

**Summary of the NELAP Accreditation Council Meeting
Monday, March 4, 2024 1:30 pm Eastern**

1. Welcome and Introductions

Kristin welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1. Both the agenda and the minutes of February 5 were approved by unanimous consent.

2. Vote on Kansas Recommendation

There was no discussion requested. Paul Bergeron moved to accept the recommendation of the evaluation team to renew the recognition of Kansas as a NELAP AB, and Stephanie seconded the motion. Twelve votes were cast during the meeting, with KS abstaining, and the remaining vote was cast by email the following day, March 5. The vote tally is presented in the table below.

State AB	Vote		State AB	Vote
FL	Yes		NY	Yes
IL	Yes (email)		OK	Yes
KS	Abstain		OR	Yes
LA	Yes		PA	Yes
MN	Yes		TX	Yes
NH	Yes		UT	Yes
NJ	Yes		VA	Yes

3. Vote on Utah Renewal of Recognition

Kristin handed the moderator role over to Michele for this item. In response to an invitation to discuss the recommendation, two ABs indicated that they had not yet been able to review the evaluation team’s recommendation. Michele determined that it would be best to postpone this item until the April meeting, and returned the moderator role to Kristin.

4. Proposed Revision to Evaluation Schedule

This item was postponed from the February meeting. Lynn has erroneously sent an earlier version of the schedule, so Jody emailed the correct version to everyone – the same correct version as was distributed for the February meeting. There were no comments and no changes requested, so the revised schedule is accepted by the Council, and the evaluators will be notified. The Executive Director’s evaluation tracking spreadsheet has been updated by Lynn.

5. Continued Discussion of Certificate Changes and Appropriate Mechanism, if needed

This discussion continued from the conference session in Columbus, about information that should be on the certificates of accreditation, with the primary AB for each method/matrix/analyte and the version of the standard used by that AB noted. The issue apparently arose from EPA’s drinking water program’s concern that, at least hypothetically, a lab could submit its certificate from a secondary AB to a non-NELAP AB and be granted certification in that non-NELAP state, but then if a problem arose, it could be difficult to identify the AB that issued the primary accreditation, and that primary AB is the sole authority over granting, suspending or withdrawing the accreditation that it issued.

EPA reportedly identified one lab that was (by acceptance of the primary accreditation) accredited or certified by 44 states, and suggests that is too much of a burden on the primary AB. Kristin noted that EPA's concern appears to be about "traceability of accreditation" rather than the use of reciprocity. If a NELAP AB were ever to decide to grant reciprocity to a non-governmental AB (NGAB) recognized by TNI, it is theoretically possible that a NELAP state not accepting NGAB accreditations could mistakenly grant secondary accreditation based on such a secondary from a different NELAP AB.

Louisiana noted that it issues many air accreditations that are accepted as secondary by a number of states, but it does not offer NELAP accreditation for drinking water. A related issue is that drinking water methods typically have the preparation methods included in the method itself, so that drinking water "prep methods" do not always get identified with separate accreditations. Mobile lab accreditations are even more difficult, as few states grant secondary for mobile labs, but insist upon accrediting the mobile as primary when it enters their state.

Several ABs noted that their current information technology (IT) systems do not have the capability of tracking primary ABs, once secondary is granted. One AB suggested that it could perhaps use a footnote, but that putting such information in a letter accompanying the official certificate would be cumbersome at best, and tediously difficult. Another AB noted that it intentionally decided not to include primary/secondary status on its certificates. In response to a query about whether LAMS was a suitable mechanism for maintaining primary/secondary distinctions, it appears that LAMS does not presently have that capability, and thus could not be used to generate certificates identifying the primary AB. Additionally, LAMS does a fair job of representing current status but has no capability for maintaining historical records.

At conference, lab representatives spoke in opposition to listing primary/secondary accreditation on certificates, due to a perception that secondary accreditation is somehow less or lower quality than primary. Those representatives would not object to having the primary AB identified, however, as "mutual recognition" is an easier concept to explain to data users.

Kristin asked whether there was consensus about adding primary AB for each method/matrix/analyte (line item) on certificates. One AB declared its opposition and at least three do not have current capability to make such a change without extraordinary measures.

The issue of whether this potential new requirement should be in policy or the standard was not addressed. The V2M1 Standard (2016 and the draft revision) has requirements about the certificates already, so as long as secondary accreditations are not included, it should be simple to add such a requirement to the standard, according to at least one AB representative.

6. Request for NELAP Evaluators for NGAB Evaluations

Kristin explained that Ilona is still looking for NELAP evaluators for the four NGAB evaluation teams. Carl noted that he has already volunteered, and after the meeting, Jody volunteered. Ilona has been provided with both names.

7. Remote Assessments

There was not sufficient time to fully discuss this issue, but many ABs noted that even though they are sending assessors on-site, more data review is being done remotely and prior to the site visit than was occurring prior to the pandemic emergency. Most refer to this as a “hybrid assessment”. One AB that currently has a policy that every third assessment must be on-site stated that they would have no problem changing to an every-other assessment regimen. Some statement about use of remote assessments will need to be included in the revised V2M1, and current discussions are trending towards “every other” assessment being an in-person visit, if remote assessments are used by an AB.

8. Next Meeting

The next teleconference meeting of the NELAP AC is scheduled for **Monday, April 1, 2024, at 1:30 pm Eastern**. Kristin is unavailable, so Michele will act as Chair for this meeting. An agenda and documents will be provided in advance.

Attachment 1

STATE	REPRESENTATIVE	PRESENT
FL	Carl Kircher E: carl.kircher@flhealth.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Vanessa Soto E: Vanessa.sotocontreras@flhealth.gov	No
IL	Millie Rose T: 217-557-0220 E: mildred.rose@illinois.gov	No
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	No
	For information purposes: Matthew Jones Matthew.jones@ks.gov	Yes
LA DEQ	Tramecha Rankins E: tramecha.rankins@la.gov 225-219-3247	No
	Paul Bergeron E: paul.bergeron@la.gov	Yes
MN	Lynn Boysen E: lynn.boysen@state.mn.us	No
	Alternate: Stephanie Drier T: 651-201-5326 E: stephanie.drier@state.mn.us	Yes
	For Information only: Windsor Molnar Windsor.Molnar@state.mn.us	Yes
NH	Brian Lamarsh (603) 271-2998 F: (603) 271-5171 Brian.M.Lamarsh@des.nh.gov	Yes
	Alternate: Bill Hall T: (603) 271-2998 E: george.hall@des.nh.gov	No

NJ	Michele Potter T: (609) 984-3870 F: (609) 777-1774 E: michele.potter@dep.nj.gov	Yes
	Alternate : Rachel Ellis E: rachel.ellis@dep.nj.gov	No
NY	Amy Steuerwald 518-473-0748 E: amy.steuerwald@health.ny.gov	No
	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	Yes
	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	Yes
	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	Lynn Bradley T: 540-885-5736 E: lynn.bradley@nelac-institute.org	Yes
EPA Liaison	Michella Karapondo Karapondo.michella@epa.gov	No
CA	Christine Sotelo Christine.Sotelo@waterboards.ca.gov	No
	Christopher Hand Christopher.Hand@Waterboards.ca.gov	Yes
NV	Michael Antoine mantoine@ndep.nv.gov	No