

Preparing for California ELAP's Standard Methods 24th Edition Transition

What Laboratories Can Do Now

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The Announcement Is Coming

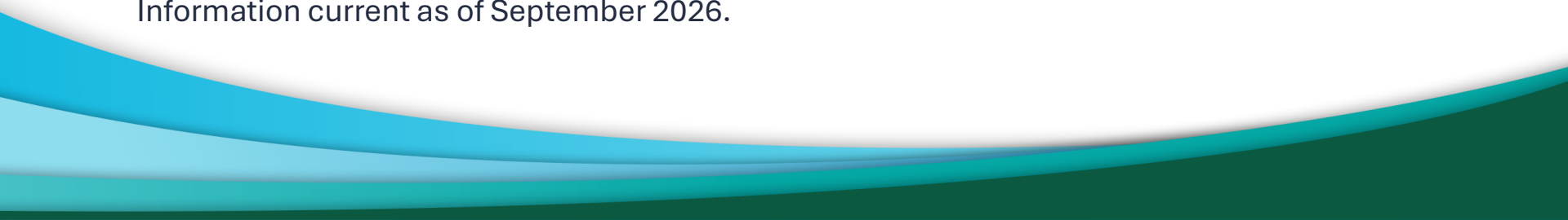
The work can start now.



Guidance, Not ELAP Policy

This session provides advance preparation guidance for California laboratories. It is not ELAP's formal implementation announcement. ELAP has indicated it intends to announce the transition by the end of calendar year 2026, based on direct communication rather than a published deadline.

Information current as of September 2026.

A decorative graphic at the bottom of the slide consisting of several overlapping, wavy bands of blue and green colors.

What We Know Today

- ✓ Standard Methods FOAs are moving toward the 24th Edition
- ✓ A separate amendment application will be required, in addition to your regular renewal
- ✓ Amendment fees will apply, and PTs will be required for the new method versions
- ✓ SOPs will need to be revised to identify the new method versions
- ✓ ELAP has not yet finalized how assessment waivers will be handled, particularly for drinking-water FOAs

What We Do Not Know Yet

- ? Final FOA tables and implementation dates
- ? The length and structure of the transition period, including possible coexistence of old and new versions
- ? The final assessment-waiver process
- ? Whether drinking-water replacement FOAs will qualify for a waiver

There Is No Need to Wait

Meaningful preparation can begin before the formal announcement.

Step 1: Get the 24th Edition

Published jointly by APHA, AWWA, and WEF (released 2022)

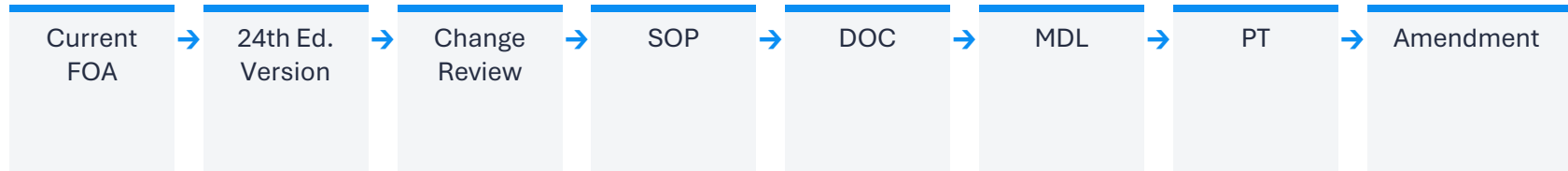
Available in print or as a digital subscription (Standard Methods Online)

Purchase at standardmethods.org, or through your APHA / AWWA / WEF membership for a discount

Step 2: Inventory Your Scope

- Pull your current ELAP certificate and identify every Standard Methods FOA, organized by matrix.
- For each FOA, capture the analyte, matrix, current method designation and version, and where the method is used.

Build a Transition Tracker



Assign an owner and status to each item. This becomes the laboratory's central project-management document for the transition.

Step 3: Compare the Versions

Do not assume that moving to the 24th Edition is simply a reference change. Compare your current version with the applicable 24th Edition version, even if you expect no change.

SM 9221 & 9223 (Coliform Methods)
Approval year has NOT changed between the
23rd and 24th editions — but check what version
your lab is actually running

SM 9020 (Microbiology QA/QC)
Revised every edition: 2005 → 2015 → 2022

What Should You Compare?

Sample handling, preparation, equipment, reagents, and calibration

QC requirements, calculations, acceptance criteria, and reporting

Supporting Standard Methods QA/QC sections

Ask One Key Question

Is there a substantial change to the procedure?

If the Change Is Substantial

Plan for a new DOC under the revised procedure

Evaluate or perform new MDL work, as applicable

Revise the SOP

Train affected personnel

Complete the new-version PT

If the Change Is Not Substantial

A new DOC is not necessarily required — document that the existing DOC applies to both versions

Apply the same approach to the MDL record

The SOP must still be revised

The new-version PT is still required

PT: Plan for Every New Version

Every new method version requires a new-version PT for that FOA, even when the underlying procedure has not changed substantially.

PTs Can Become the Bottleneck

Check provider, method, and matrix availability early

Confirm analyte, method, and matrix naming against the FOA

Build PT timing into the transition schedule, ahead of the amendment package

Every SOP Gets Revised

This is true even when the only change is the method reference. At minimum, the SOP must identify the version the laboratory intends to perform and seek accreditation for.

Think Beyond the SOP

Bench sheets, worksheets, LIMS configurations, and calculations

QC charts, training records, and Quality Manual references

Forms, equipment records, and purchasing or supply requirements

Example: Microbiology

SM 9020/9030 changes from the 22nd to the 24th Edition affect the broader microbiology quality system, not just the individual analytical method.

Microbiology: Potential Impacts

Temperature monitoring, autoclaves, and incubators

Balances, meters, and reagent water

Sterility, media, and recordkeeping

See IAS ELAP Webinar 26 for the detailed comparison

Example: Supporting Sections Matter

A method number can look unchanged even as its required supporting Standard Methods sections change. Review SOPs and Quality Manuals accordingly — not just the analytical method number.

Examples — Not a Method Review

Each laboratory remains responsible for reviewing the methods within its own scope.

Plan for a Separate Amendment

This transition amendment is separate from your regularly scheduled renewal, and associated fees will apply in addition to renewal fees.

Budget for the Accreditation Work

Technical Work
& Staff Time

PT Costs

Amendment
Fees

Possible
Assessment
Costs

Assessments and Waivers

Previous MUR: a waiver was available for many replacement FOAs, though not universally

Upcoming transition: not yet decided, particularly for drinking-water FOAs

Do not assume either outcome until ELAP formally clarifies the process

Time It With Your Renewal

- If your regular renewal assessment falls near the transition window, combine renewal and amendment assessments
- Combining reduces the number of separate assessments — and the disruption and cost that come with each one

What Can You Do Now?

Inventory your Standard Methods FOAs

Obtain the 24th Edition

Map current versions to their 24th Edition counterparts

Compare methods and document substantial changes

Draft SOP revisions

Identify where new DOC or MDL work will be needed

Investigate and plan your PTs

Identify impacts to forms, LIMS, and training

Budget for the amendment and a possible assessment

What Needs to Wait

Prepare the groundwork now — but hold off on making any of it official until ELAP opens the transition.

- || Making revised SOPs effective

- || Finalizing new-version DOCs

- || Submitting your transition amendment application

- || Assuming waiver eligibility, especially for drinking-water FOAs

- || Finalizing assessment scheduling or costs

- || Ordering or scheduling PTs

- || Finalizing new-version MDLs

- || Finalizing which FOAs you select for the amendment

- || Locking in submission timing or deadlines

Resources and Questions

CA ELAP: Future FOA Changes

waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/labs/docs/2025/delapo-report-060525.pdf

CA ELAP: Applications & FOA Tables

waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/labs/apply.html

CA ELAP: Assessments

waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/labs/laboratory_assessments.html

IAS Webinar 26: SM 9020 Changes

international-accreditation-service.teachable.com/p/elap-webinar-26

CA ELAP: MUR Guidance

water.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/labs/mur.html

CA ELAP: PT Requirements

waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/labs/proficiency_testing.html

CA ELAP: Fees

waterboards.ca.gov/resources/fees/elap_fees.html

SM: Approval Years by Edition

standardmethods.org — search “SMC Approval Years”



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