



## MODULE 6D

### PROFICIENCY TESTING (PT) FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MICROBIOLOGY LABORATORIES

#### 6D.1 PARTICIPATION

Participation in AIHA PAT Programs, LLC's Environmental Microbiology Proficiency Analytical Testing (EMPAT) program or an equivalent proficiency testing program approved by AIHA-LAP, LLC is a prerequisite to qualification under the AIHA-LAP, LLC Environmental Microbiology Laboratory Accreditation Program (EMLAP). Laboratories in the EMLAP are required to analyze EMPAT samples, as required by the *Appendix C - EMLAP Scope/PT Table* maintained on the AIHA-LAP, LLC's web site ([www.aihaaccreditedlabs.org](http://www.aihaaccreditedlabs.org)), for those Fields of Testing (FoT)/Method(s) for which accreditation is sought.

Laboratories participating in the EMPAT program shall conform to all proficiency testing requirements as outlined in this module and Module 6A.

#### 6D.2 EMPAT PT SAMPLE DATA EVALUATION

The data resulting from an EMPAT round shall be made available to the EMLAP Taskforce after round closure for review and evaluation. The evaluation of EMPAT sample results, to determine FoT/Method proficiency, will be solely the responsibility of the EMLAP Taskforce. The EMLAP Taskforce retains the right to entirely remove from consideration any EMPAT sample, based on data received from referee and/or participating laboratories during a round.

#### 6D.3 EMPAT CULTURABLE SAMPLES EVALUATION

Samples shall be removed entirely from the grading due to but not limited to the following:

**6D.3.1** Sample fails to perform according to specification for more than fifty (50) percent of the laboratories participating in the round.

**6D.3.2** Less than eighty (80) percent of the referee laboratories correctly identify the sample at the genus level.

#### 6D.4 SCORING FOR EMPAT CULTURABLE PT SAMPLES

Each EMPAT culturable challenge sample (fungal and bacterial) has a maximum score of ten (10) points. Laboratories that correctly identify the genus and species will receive full credit of ten (10) points. Laboratories that correctly identify the genus, but do not attempt speciation will receive nine (9) points. Laboratories that correctly identify genus, but incorrectly identify the species will receive eight (8) points.

**6D.4.1** Results must be reported with appropriate corresponding challenge number. Results that have not been recorded properly on reporting forms will be awarded zero (0) points for the challenge.

**6D.4.2** The laboratory must clearly indicate species name under the "Species" heading on the results reporting form. If speciation has not been attempted, then this section shall remain blank. Species recorded under the "Genus" heading will be awarded zero (0) points for species identification.



**6D.4.3** The laboratory must sign and date under “Authorizing Signature”. Failure to accept responsibility for the reported results will result in a score of zero (0) points for the entire round.

**6D.4.4** Unexcused absences will result in a score of zero (0) points for the entire round.

**6D.4.5** Acceptable names for organism used in the EMPAT program will be the most current recognized genus and species epithet (binomial). The single most recent synonym of the current binomial also will be accepted.

#### **6D.5 EMPAT DIRECT EXAMINATION PT SAMPLES EVALUATION**

Samples shall be removed entirely from the grading due to but not limited to the following:

**6D.5.1** Less than fifty (50) percent of the accredited laboratories correctly identify the challenge.

**6D.5.2** Less than eighty (80) percent of the referee laboratories correctly identify the challenge.

#### **6D.6 SCORING FOR EMPAT DIRECT EXAMINATION SAMPLES**

Each EMPAT Fungal Direct PAT challenge has a maximum score of five (5) points. Laboratories that correctly identify a challenge sample will receive full credit of five (5) points. Laboratories that incorrectly identify a challenge sample will receive zero (0) points. Laboratories that incorrectly identify a challenge sample deemed unacceptable (see Section 6D.5) will receive full credit of five (5) points.

**6D.6.1** For the laboratory to receive credit for its test results, the laboratory shall complete testing within the sixty (60) minute time allocation.

**6D.6.2** Unexcused absences will result in a score of zero (0) points for the entire round.

#### **6D.7 ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING PROFICIENCY**

A laboratory is rated proficient for the applicable FoT/Method if two (2) of the last three (3) consecutive EMPAT rounds have passing scores. A passing score for a round is achieved when the laboratory receives a score of at least eighty-five (85) percent. The laboratory shall have participated in at least two (2) EMPAT rounds to be considered for initial accreditation. Laboratories that become non-proficient for any FoT/Method shall adhere to the procedures outlined in Section 3.8.2.

#### **6D.8 SCORE APPEALS**

Participating laboratories shall have the opportunity to file for an appeal of any scoring decision made during a round. The laboratory shall file a written appeal to the AIHA PAT Programs, LLC. Appeals shall be resolved by the EMLAP Task Force.

#### **6D.9 AIHA PAT PROGRAMS, LLC REPORTING FREQUENCY**

AIHA PAT Programs, LLC reports EMPAT testing results to AIHA-LAP, LLC after each proficiency testing round has closed.