



Navy Drug and Alcohol
Deterrence Program
2022

Guide 4

Medical Review Process
(MRP)

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Guide 4 - Medical Review Process (MRP)

1. Overview. OPNAV N173A manages Navy's medical review process (MRP) to ensure all drug positive results are properly annotated as authorized/legitimate or wrongful/illegitimate use. Additionally, MRP ensures that no adverse disciplinary action will be administered to those whose positive drug test is the result of authorized and legitimate prescription drug use.

2. Responsibilities

a. Commands. Upon receipt of a positive urinalysis result potentially caused by the use of prescribed drugs or treatment, the command will initiate an investigation into the circumstances that led to the positive result and obtain a technical review from the servicing drug screening laboratory forensic toxicology expert. Specific document requirements to obtain a technical review from the servicing Drug Laboratory may include providing substantiating prescription records and specimen-specific information, see Appendix for example technical review request letter. Timely communication with OPNAV N173A must be received within 60 days of result to ensure no adverse actions are incurred.

(1) All drug positives reported by the Forensic Toxicology Drug Testing Laboratory (FTDTL) are reported as cases of drug misuse to the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) after 90 days. Due to the time-sensitive reporting, commanding officers (CO) must submit recommendation letters and supporting documentation for those positives that are not cases of drug misuse within 60 days to OPNAV N173A to undergo the medical review process (MRP). The MRP is required to review all positive drug results that could be the result of lawful or illicit prescription drug use.

(2) Prescriptions are valid for the period as written by the prescribing authority to only the Service member. Absent a specified time period when prescribed, prescriptions for substances included on Schedules II through V of Section 812 of Title 21, United States Code, will be considered expired six (6) months after the most recent date of filling, which is indicated on the label. For example, a prescription with a fill date of August 14th will be considered expired after February 14th of the following year.

(3) Service records of all members who engage in or are identified as being involved in drug misuse must be flagged by OPNAV N173A to prevent reenlistment or transfer until resolved.

b. OPNAV N173A. All drug positive urinalysis results are reviewed by a Review Officer (RO) to assess authorized/legitimate use or wrongful/illegitimate use within 90 days of notification of a positive result. The RO will make a determination through review of all submitted documents and available records, such as documentation from the command-level investigation, prescriptions documented in electronic health record systems, hard copy medical records, prescription bottles, or physician statements documenting drugs administered during medical or dental procedures.

(1) If the determination made by the RO is "authorized/legitimate use," no further action

is required by the command. RO will initiate removal of the positive result from the Alcohol and Drug Management Information Tracking System (ADMITS) and notify the command of the determination via email.

(2) If the determination made by the RO is “unauthorized/illegitimate use”, OPNAV N173A will notify the command (CO, Drug and Alcohol Program Advisor (DAPA, Urinalysis Program Coordinator (UPC), or delegated command point of contact of the determination via email. All positive results that are not the result of authorized/legitimate use of prescription medication must be processed for administrative separation.

(3) Final determination to remove a positive result from ADMITS rests with OPNAV N173A. No positive results determined to be wrongful/illegitimate will be removed from the ADMITS database.

3. Procedures

a. On notification of a positive urinalysis, Commands will review the circumstances to recommend if the positive is a potential case of drug misuse. All positives must be reviewed and assessed. Positives that are subsequent to a member’s initial positive may be combined into a single case for review. The laboratory accessioning number for each positive must be referenced on the recommendation letter.

b. If the review supports a case of authorized/legitimate use, the CO will forward all information to be considered along with his/her recommendation of “authorized/legitimate use” to OPNAV N173A for final determination with a copy to their Echelon 2 and 3 Alcohol and Drug Control Officer (ADCO). See sample command recommendation of positive urinalysis letter, see Appendix.

c. If the review supports a case of wrongful/illegitimate use, the CO will notify OPNAV N173A, take disciplinary action as appropriate and initiate administrative separation procedures. The command must provide a monthly update letter to OPNAV N173A on each wrongful/illegitimate use drug positive case that is 30 days past initial notification until a final decision has been determined. The preferred delivery method for the update notification is via email to MILL_N17_DDR@navy.mil (Secure Mailbox) or it may be mailed to:

Drug Detection and Deterrence (OPNAV N173A)
Attn: DDR Section (MRO)
5720 Integrity Drive, Bldg. 457
Millington, TN 38055

d. The command will obtain a technical review from their servicing drug laboratory for all cases where the member’s positive is suspected or reported to be from prescribed or medically administered drug use. Illicit drugs, such as, but not limited to marijuana, cocaine, synthetic cannabinoids, heroin, ecstasy, and d-methamphetamine, typically have no legitimate medical use and are not subject to technical review unless their presence is potentially the result of a prescribed medication or procedure.

e. All members whose positive results are not the result of authorized/legitimate use must be processed for administrative separation. Commands must notify OPNAV N173A of the final outcome of all drug positive administrative separation processes via one of the following:

(1) Drug and Alcohol report (DAR) reporting of finalized outcome of administrative separation process.

(2) Official message or letter from PERS-8 or PERS-9 indicating no further action is required or member is retained.

(3) An official letter that includes a copy of the courts-martial findings in cases where member is retained.

f. COs will ensure that when appropriate, active duty personnel who are subsequently retained following an administrative separation board or court-martial proceeding be screened for a substance use disorder. Any member discharged from a drug treatment program in accordance with DoDI 1010.04 must undergo monthly random drug monitoring (testing) for 1 year. Those personnel with special duty requirements may have additional drug monitoring standards imposed by professional boards or DoD policy.

Appendix - Example Technical Review Request (use official letterhead):

5355
Ser Code/#####
DD Mon YY

From: Commanding Officer, Command, City, State

To: Commanding Officer, Navy Drug Screening Laboratory, Jacksonville/Great Lakes

Subj: REQUEST FOR TECHNICAL REVIEW ICO LAN XXXXXXXXXXXXX

Ref: (a) PHONCON Command Person/NAVDRUGLAB Person of DD Mon YY

Encl: (1) Verified, Linkable Information Prescription Profile

1. Per reference (a), please complete a Technical Review concerning the positive result reported for the urinalysis specimen identified by:

- a. Batch # / Specimen #: ##### / ####
- b. Collection Date: DD Mon YY
- c. LAN: XXXXXXXXXXXXX
- d. Drug(s): List from iFTDTL

2. Enclosure (1), provided in support of this request, contains prescription information for the Service Member who's urinalysis specimen is identified by the subject LAN (XXXXXXXXXXXX). This information is non-repudiable (e.g., printed prescription profile with prescription issuance dates) and verifiably-linked to the Service member.

3. Please forward the completed Technical review by mail/email/FAX to physical address/email address/FAX number (FAX delivery shall be coordinated with my point of contact [POC] for this matter in paragraph 4, below).

4. My POC for this matter is Rank/Rate Full Name at e-mail address and telephone number plus extension.

/s/

C. O. NAME or By Direction

Appendix - Example Recommendation Letter (use official letterhead):

5355
Ser Code/#####
DD Mon YY

From: Commanding Officer, (insert command name)

To: Director, Navy Drug and Alcohol Deterrence Branch (N173)

Subj: RECOMMENDATION REGARDING POSITIVE URINALYSIS IN CASE OF
(RANK/RATE, FULL NAME, BRANCH OF SERVICE)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5350.4E
(b) iFTDTL website

Encl: (1) NDSL Great Lakes/Jacksonville Technical Review of SNM Sample

1. Per reference (a), I recommend that the positive urinalysis result reported via reference (b) in the case of (Rate/Rank and last name) not be recorded as an incident of drug abuse, as detailed below.
2. (Rate/Rank and last name) tested positive for (test result) on the urinalysis test in the amount of _ng/ml on (sample collection date), recorded as LAN# (insert sample LAN). (Rate/Rank and last name)'s medical record verifies that they have an authorized prescription for (prescribed drug by name, e.g. Guaifenesin with Codeine) which was taken as prescribed prior to testing.
3. Per reference (a), chapter 4, paragraph 6 and based on review of (Rate/Rank and last name)'s medical record in light of enclosure (1), it is recommended that the positive in question not be regarded as a drug abuse incident.
4. My command point of contact is (Name, phone, email).

CO's signature

Copy to:
TYCOM ADCO