

National Drug Court Institute: Onsite versus Laboratory-Based Drug Testing

Type	Advantages	Disadvantages
On-Site Drug Testing	<p>Rapid results turn-around time (quick reward for drug free behavior or quick justification for sanctions).</p> <p>Ease of use technology.</p> <p>Potential for reduced testing costs.</p> <p>No capital equipment expenditures.</p> <p>Reduced training costs.</p> <p>Elimination of specimen transport and storage issues.</p>	<p>Increased cross-reactivity and interference (potential false positive results).</p> <p>On-site testing often does not include quality control.</p> <p>On-site testing does not include testing for diluted samples (creatinine) and adulteration testing.</p> <p>Testing personnel competency is often not assessed.</p> <p>Reduced flexibility in testing panels (limited number of drugs tested).</p> <p>Potential privacy or conflict-of-interest concerns.</p>
Laboratory-Based Drug Testing	<p>Testing often provided by professional trained technologists.</p> <p>Use of approved scientific methods.</p> <p>Integrated quality assurance.</p> <p>Confirmation testing more readily available.</p> <p>Creatinine and adulteration testing more readily available.</p> <p>Toxicology expertise/forensic competency.</p> <p>Established custody and control procedures.</p>	<p>Increased results turn-around time (compared to on-site testing).</p> <p>Additional sample handling and shipment required.</p> <p>Potential increased cost per test.</p> <p>Difficulty in accessing data and information from large corporate laboratories.</p>