HEALTHCARE BIOMEDICAL WASTE AUDIT TEMPLATE

Biomedical Waste Management Audit Checklist

Audit waste generation, segregation, sharps, containers, collection, storage, transport, treatment, special waste, worker safety, incidents, records, and corrective actions.

FACILITY / UNIT	AUDIT DATE	AUDITOR	APPROVER

Adapt to current national or local biomedical-waste requirements, facility policy, approved segregation and color-coding scheme, occupational-safety procedures, and licensed contractor obligations.

1. Audit setup, governance, and waste-management scope

1 Confirm the facility, audit date, operating status, auditor, biomedical-waste lead, IPC contact, occupational-safety contact, and escalation contacts.

METADATA + SIGN-OFF

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Identify who can stop unsafe handling, isolate waste, authorize emergency pickup, contact the waste contractor, and approve corrective-action closure.

2 Define the departments, patient-care areas, laboratories, pharmacies, procedure rooms, support services, storage areas, waste streams, and treatment routes included in the audit.

SCOPE CHECKLIST

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Record excluded areas and confirm the sample covers every active waste-generating and waste-handling process.

3 Verify a current biomedical or health-care waste management plan defines responsibilities, segregation rules, collection frequency, storage controls, transport, treatment, disposal, and emergency response.

CRITICAL | CRITICAL DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Check the approved version, issue date, availability to staff, and alignment with current national or local requirements.

4 Confirm facility procedures use the current jurisdiction-approved waste classifications, container specifications, labels, and color-coding scheme rather than an outdated local convention.

CRITICAL | CRITICAL CLASSIFICATION CONTROL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Color coding differs by jurisdiction; audit against the facility's currently approved scheme and applicable regulation.

5 Review recent spills, sharps injuries, segregation failures, storage breaches, rejected loads, contractor issues, complaints, and overdue corrective actions.

PREVIOUS FINDINGS REVIEW

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Use repeat failures to target high-risk departments, shifts, waste streams, routes, or contractor handoffs.

6 Capture the audit start time, facility or unit identifier, operating context, and approved reference evidence without exposing unnecessary patient information.

TIMESTAMP + EVIDENCE

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Record enough context to verify the audit while protecting confidentiality and following facility photography rules.

2. Waste minimization, classification, and segregation at source

7 **Verify staff separate general non-hazardous waste from hazardous health-care waste at the point and time the waste is generated.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL SOURCE SEGREGATION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Observe live disposal practices; downstream sorting of mixed hazardous waste is not an acceptable substitute for segregation at source.

8 **Confirm infectious waste is placed directly into the facility-approved infectious-waste container without unnecessary handling or transfer.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL INFECTIOUS WASTE CONTROL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Check the container is available where care occurs, correctly identified, and appropriate for the waste generated.

9 **Verify pathological or anatomical waste is identified, contained, stored, and routed according to the approved facility and jurisdictional process.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL PATHOLOGICAL WASTE CONTROL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Confirm privacy, containment, temperature or storage requirements, and authorized treatment or disposal route where applicable.

10 **Confirm pharmaceutical, chemical, cytotoxic or genotoxic, and radioactive wastes are not mixed with routine infectious or general waste unless the approved procedure specifically permits it.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL SPECIAL-WASTE SEGREGATION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Use dedicated procedures for special waste streams and involve pharmacy, laboratory, radiation-safety, or hazardous-material specialists where applicable.

11 **Check recyclable or recoverable non-hazardous materials are separated only where a safe, approved recycling pathway exists and contamination can be reliably prevented.**

WASTE MINIMIZATION CHECK

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Prioritize waste prevention and correct procurement before recycling; never compromise infection prevention to recover materials.

12 **Verify departments have enough correctly placed containers to prevent overfilling, improvised disposal, or mixing of incompatible waste streams.**

CRITICAL | CONTAINER AVAILABILITY CHECK

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Compare container location and capacity with actual waste volume during peak activity, not only at quiet times.

3. Sharps, containers, labels, and point-of-generation controls

13 **Confirm used needles, blades, lancets, broken contaminated glass, and other sharps are discarded immediately into an approved puncture-resistant sharps container.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL SHARPS DISPOSAL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Observe the disposal step where possible and confirm sharps are not left on trays, beds, counters, or carried unnecessarily.

14 **Verify sharps containers are leak-resistant, closable, stable, correctly assembled, within reach of the point of use, and positioned to reduce tipping or reaching hazards.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL SHARPS CONTAINER CHECK

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Place containers so the opening is visible and accessible without requiring staff to walk while carrying an exposed sharp.

15 **Confirm needles and other sharps are not manually recapped, bent, broken, removed, or manipulated except where an approved procedure specifically requires a safer controlled method.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL SHARPS-HANDLING OBSERVATION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Escalate unsafe manipulation immediately because it can create preventable needlestick and splash exposures.

16 **Check waste bags and rigid containers are intact, compatible with the waste, correctly lined where required, and not leaking, torn, punctured, or visibly contaminated on the outside.**

CRITICAL | CONTAINER INTEGRITY CHECK

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Replace damaged containers before transport and safely contain any external contamination.

17 **Verify containers display the required waste identification, hazard marking, source or location, date, and traceability information defined by facility policy or regulation.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL LABEL + TRACEABILITY

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Labels should remain legible through storage, transport, treatment, and final handoff where traceability is required.

18 **Confirm waste containers are closed, sealed, or locked at the required fill level and are never compacted by hand or overfilled beyond the approved limit.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL FILL-LIMIT CONTROL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Close containers before contents protrude or pressure must be applied; replace them promptly at the approved fill line.

4. Collection readiness, internal handling, and safe movement

19 **Verify sealed waste awaiting pickup is kept in a designated secure location and is not left in patient corridors, public areas, exits, or food-handling spaces.** CRITICAL · CRITICAL PICKUP READINESS

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Minimize dwell time at the point of generation and protect waste from patients, visitors, pests, and unauthorized access.

20 **Confirm waste handlers inspect bags and containers for closure, leakage, damage, correct segregation, and required labels before accepting them for internal collection.** CRITICAL · CRITICAL PRE-COLLECTION CHECK

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Do not squeeze bags or handle them close to the body; manage leaking or damaged waste with an approved overpack or containment process.

21 **Check internal collection follows planned routes and times that minimize movement through high-traffic patient, food-service, clean-supply, and public areas.** COLLECTION ROUTE CONTROL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Separate waste movement from clean-goods movement wherever practicable and prevent cross-contamination at shared lifts or corridors.

22 **Verify carts, trolleys, bins, or transport containers are leak-resistant, easy to clean, appropriately covered or secured, and used only for their approved purpose.** CRITICAL · CRITICAL COLLECTION-EQUIPMENT CHECK

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Inspect wheels, lids, handles, surfaces, drainage points, and any damage that could cause leakage or contamination.

23 **Confirm biomedical waste is never transported by dragging bags, carrying them against the body, or placing loose waste directly on floors or vehicle surfaces.** CRITICAL · CRITICAL HANDLING OBSERVATION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Use approved carts and handling techniques that reduce puncture, splash, musculoskeletal, and contamination risk.

24 **Verify collection equipment is cleaned and disinfected at the approved frequency and immediately after leakage, spills, or visible contamination.** CART CLEANING VERIFICATION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Record the cleaning method, responsible role, product, frequency, and response to visibly contaminated equipment.

5. Temporary storage area security, hygiene, and capacity

25 **Verify the central or temporary biomedical-waste storage area is designated, access-controlled, signed, and protected from patients, visitors, animals, pests, and unauthorized staff.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL STORAGE SECURITY

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Access should be limited to trained personnel and emergency services as defined by facility procedure.

26 **Check the storage area has cleanable surfaces, effective drainage or spill containment where required, lighting, ventilation, and sufficient space for safe separation of waste streams.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL STORAGE CONDITION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Inspect for leaks, standing liquid, damaged surfaces, odors, pest evidence, and blocked access.

27 **Confirm incompatible waste types are physically separated and hazardous waste is not stored with food, linen, clean supplies, pharmaceuticals for use, or general public waste.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL STORAGE SEGREGATION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Maintain separation for infectious, sharps, chemical, pharmaceutical, cytotoxic, pathological, and radioactive waste as locally required.

28 **Verify waste remains within the maximum facility or regulatory storage time and any required temperature controls are maintained for waste that can decay, decompose, or create odor or infection risk.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL STORAGE-TIME CONTROL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Check the oldest waste first and review pickup delays, refrigeration requirements, and contingency arrangements.

29 **Check storage containers remain closed, upright, identifiable, undamaged, and arranged so staff can inspect and remove them without climbing over or moving incompatible waste.**

STORAGE ORGANIZATION CHECK

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Keep aisles, doors, spill equipment, fire controls, drains, and emergency access clear.

30 **Confirm the storage area has suitable spill supplies, hand-hygiene access where appropriate, cleaning tools, PPE, emergency contacts, and a documented cleaning schedule.**

STORAGE SUPPORT CONTROLS

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Verify supplies are complete, in date where applicable, accessible, and matched to the waste hazards present.

6. External transport, contractor control, treatment, and final disposal

31 **Verify external waste transporters, treatment providers, and disposal contractors are currently approved or licensed as required for the waste streams they handle.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL CONTRACTOR APPROVAL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Check authorization scope, expiry date, approved facilities, vehicle requirements, and any current restrictions or non-conformances.

32 **Confirm every off-site handoff uses the required manifest, consignment note, weight or quantity record, waste category, origin, date, transporter, and destination details.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL MANIFEST TRACEABILITY

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Reconcile pickup records with contractor receipts, treatment certificates, and final disposal evidence where required.

33 **Inspect external collection vehicles or containers for secure loading, separation, leak control, cleanable surfaces, hazard identification, and condition appropriate to the waste carried.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL VEHICLE / CONTAINER CHECK

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Reject or escalate unsafe transport arrangements before waste leaves the facility where authority permits.

34 **Verify infectious and sharps waste is treated using an approved technology and operating process suitable for the waste type before final disposal or material recovery where permitted.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL TREATMENT VERIFICATION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Match the waste stream to the approved treatment route; treatment choice should protect health and minimize environmental harm.

35 **Where treatment equipment is operated by the facility, confirm cycle parameters, maintenance, validation or performance monitoring, operator competency, and failed-cycle response are documented.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL TREATMENT PROCESS CONTROL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Do not release a failed or unverified load; identify it, contain it, investigate the cause, and repeat or redirect treatment according to procedure.

36 **Confirm final disposal routes and any treated-waste recycling or recovery process are authorized, documented, and do not reintroduce infectious, chemical, pharmaceutical, or sharps hazards.**

CRITICAL | FINAL DISPOSAL VERIFICATION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Trace a sample load from generation through treatment and final disposal or approved recovery.

7. Pharmaceutical, chemical, cytotoxic, pathological, and other special waste

37 **Verify expired, recalled, damaged, partially used, or otherwise unusable pharmaceuticals are identified and segregated from routine waste according to the approved pharmaceutical-waste procedure.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL PHARMACEUTICAL WASTE CONTROL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Use pharmacy oversight where required and prevent discarded medicines from entering general waste, drains, or unauthorized recovery channels.

38 **Confirm controlled medicines and other diversion-sensitive pharmaceuticals follow secure destruction, witnessing, documentation, and chain-of-custody requirements where applicable.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL CONTROLLED-DRUG DISPOSAL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Check the full chain from authorization through destruction and reconciliation without recording unnecessary patient details.

39 **Verify cytotoxic, genotoxic, or other highly hazardous drug waste and contaminated materials are handled using the facility's dedicated containment, PPE, storage, transport, and treatment procedure.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL CYTOTOXIC / GENOTOXIC CONTROL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Keep this waste separate from routine pharmaceutical and infectious waste and use trained personnel and approved treatment routes.

40 **Check chemical waste, disinfectants, solvents, laboratory reagents, heavy-metal waste, and pressurized containers are classified and routed according to their specific hazards.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL CHEMICAL WASTE CONTROL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Do not mix incompatible chemicals or pour hazardous chemicals into drains unless specifically authorized by current procedure and regulation.

41 **Verify pathological waste and blood products are contained, identified, stored, transported, and treated or disposed of using the approved pathway with privacy and dignity safeguards.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL PATHOLOGICAL WASTE CONTROL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Check local requirements for refrigeration, documentation, special handling, and final disposal.

42 **Where radioactive waste is generated, confirm it is controlled under the facility's radiation-safety programme and is not managed through routine biomedical-waste processes unless specifically authorized.**

CRITICAL | RADIOACTIVE WASTE INTERFACE

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Use the radiation-safety officer or equivalent competent person and applicable regulatory requirements for classification, storage, decay, transport, and release.

8. Worker safety, PPE, hygiene, spills, and exposure response

43 **Verify waste handlers and staff who generate hazardous waste have role-specific training on segregation, sharps, container closure, transport, spills, exposure response, and prohibited practices.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL STAFF COMPETENCY

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Use observation or a practical scenario to verify knowledge rather than relying only on attendance records.

44 **Confirm appropriate gloves, protective clothing, closed footwear, eye or face protection, and other task-specific PPE are available and used for the actual waste-handling hazards.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL PPE CONTROL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Match PPE to splash, sharps, chemical, cytotoxic, manual-handling, and cleaning risks rather than using one generic PPE rule.

45 **Check staff perform hand hygiene after removing gloves and after contact with waste, contaminated containers, spills, or potentially contaminated transport equipment.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL HAND-HYGIENE OBSERVATION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Gloves do not replace hand hygiene; ensure facilities and supplies are accessible to waste handlers.

46 **Verify spill kits and written response procedures cover infectious fluids, chemicals, cytotoxic materials, mercury or other special hazards present in the facility.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL SPILL READINESS

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Spill equipment and response roles should match actual hazards and be immediately accessible where incidents are likely.

47 **Confirm needlestick, sharps, splash, and other occupational exposures receive immediate first aid, prompt reporting, risk assessment, medical evaluation, and follow-up according to facility procedure.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL EXPOSURE RESPONSE

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Do not delay reporting while completing waste collection or cleaning; preserve enough information to assess the exposure.

48 **Review waste-handler vaccination, occupational-health access, injury trends, and post-incident corrective actions according to local policy and risk assessment.**

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH REVIEW

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Use trend data to address repeated injuries, unsafe routes, container placement, staffing, training, or equipment problems.

9. Emergency, spill, surge, and contingency management

49 **Verify contingency procedures cover missed collections, treatment failure, vehicle breakdown, storage-capacity limits, utility loss, spills, leaks, and sudden increases in hazardous waste volume.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL CONTINGENCY PLAN

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Confirm responsibilities, temporary controls, alternate capacity, contractor contacts, and escalation thresholds are practical and current.

50 **Check there is a safe process to isolate leaking, damaged, unlabelled, or wrongly segregated waste without exposing staff to hand sorting or unnecessary rehandling.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL NON-CONFORMING WASTE CONTROL

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Use overpacks, secondary containment, specialist review, or other approved methods rather than opening hazardous waste bags.

51 **Confirm significant spills are contained, access is restricted, appropriate PPE is used, the correct cleaning or decontamination method is applied, and waste from the response is managed safely.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL SPILL RESPONSE

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Document the material, location, exposure risk, response time, affected staff, cleanup method, and closure evidence.

52 **Verify emergency or outbreak waste surges are managed with sufficient containers, storage, collection capacity, trained staff, and approved treatment routes without abandoning source segregation.**

SURGE CAPACITY CHECK

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Plan for peak waste volume and keep segregation rules simple, visible, and sustainable under pressure.

53 **Confirm rejected loads, contractor refusal, treatment failure, or disposal-site disruption triggers documented containment and an approved alternate route before storage limits are exceeded.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL SERVICE-DISRUPTION RESPONSE

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Track the affected quantity, interim storage, responsible owner, revised pickup or treatment plan, and authorization.

54 **Verify biomedical-waste incidents that may affect staff, patients, the public, or the environment are escalated and reported to internal or external authorities when required.**

CRITICAL | CRITICAL INCIDENT NOTIFICATION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Retain notification timing, recipient, reference number, interim controls, and follow-up actions where applicable.

10. Monitoring, corrective actions, records, and final sign-off

55 **Calculate the overall biomedical-waste compliance result and summarize critical gaps, repeated segregation failures, high-risk waste streams, injuries, storage issues, and contractor exceptions.** AUDIT SCORE + SUMMARY

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Separate immediate safety risk from underlying causes such as layout, supplies, staffing, training, contractor performance, or unclear procedures.

56 **Create immediate containment for every critical sharps, segregation, spill, leakage, storage, transport, treatment, or unauthorized-disposal failure.** CRITICAL | CRITICAL CONTAINMENT ACTION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Record what was stopped, isolated, overpacked, relabelled, cleaned, removed from use, or escalated before normal work continued.

57 **Assign each finding an owner, priority, due date, root-cause requirement, corrective action, and objective closure-evidence rule.** CRITICAL | CRITICAL CORRECTIVE ACTION ASSIGNMENT

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Use short deadlines for immediate risk and realistic deadlines for permanent prevention.

58 **Review waste quantities, segregation accuracy, sharps injuries, spill events, rejected loads, storage time, contractor performance, treatment failures, and repeat findings for trends.** PERFORMANCE TREND REVIEW

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Use comparable measures over time and focus improvement on departments or waste streams with persistent risk.

59 **Verify corrective actions are closed through follow-up observation, records, photos, supply changes, training evidence, contractor documents, maintenance proof, or a repeat audit.** CRITICAL | CRITICAL CLOSURE VERIFICATION

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Do not close a finding based only on a written comment from the assigned owner.

60 **Record the final audit decision, remaining restrictions, next review date, auditor, biomedical-waste lead or manager approval, date, time, and signature.** CRITICAL | CRITICAL APPROVAL + SIGNATURE

Compliant | Needs attention | Critical gap | N/A

◇ Execution tip: Keep unsafe waste routes, storage areas, equipment, or contractor arrangements restricted until all release conditions are met.