

MICROBIOLOGY LABORATORY CORRECTION OF PAPER RECORDS

CAP Laboratory General Checklist
GEN.20450

Sheryl Stuckey, MLS (ASCP)^{CM}
Manager, Microbiology Laboratory

CAP Laboratory General Checklist Standard: GEN.20450

The laboratory makes corrections to laboratory records (*e.g., quality control data, temperature logs, and intermediate test results or worksheets*) using appropriate techniques.

NOTE: The laboratory must have a written procedure that defines how to make corrections to both paper and electronic laboratory records. **Laboratory records and changes to such records must be legible and indelible.** The techniques used must meet the following criteria:

- Original (erroneous) entries must be visible (i.e., **erasures and correction fluid or tape are unacceptable**) or accessible (e.g., audit trail for electronic records).
- Corrected data, **including the identity of the person changing the record and when the record was changed,** must be accessible to audit.

PROPER CORRECTION OF PAPER RECORDS

1. Determine the need and reason for the correction of the record.
2. Ensure that the original information remains visible and legible by drawing a single line through it.
3. Note the reason for the correction of the record (i.e., clerical error, illegible, wrong location in the record, etc.,) at the end of the line.
4. Record the correction on the next line or in the available space.
5. Date and initial the correction.
6. Telephone notification of the primary caregiver about the correction must be performed if the correction is a patient result (i.e., downtime form) or a change that could impact patient treatment.

1st COMMANDMENT: THOU SHALT NOT USE...



Record Correction Deficiency Examples

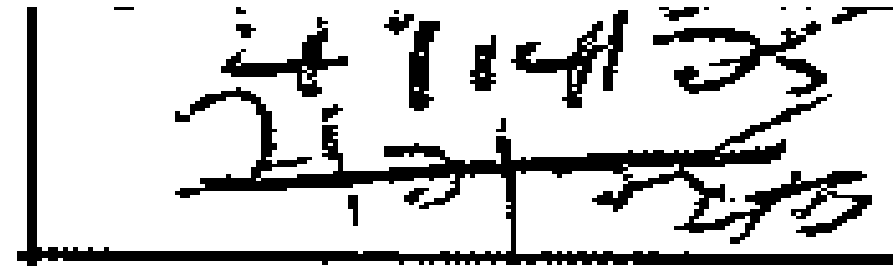
Strike-through with no correction,
date or initials



A handwritten table with three columns. The first column contains the text '000746'. The second column contains the date '11-18-05'. The third column contains the date '12-19-09'. A single horizontal line is drawn across all three columns, striking through the entire row of text.

000746	11-18-05	12-19-09
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Strike-through with correction
but no date or initials



A handwritten table with two columns. The first column contains the text '41143'. The second column contains the text '213'. A single horizontal line is drawn across both columns, striking through the entire row of text. Below the line, the text '41143' is written again in the first column, and '213' is written again in the second column, indicating a correction without a date or initials.

41143	213
41143	213

Record Correction Deficiency Examples

Overwriting an entry

18

Strike-through with notation of error, but no date or initials

Recording Technologist	Date Results Recorded

error

Potential Questions Raised by Record Corrections

Overwriting an entry

	24
17-25 mm	20
<u>≥3 mm</u>	4

Questions

1. Was the quality control in or out?
2. Were patient results reported?
3. Can you trust the results reported by the laboratory?
4. What is the frequency of record corrections in this laboratory?
5. Did the recorder have attention to detail or the skill to interpret the test?
6. Could this be a patient safety concern?

RECORD CREATION BEST PRACTICES

- Have clarity about what you want to record and how it should be recorded before you start the record.
- Make sure that the pen you will use writes smoothly and has sufficient ink prior to use (This decreases the likelihood of overwriting the entry.).
- Carefully record entries in ink, not marker or pencil (these may not be indelible).
- Make sure that entries are legible.
- If corrections are needed, legibly date and initial EACH CORRECTION.
- Never overwrite any entry.
- **CORRECTIONS SHOULD BE RARE!**