

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD FOR TESTING AND INVESTIGATIONS (ISTI)

Summary of Major Changes from the 2021 ISTI to the 2023 ISTI

The International Standard for Testing and Investigations (ISTI) establishes mandatory standards for test distribution planning (including the collection and use of athlete whereabouts information), notification of athletes, preparing for and conducting sample collection, security/post-test administration of samples and documentation, and transport of samples to laboratories for analysis. In addition, it also establishes mandatory standards for the efficient and effective gathering, assessment and use of anti-doping intelligence, and for the efficient and effective conduct of investigations into possible anti-doping rule violations.

A summary of the major changes to the 2021 ISTI and supporting reasoning are outlined below.

A. ISTI Definitions

Some definitions contained within other International Standards, and which are referenced in the ISTI were corrected to align verbatim. One definition contained in the ISTI was removed following the removal of its single reference in the ISTI.

B. Dried Blood Spot Samples

Research and development of dried blood spots (DBS) as a new type of sample was ongoing whilst the 2021 ISTI was in development. As such, it was decided to develop a Technical Document TD2021DBS to mandate the procedures around DBS collection with a view to incorporating such procedures into the ISTI at its next revision.

Following the implementation of DBS collection and analysis in the field for the first time in 2021, the procedures from TD2021DBS have been transferred to the ISTI. This now references DBS as a type of sample in addition to urine and venous blood. This transfer also included requirements around DBS sample collection equipment in Article 6.3.4 and sample collection procedures in a new Annex J titled "Collection, Storage and Transport of DBS Samples."

Whilst research continues to expand the list of prohibited substances and methods that can be detected using DBS, it is important that the requirements for equipment and the collection procedures are incorporated within the ISTI. This new Annex J is also structurally consistent with the collection, storage and transport of urine and venous blood samples.

The collection of DBS samples is currently not mandatory, however if ADOs wish to collect such samples, then the equipment and procedures around collection, storage and transport of samples included in the ISTI are mandatory.

C. Athlete Whereabouts

Greater clarity on the term 'Whereabouts Filing' and the associated Code Article 2.4 consequences, so it is clear that this defined term only applies to athletes in a Registered Testing Pool and not to athletes in a Testing Pool.

D. Sport Gender

It is clarified that during a sample collection session, the sport gender of the athlete shall be recorded on the relevant documentation.

E. Athletes who are Minors

Annex B was revised to reflect the importance of safeguarding athletes who are minors. As such, there is now a requirement that a minimum of two sample collection personnel are assigned to a sample collection session involving a Minor and that when an athlete that is a minor is in the doping control station, there shall always be two sample collection personnel present.

Additional language was also added recommending that the athlete who is a minor have a representative present with them throughout the sample collection session and that Sample Collection Personnel will make reasonable efforts to assist the athlete to locate one. If a representative is unable to be located, then a second sample collection personnel will accompany the athlete until a representative is located or until the athlete arrives at the doping control station.

It remains not mandatory that the athlete have a representative present and that a test will not be invalidated if one cannot be located. Mandating this requirement would allow athletes and their entourage the opportunity to manipulate the testing system and potentially prevent a minor athlete from being tested.

F. Venous Blood Collection

With the addition of DBS as a new type of sample, the word 'venous' has been added to reflect the difference between the collection of blood by venipuncture that is currently used for the athlete biological passport program and for the detection of a number of prohibited substances and the capillary collection of DBS.

G. Blood Stability Score – Athlete Biological Passport

Amendments have been made to the blood stability score range to ensure that venous blood samples for the athlete biological passport arrive to WADA accredited laboratories in suitable condition for analysis. The changes are based on revised calculations that take into account the temperature in which the venous blood samples are transported to the laboratory and the time it takes for the venous blood sample from collection to its reception at the laboratory.