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## LAB ALERT #2: Updated Guidance for 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

**Date:** February 18, 2020

**To:** South Dakota Public Health Laboratory Clientele

**From:** South Dakota Public Health Laboratory Client Services

### **Suspect COVID-19 Illness**

2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) testing will only be performed for a [person under investigation](#) (PUI) as determined by the South Dakota Department of Health (SD-DOH). Please contact the SD-DOH for questions regarding COVID-19 PUI definition (1-800-592-1861 or 605-773-3737).

### **Specimen Collection**

The following specimens are required for 2019-nCoV testing:

- All PUIs: Nasopharyngeal swab in viral transport medium
- All PUIs: Oropharyngeal swab in viral transport medium
- PUIs with advanced disease: Sputum (only if producing; do not induce)

Duplicate specimens should be collected. One set of specimens should be shipped to SDPHL, and the second set of specimens should be stored at 2-8°C until needed.

### **Clinical Laboratory Testing**

COVID-19 PUIs must be tested for common respiratory pathogens such as influenza; SDPHL offers influenza testing and the Respiratory Pathogens Panel (RPP) for facilities with limited testing capabilities. **Do not attempt virus culture.** Test results should be communicated to the SDPHL as soon as they are available.

### **Packaging and Shipping**

Specimens for 2019-nCoV testing should be shipped to the SDPHL on ice packs as a Category B biological substance. Specimens can be shipped using the SDPHL courier service. The courier can be reached at 877-434-9366.

For any questions regarding the information provided in this LAB ALERT, contact the South Dakota Public Health Laboratory at 605-773-3368.

Please distribute this LAB ALERT to others in your facility that may need this information.