



Suspension, Withdrawal or Reduction of Accreditation

In order for PJLA to maintain its high degree of credibility and customer acceptance, there must be an effective enforcement mechanism for dealing with unauthorized actions. This procedure describes a method whereby alleged offenders are treated fairly, while at the same time protecting the viability and integrity of third-party accreditation. In addition, this procedure provides guidelines to follow in the event that the scope of accreditation is to be reduced.



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1.0 GENERAL

- 1.1 Purpose: Defines the procedure for suspending and/or withdrawing accreditation certificates and the reduction of scopes of accreditation
- 1.2 Scope: Covers all PJLA accreditation activities and accredited organizations.

2.0 RELATED PROCEDURES, DEFINITIONS, EXHIBITS

- 2.1 ISO/IEC 17011: 2004
- 2.2 IPL-2, Quality Manual
- 2.3 IPL-1, By-Laws
- 2.4 SOP-10, Appeal Procedure
- 2.5 SOP-1, Accreditation Procedure
- 2.6 LF-3, Agreement for Services

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The President/Operations Manager or Designee is responsible for the suspension, withdrawal or the reduction of accreditation certificates for matters concerning contractual violations and accreditation issues .

4.0 WARNING AND INVOLUNTARY SUSPENSION

- 4.1 A organization who commits a prohibited act as defined in PJLA procedures, the Accreditation Agreement (LF-3), or other publications, is advised in writing by the President/Operations Manager of the fact of their delinquency. This communication is termed a Warning. Examples of prohibited acts are included in Appendix A of this procedure.
- 4.2 The Warning includes a deadline, by which time the organization is advised to have substantially cured the delinquency.
- 4.3 If the organization has not satisfactorily met the deadline, then the President/Operations Manager issues the organization a letter, by registered mail or other means requiring signature, officially suspending the accreditation and informing them of their right to dispute/appeal the decision. Dispute/Appeals must be made within 15-days from the notice date of the letter. Disputes and Appeals are handled in accordance to PJLA



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Dispute and Appeal Procedure (SOP-10). When disputes/appeals are initiated the suspension will remain until a decision can be made. This should be no longer than 30 days from the date that dispute/appeal was requested. Suspension Letters should include a notice that they can no longer promote that they are accredited and to remove any claims of accreditation from their marketing material, testing, calibration, RMP reports, website etc. Additionally, the laboratory will be informed to notify all pertinent customers relying on their accreditation. Certificates will be removed from the current listing of accredited laboratories to the suspended laboratory listing on the PJLA website.

4.3.1 In the event the organization has failed to provide a satisfactory cure, then the organization is instructed to cure the delinquency and to provide evidence of the cure within a designated period of time to remove the suspension and to prevent their certificate from being withdrawn completely. (See Appendix A for specific timelines).

5.0 INVOLUNTARY WITDRAWAL OF ACCREDITATION

5.1 The withdrawal process is invoked in the following circumstances:

5.1.1 A organization in suspension status has not cured the cause to PJLA's satisfaction within the prescribed amount of time, or

5.1.2 A organization having been under Suspension once during the previous 12 calendar months, or having received a Final Warning within the past 6 calendar months, commits another prohibited act.

5.1.3 Examples are included in Appendix A of this procedure.

5.2 The President/Operations Manager or designee issues a notification of withdrawal letter to the organization in writing, by registered mail (or other communication requiring signature upon receipt). Withdrawal letters should include a notice that they can no longer promote that they are accredited and to remove any claims of accreditation from their marketing material, testing, calibration, RMP reports, website etc. Additionally, the laboratory will be informed to notify all pertinent customers relying on their accreditation. Certificates will be removed from the current listing of accredited laboratories to the withdrawn laboratory listing on the PJLA website. As needed, the President/Operations Manager will utilize the



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technical committee and/or executive committee to make the final decision to withdraw the organization's accreditation.

6.0 REDUCTION OF ACCREDITATION

- 6.1 Involuntary scope reductions may occur as a result of failure to meet accreditation requirements in certain areas of an accredited organization's scope.
- 6.2 The President/Operations Manager or designee along with the assessment team and Executive Committee as needed, decide on involuntary scope reductions.
- 6.3 The organization is notified of the decision in writing within 15 days of the decision to reduce their scope of accreditation. These letters should include a notice that they can no longer promote that they are accredited for any removed items on their scope of accreditation and to remove any claims of accreditation from their marketing material, testing, calibration, RMP reports, website etc. Additionally, the laboratory will be informed to notify all pertinent customers relying on their accreditation. Certificates will be revised and updated on the current listing of accredited laboratories. The organization is afforded the opportunity to receive a copy of the deliberations and is informed of its option to appeal in accordance with SOP-10, Dispute and Appeals Procedure. Dispute/Appeals must be made within 15-days from the notice date of the letter. Disputes and Appeals are handled in accordance to PJLA Dispute and Appeal Procedure (SOP-10). When disputes/appeals are initiated the decision of the scope reduction will remain until a decision can be made. This should be no longer than 30 days from the date that dispute/appeal was requested.

7.0 VOLUNTARY SUSPENSION, WITHDRAWAL OR TRANSFER OF ACCREDITATION

- 7.1 The President/Operations Manager or Designee receives all inquiries in regard to organizations requesting to voluntarily suspend, withdraw or transfer their accreditation.



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- 7.2 The President/Operations Manager discusses the reasoning for these decisions with the organization and determines the effective date. In cases, where the organization claims that they are no longer in business or is no longer maintaining their accreditation then their accreditation will be withdrawn immediately. If the organization informs PJLA that they will be transferring to another accrediting body then the President/Operations Manager will communicate with the organization to assist with the transfer process including the release of any previous assessment reports and discuss the effective date that they will no longer need PJLA's accreditation. At no such time will PJLA allow certificates to remain valid if the laboratory has not met their obligation to maintain their accreditation. Example: Scheduling of assessments every 12 months, financial obligations, corrective action issues. If the organization cannot fulfill these obligations regardless if they are transferring, then their certificate will proceed to the suspension/withdrawal process as described in this procedure. If the organization is in good standing then the certificate of accreditation can remain on the PJLA website until expiration or when the organization informs PJLA of their new effective date with the other accreditation body, whichever arises first.

8.0 RECORDS

- 8.1 The President/Operations Manager or designee retains all records of warning, suspension, final warning, withdrawal activities, and scope reductions in accordance to SOP-5.



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APPENDIX A: PROCESS FOR SUSPENSION AND WITHDRAWAL

1.0 Failure to Schedule an Assessment within 12 Months

Organization is contacted 60-90 days prior to their assessment due date to confirm and assessment date. An email warning is provided by the Accreditation Program Assistant that if the date is not confirmed then they will start to receive a warning letter for suspension from headquarters.



If no response is received and 30 days has past their due date, then the first warning letter is sent that they must contact headquarters within 15 days to schedule the assessment.



If no response is received within 15 days, then the suspension letter is sent informing them that they have 45 days to schedule or they will be withdrawn. The certificate is removed from the active listing and placed on the suspension listing on the website.



If 45 days pass, then the organization is then informed that they have been withdrawn from the PJLA database.



2.0 Failure to respond to Corrective Action within 60 days

Organization has 60 days to close corrective action from the last day of the assessment.



If no corrective action has been submitted to the assessor/assessment team, then the first warning letter is sent that they must submit corrective action within 30 days.



If no response is received within 30 days, then the suspension letter is sent informing them that they have 15 days to submit corrective action. The suspension will be updated on the PJLA website.



If 15 days pass, then the organization is then informed that they have been withdrawn from the PJLA website.



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3.0 Failure to Meet Financial Obligations

Organization's invoices are to be paid upon receipt. Accounts receivable will call organizations 30 days after the dated invoice for payment or payment arrangements.



If no payment has been made within 60 days of the dated invoice, then the first warning letter is sent to the organization that they must submit payment within 30 days.



If 30 days pass, then the suspension letter is sent informing them that they have 15 days to submit payment. The suspension will be updated on the PJLA website.



If 15 days pass, then the organization is then informed that they have been withdrawn from the PJLA website.

4.0 Failure to Respond to a Complaint

Organizations are notified to respond to a complaint within a reasonable period of time, based on the situation and severity of the issue.



If the period of time passes then the organization is provide a warning letter that they need to respond within 15 days or they will be suspended



If no response is received the organization will be suspended and will have an additional 15 days to respond or they will be withdrawn. The suspension will be updated on the PJLA website.



If no response is received within 15 days then they will be withdrawn and made inactive on the PJLA website.

5.0 Voluntary Suspension, Withdrawal, Transfer of Accreditation

Once an organization notifies PJLA that they would like to suspend, withdrawal or transfer their accreditation then the President/Operations is notified immediately.



The President/Operations Manager contacts the organization to confirm effective dates. If a verbal confirmation cannot be obtained within 7 days, then an official letter requesting additional information will be sent to the organization to ensure the



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appropriate effective withdrawal date is given. The organization will have 14 days to respond.



If 14 days pass and no confirmation are made then PJLA has the right to place an immediate withdrawal date on the accreditation. In the case, we are notified that they are transferring to another accrediting body then the withdrawal date will be determined by the President/Operations Manager based on their status with maintaining their accreditation. If they are in good standing, their certificate will remain active until expiration or until they no longer fulfil their accreditation obligations with PJLA (i.e. failure to schedule, failure to respond to corrective action, failure to meet financial obligations). A letter will be sent within 7 days of their official withdrawal date.

6.0

For organizations under programs such as the DoD ELAP, EPA NLLAP etc. change of accreditation status must be communicated to representatives for these programs within 5 business days. Relevant certificate update templates such as the DoD ELAP Denix Load Sheet must be submitted within this time timeframe.