

Purpose:

This document outlines COLA's expectations pertaining to the use of COLA's ISO 15189:2022 Accreditation Symbol and requirements for referring to a laboratory's accreditation status. This document is made available to interested parties.

Overview

COLA, as an Accreditation Body (AB), in its purview, aligns with ISO/IEC 17011:2017 *Conformity assessment – Requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies* related to the Use of Accreditation Symbols and the requirements governing Claims of Accreditation Status. **Laboratories that receive accreditation by demonstrating conformance to the ISO 15189:2022 Standard have achieved the recognition and benefit of using COLA's ISO 15189:2022 Accreditation Symbol.**

To protect the integrity of the symbol as a demonstration of competence, impartiality and consistent operations of your laboratory, COLA insists that customers, who earn the right to use the COLA Symbol, are informed and strictly abide by the terms of general use outlined in this document. Making ambiguous, false or misleading claims about the scope of accreditation covered by the symbol is entirely unacceptable, goes against COLA policy, and may result in the withdrawal of accreditation. If you have questions or are unclear about any of the requirements below, you may contact COLA for additional guidance.

General Use of the Accreditation Symbol

Laboratories awarded COLA accreditation (*after demonstrating full conformance to the ISO 15189:2022 Standard*) are permitted to use the COLA symbol and refer to COLA accreditation in communications media in accordance with the following requirements:

1. Use of the symbol and claims of accreditation status are limited **to the specific activities covered by the scope of accreditation.**
2. Accreditation claims and use of the COLA symbol must include a clear indication that the accreditation is related to demonstrating conformity to the **ISO 15189:2022 Standard.**
3. The symbol does not refer to the status of accreditation or imply that COLA endorses or has approved a specific product, process, service, management system, test result(s) or person.
4. The COLA symbol cannot be used by your legal entity on company materials, which are unrelated to the scope of accreditation for which the use of the symbol was awarded. In cases where the symbol or claim is used, the materials must clearly define what is accredited and non-accredited work.
5. The laboratory must discontinue use of the reference and symbol upon withdrawal of accreditation or upon request by COLA

6. The laboratory must inform affected customers of any suspension, reduction or withdrawal of its accreditation status and the associated consequences without undue delay.
7. When the results of subcontracted work are included on any standard report, the accredited laboratory takes full responsibility for the subcontracted work, including gaining permission to include any results from the subcontracted work. If the subcontractor is not COLA accredited or accredited by another accrediting organization, it shall be clearly indicated that those results are not accredited.
8. Whenever opinions of interpretations are included in the test result, which are the opinions or interpretations by persons who performed work independent of the accredited laboratory, disclaimers shall be used to indicate that the expert opinion or interpretation is outside of the scope of accreditation

Claims of COLA accreditation status shall be made by the name or registered trade name of the legal entity that holds COLA accreditation, as shown on your scope of accreditation.

COLA Symbol Misuse Guidelines (Do not):

1. Alter the symbol in any way, (including but not limited to, adding elements to or covering part of the symbol with other elements, color changes, stretching or skewing, flipping, separating into parts or altering any part of the symbol).
2. Redesign, redraw, animate, modify, distort, or alter the proportions of the symbol.
3. Surround the symbol with—or place in the foreground over—a pattern or design.
4. Rotate or render the symbol three-dimensionally.
5. Add words, images, or any other new elements to the symbol.
6. Replace the approved symbol font or attempt to recreate the symbol.
7. Enclose the symbol in a shape or combine it with other design elements or effects.
8. Modify the size or position relationship of any element within the symbol.
9. Add additional copy to the symbol.
10. Use colors other than the approved palette in the symbol.

COLA will take proper action to ensure that laboratories correct any false or unauthorized claims of accreditation status, or misleading or unauthorized use of the COLA symbol.

Proper action begins with a written request to correct the unauthorized claim within a defined period; however, failure to correct the issue could result in suspension, withdrawal of accreditation or legal action.

Key Reference:

ISO/IEC 17011:2017 Conformance assessment – Requirements for accreditation bodies
accrediting conformity assessment bodies

Records:

Record ID	Custodian	Where Stored	Retention Period
Log of actions taken for misuse of symbol or inappropriate claim	Director of Standards, Regulations and Policies	S:\ISO 15189\ISO 15189	8 years after termination of relationship

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