

# Important information on how to fill out a COC



Chain of Custody (COC) refers to the documented process ensuring the identity and integrity of a sample from collection to laboratory reporting. This protocol is critical to preserving the chronological history of a sample, essential for legal evidence. Samples must be handled with care to prevent any claims of tampering, ensuring the validity of analytical results and a defensible laboratory report.

## Required COC documentation (\*denotes a mandatory field)

1. **Company name\***
2. **Project manager's name and contact details\***
3. **Project details/identifiers**
4. **ALS quote number and purchase order number (if applicable)**
  - Ensure accurate quote number to avoid invoicing errors.
5. **Reporting and invoicing email addresses**
  - List multiple addresses if needed to ensure timely document delivery.
6. **EDD requirements**
  - Specify required EDD and relevant email address.
7. **Storage requirements\***
  - Standard: 3 weeks for water, 2 months for soil. Indicate if standard or extended storage is needed (additional fees apply).
8. **Turnaround times\***
  - Indicate desired result reporting time; surcharges apply for expedited processing (1, 2, or 3 days).
9. **Sample identification\***
  - Each sample must be clearly identified on separate lines with sampling date and time for holding time calculation.
10. **Analysis required\***
  - Indicate desired tests with a cross; use suite codes (e.g. W-04) for specific ALS suites.
11. **Duplicate/matrix spike details**
  - Mark relevant samples for duplicate and/or matrix spike analysis; additional volumes need to have been provided for marked samples.
12. **Comments**
  - Note any site history, contaminant levels, or saline nature for immediate lab precautions.
13. **Transfer of custody:**
  - Relinquishment: sign and date the 'relinquished by' section each time samples are transferred.
  - Receipt: the receiving party must sign and date the 'received by' section upon receipt.

These details are essential for the laboratory to proceed with analysis accurately and efficiently.



## Common COC mistakes

### Incorrect client details

- Record your company name, not the client's name. ALS works directly with you.

### Multiple batches on COC

- Only list one batch of samples per COC.

### Referencing previous workorders

- Each COC must detail all tests for its specific batch. Do not reference past workorders or COCs.

### Error correction

- Use a single line to cross out mistakes, then initial and date. Do not use liquid paper. Make sure the correct information is legible.

### Dissolved/total metal analysis

- Specify the required analysis; otherwise, total recoverable metals will be chosen by default.

### Illegible handwriting

- Use clear handwriting within lined areas. Avoid writing at angles to minimise errors.

### Electronic versions

- Use a readable font size and feel free to use multiple pages if necessary.

### Missing sample details

- Ensure all sample names, dates, and times are recorded. ALS will not complete the COC without these details.

### Missing quote number or invoicing details

- Without a quote number, list prices will be applied. Include a valid PO number if required for invoice payment.

### No COC enclosed

- Submit a completed COC with each batch to avoid delays and potential breaches in holding and extraction times.

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## Advantages of a correctly filled out COC

Clear, accurate and complete COC paperwork will benefit you, your client, and ALS by reducing the potential for errors, and delays. Ensuring the COC is accurate and easily understood makes the samples legally defensible.

