



**March 18, 2020**

## **Note to Laboratories Accredited by AIHA LAP**

As the situation around COVID-19 continues to evolve, I want to share our contingency plans to schedule and conduct site assessments for the next couple of months. As managing director, my priority is to ensure the safety and well-being of our staff, volunteers, site assessors and you -- our laboratory customers. That said, the LAP team will be taking the following steps on upcoming assessments and those already scheduled:

### Upcoming Assessments:

Effective today, March 18, AIHA LAP will not be scheduling site assessments until further notice. We will automatically grant extensions as needed in intervals up to 3 months to those laboratories with assessments upcoming but not yet scheduled. The accreditation specialists will continue to send out reaccreditation notification letters, and labs must still meet the established deadlines for submitting reaccreditation applications. Please contact AIHA LAP immediately if you are not able to meet that application deadline.

### Assessments Scheduled Now Through June 18:

Some assessments that were previously scheduled are already underway and will not be interrupted. AIHA LAP has reviewed other assessments scheduled over the next couple of months and, on a case-by-case basis, postponed certain assessments because the lab's location presented a risk to the site assessor or due to lab closings. In still other cases, assessments have been postponed after the laboratory indicated their discomfort with hosting a site assessor – which is their right.

In those limited number of circumstances where there has been agreement by the lab, the site assessor, and AIHA LAP to move forward with an assessment already scheduled, the lab and the site assessor are being asked to complete a web-based questionnaire regarding recent travels and potential exposures. LAP staff reviews these response forms and will postpone an assessment if any responses raise a red flag.

For labs with assessments that will go on as scheduled, we urge you to continue to monitor developments on the CDC web site [www.coronavirus.gov](http://www.coronavirus.gov) as federal, state or local mandatory closures or travel restrictions could change everything.



### Next Steps for Labs with Postponed Assessments:

If an assessment needs to be postponed for any reason, we will grant the lab (in good standing) an extension as needed in intervals up to 3 months. For all labs receiving extensions, AIHA LAP will review the labs' status to determine those that are candidates for remote assessments (in whole or in part). We will contact each laboratory whose assessment is postponed and discuss the next steps.

### AIHA LAP Working Remotely

Finally, you should know that all LAP team members have been working remotely since March 13 and will continue to do so until further notice. Please feel free to email or call us during normal business hours and we will be happy to assist you in any way we can.

Again, our priority is the safety and well-being of everyone involved in our accreditation program. During these unprecedented times, we ask for your patience and understanding as we make these adjustments to your site assessment schedules. Please contact the LAP staff should you have any questions about a site assessment.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl O. Morton".

**Cheryl O. Morton**  
*Managing Director*

**AIHA Laboratory Accreditation Programs, LLC**