Standard Operating Procedure

Sample Reception and Labeling Protocol

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1. Purpose

This SOP details the **sample reception and labeling protocol**, covering procedures for receiving samples, verifying sample integrity, assigning unique identification codes, proper labeling techniques, and documentation requirements. The goal is to ensure accurate sample tracking, prevent contamination or mix-ups, and maintain the integrity of samples throughout handling and analysis processes.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all laboratory staff handling the reception, labeling, and initial documentation of samples for [Organization/Laboratory name].

3. Responsibilities

- **Laboratory Staff:** Responsible for following this SOP for all incoming samples.
- **Laboratory Supervisor:** Ensures staff are trained and the procedure is implemented correctly.

4. Materials and Equipment

- Sample receipt logbook or Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS)
- Permanent laboratory markers / printed labels
- Barcode printer and scanner (if applicable)
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Secondary containment trays

5. Procedure

1. **Preparation**
    - Put on appropriate PPE prior to handling any samples.
    - Ensure reception area is clean and ready to receive new samples.
2. **Sample Reception**
    - Receive samples from courier, client, or internal staff.
    - Check accompanying paperwork for completeness and accuracy.
3. **Sample Integrity Verification**
    - Inspect all samples for correct packaging, leakage, damage, or improper temperature (if applicable).
    - Note any discrepancies or damages in the receipt log and inform the supervisor immediately.
4. **Assigning Unique Identification Code**
    - Assign each sample a unique ID, generated per laboratory coding conventions (e.g., YYMMDD-SEQ#-ProjectID).
    - Record the unique ID in the receipt log/LIMS along with sample details and date/time of receipt.
5. **Labeling**
    - Label each sample container clearly and indelibly with the assigned unique ID.
    - If using pre-printed or barcoded labels, ensure the label is firmly affixed to the container without obscuring any important information.
    - For temperature-sensitive samples, use additional labels to indicate storage requirements.
6. **Documentation**
    - Enter all relevant information into the sample receipt logbook or LIMS: date/time, sample type, number of containers, condition on arrival, and assigned unique IDs.

    - File all accompanying paperwork according to laboratory policy.
7. **Transfer to Storage or Processing**
    - Transport labeled samples to the designated storage area or analysis laboratory as soon as possible.
    - Follow all relevant chain-of-custody procedures if applicable.

6. Documentation and Records

- Sample receipt logbook or digital records in LIMS
- Copies of all accompanying sample paperwork
- Chain-of-custody records, if required

7. References

- [Insert relevant guidelines, e.g. ISO 17025, organizational policies]