

**ATTENTION:** HHS-Certified and Applicant Laboratories and Instrumented Initial Test Facilities

*Please forward this Notice to Medical Review Officers (MROs), collection sites, clients, and other service providers for federal workplace drug testing programs.*

HHS-certified laboratories have reported a significant increase in the number of specimens that were reported as invalid beginning in the second half of 2017. The cause of the increase in invalid specimens is under review; however, it may be related to the use of synthetic urine products. All drug testing service providers should be aware of this issue, and take the necessary steps authorized in the Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Workplace Drug Testing Programs using Urine (UrMG) to prevent and detect substitution in accordance with existing program policies.<sup>1</sup>

A notable feature of the increased number of invalid specimens is that they show depressed immunoassay results. Laboratories identifying a significant increase in this type of invalid specimens may contact the NLCP for authorization to report regulated specimens with an Invalid Result based on immunoassay interference without first contacting the MRO to discuss additional testing at another certified laboratory.

Certifying Scientists and MROs please review relevant sections of the UrMG related to testing, reporting, and recollection procedures for invalid specimens. Examples of relevant sections include Sections 3.9(i), 8.9(a), 11.19(g), 11.19(h)(9), and 13.5(f).

Collectors please review relevant sections of the UrMG relating to collections and recollections. Examples of relevant sections include Sections 1.7, 8.3(h), 8.4(c), 8.5(d), 8.5(e), and 8.9,

If you have any questions concerning this Notice, please contact NLCP staff at (919) 541-7242 or [nlcp@rti.org](mailto:nlcp@rti.org).

<sup>1</sup> Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Workplace Drug Testing Programs using Urine, effective October 1, 2017 (82 FR 792), available on the SAMHSA website under *Guidelines and Resources*:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/workplace>