

Keep It How Long?

Minimum retention periods for specimens and records. Discard nothing before its period ends.

SPECIMENS — §5.2

Whole blood & urine	≥ 24 hours
Serum, plasma, CSF & other body fluids	≥ 48 hours
Permanently fixed & stained blood films	≥ 7 days
Outpatient specimens	≥ 24 hours
Inpatient specimens	≥ 72 hours
Reactive Dengue / Hepatitis B specimens — monitored refrigeration or freezing (LAB-QM-POST-002 §5.8.4)	≥ 6 months

WHILE STORED (§5.3): each shift's tubes go upright in a biohazard zip-lock bag in the designated refrigerator, the bag labeled with **DATE, DAY AND SHIFT RECEIVED**. Temperature monitored per LAB-QM-ANA-005.

DISPOSAL (§5.4): discard only after the period above elapses — as pathological (biohazard) waste, per LAB-QM-IC-001 §5.4.

FLAG — OVERLAP: the specimen-type periods and the outpatient/inpatient periods can both apply to one specimen (e.g. inpatient serum: 48 h and 72 h). The policy does not state which prevails — **WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK THE CMT/LQM BEFORE DISCARDING**.

RECORDS — §5.6

Laboratory test results (instrument printouts, worksheets, result records)	5 years
Issued test reports (original and corrected / amended)	2 years
Test requests / requisitions	2 years
Accession registries & logbooks	10 years
Quality control (QC) records	2 years
PT (NEQAS) records & quality system assessment records	5 years
Specimen rejection records	1 year
Maintenance records	2 yrs after equipment unserviceable
Competency & training records (incl. employee ID records)	3 yrs after last day of employment
Waste disposal records	2 years
Audit & inspection records · management review records	5 years · 2 years
Retired controlled documents	2 yrs after supersession
Method / instrument validation records	Life of use + 2 yrs

STORAGE (§5.7): records storage area, protected from heat, water, fire and damage. Access limited to authorized staff.

SCHEDULE: DOH Department Circular No. 2021-0226, applied in LAB-QM-POST-004 §5.6. Results filed in the patient chart follow chart retention: in-patient 10 years after discharge; out-patient 7 years after last consultation.