in the last months included training opportunities and shared challenges.

8. New Business

- Paul Junio asked to be added to the agenda for next month – LAMS and codes.

- Supply Shortage (Diazomethane / Method Materials**):** Laboratories are experiencing delays in obtaining required materials. Paul Junio shared a possible contact and some is going to be ordered to make sure it is equivalent.

- Accreditation and Complaint Process Confusion: A situation was described where a complaint triggered a potential audit of a state lab, but ultimately appeared to stem from inter-agency confusion regarding accreditation authority rather than an issue with the laboratory itself. The incident raised concerns about communication and process clarity.

- Linear Dynamic Range (LDR): There was discussion on how to properly implement LDR checks. Best practice suggestions included running LDR checks slightly above the

highest calibration point (e.g., +10%) to ensure compliance and maintain usable calibration range. The importance of explaining the technical rationale to laboratories was emphasized.

- Microbiology Incubator Temperature Deviations: A significant concern was raised regarding labs documenting out-of-range incubator temperatures without taking corrective action. This issue appears to be increasing and may be linked to workforce turnover and insufficient training. Other participants confirmed similar trends, suggesting this may be a broader, systemic issue.

9. Next Meeting

The next NELAP AC meeting is scheduled for April 20, 2026, at 12:30 PM Eastern.

Kristin adjourned the meeting at 1:30PM Eastern.

Attachment 1 - Roster

STATE	REPRESENTATIVE	PRESENT
FL	Carl Kircher T: 904-791-1574 E: carl.kircher@flhealth.gov	No
	Alternate: Paul Legge (904)791-1582 E: Paul.Legge@flhealth.gov	No
IL	Millie Rose T: 217-557-0220 E: mildred.rose@illinois.gov	Yes
KS	Carissa Robertson Carissa.Robertson@ks.gov (785) 291-3162	Yes
	Alternate: Paul Harrison paul.harrison@ks.gov (785) 296-1656	No
	For information purposes: Amy Suggitt Amy.Suggitt@ks.gov	Yes
	For information purposes: Matthew Jones Matthew.jones@ks.gov Timothy Canfield. No	No
LA DEQ	Tramecha Rankins E: tramecha.rankins@la.gov 225-219-3247	No
	Paul Bergeron E: paul.bergeron@la.gov	No
MN	Windsor Molnar Windsor.Molnar@state.mn.us 651-201-3702	Yes
	Alternate: Cody Tennant E: cody.tennant@state.mn.us	Yes
NH	Brian Lamarsh (603) 271-2998 F: (603) 271-5171 Brian.M.Lamarsh@des.nh.gov	Yes
NJ	Michele Potter T: (609) 984-3870 F: (609) 777-1774 E: michele.potter@dep.nj.gov	No
	Alternate : Rachel Ellis E: rachel.ellis@dep.nj.gov	No

NY	Amy Steuerwald 518-473-0748 E: amy.steuerwald@health.ny.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Gretchen Welfinger Gretchen.Welfinger@health.ny.gov	Yes
	For Information only: Derek Symula derek.symula@health.ny.gov	No
OK	Taryn Hurley Taryn.hurley@deq.ok.gov (405) 702-1006	No
	Alternate: Ryan Lerch Ryan.Lerch@deq.ok.gov (405) 702-1020	No
OR	Steve Jetter T: 503-505-2672 E: steven.jetter@oha.oregon.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Lizbeth Garcia 971 865 0443 E: Lizbeth.garcia@dhsoha.state.or.us	No
	Included for information purposes: Ryan Pangelinan E: Ryan.pangelinan@dhsoha.state.or.us	No
PA	Annmarie Beach E: anbeach@pa.gov T: 717-346-8212	Yes
TX	Jody Koehler (512) 239-1990 Jody.Koehler@tceq.texas.gov	No
	Steve Gibson (512) 239-1316 Steve.Gibson@tceq.texas.gov	Yes
UT	Kristin Brown T: (801) 965-2540 F: (801) 965-2544 E: kristinbrown@utah.gov	Yes
VA	Cathy Westerman T: 804-648-4480 ext.391 E: cathy.westerman@dgs.virginia.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Shane Wyatt shane.wyatt@dgs.virginia.gov	No
NELAP AC PA and EC	Ilona Taunton Ilona.taunton@nelac-institute.org	Yes
EPA Liaison	Michella Karapondo Karapondo.michella@epa.gov	Yes

CA	Christine Sotelo Christine.Sotelo@waterboards.ca.gov	No
CA	Christopher Hand Christopher.Hand@Waterboards.ca.gov	Yes
AR	Brie Lusk brie.lusk@arkansas.gov	No
NV	Jasmine Curiel jcuriel@ndep.nv.gov	No
WV	Justin Carpenter justin.d.carpenter@wv.gov	No