

Sample Collection & Chain of Custody

Proper sample collection and chain of custody procedures are essential to ensure the accuracy of the analysis as well as to ensure that proper documentation has taken place for potential use in legal proceedings. Failure to correctly follow either procedure may nullify or disqualify not only the accuracy of the analyses, but also their use as legal evidence.

The type of paternity test you require will depend on the reason(s) you are having the test performed. If it is simply for peace of mind, you can utilize the private paternity test, however if it is regarding such areas as child support, child custody, or immigration applications you will want to utilize a legal paternity test. The primary difference between the two types of tests is the sample collection method. Private paternity test samples can be collected in the privacy of your own home, without any witnesses, while legal paternity test samples are collected at an approved collection site, where your identification will be verified, a photograph will be taken and your sample collection will be witnessed. The purpose of these stringent procedures is to ensure that the participants are who they say they are and to make sure that accurate samples have been taken to submit to the laboratory.

The following bullet points all describe required sample collection/chain of custody procedures for a legal paternity test.

- The laboratory will have all necessary policies, procedures, and processes for proper sample collection and maintenance of identification documents.
- Each person tested will provide informed consent before sample collection. In the case of minors, the individual with legal authority will provide informed consent.
- A competent person, with no interest in the test outcome, will perform the sample collection and document the process.
 - This person is responsible to protect the sample from contamination, protect the safety of the individual being sampled, and maintain sample integrity.
- The sample collection professional must confirm:
 - The person(s) being tested have provided appropriate identification and the relationship of the individuals is accurately recorded.
 - Informed consent has been obtained.
 - The sample was collected from the proper individual.
 - All sample labeling is accurate.
 - The sample(s) are properly packaged in a tamper-evident manner.
- Each sample requires a unique identification, the date of sample collection, and the sample collector's initials.
- The accuracy of the labeling will be documented by the sample provider or individual who gave legal consent for the person being sampled.
- The samples must be transported to the laboratory in a tamper evident envelope or package.
 - Individuals tested cannot package or transport the samples
- The printed name, birth date, and alleged relationship of each individual tested must be recorded.
- With the exception of the child being tested, the race/ethnic makeup of the test participants should be recorded for later use in performing statistical calculations.
- The place and date of sample collection must be recorded, including the printed name and signature, as well as contact information for the sample collector. If an individual other than the sample collector is acting as a witness of the sample collection, his/her printed name, signature and contact information is required.
- Each person sampled must provide a history of any transfusions in the prior 3 months as well as any history of allogeneic hematopoietic progenitor cell transplantation.
- A photocopy of a government issued photo identification and or a photograph taken at the time of collection. This documentation shall be signed and dated by the individual being tested or person providing consent as well as by the sample collector and/or witness.

By following proper sample collection procedures and documenting chain of custody the accuracy and potential legal admissibility of the test results can be greatly enhanced. If any questions develop or if ever in doubt please contact the laboratory at 877-434-0292.

Setting the Standard for Quality DNA Identification



Chromosomal Laboratories, Inc.
 1825 W. Crest Lane
 Phoenix, AZ 85027
 877.434.0292
 623.434.0292
 FAX: 623.321.6118
 www.chromosomal-labs.com
 info@chromosomal-labs.com