

## LAB ALERT #9: SARS-CoV-2 TESTING UPDATES (3/14)

### **\*\*URGENT\*\***

In an effort to ensure individuals tested for SARS-CoV-2 have received their test results before statewide cases are reported, the Department of Health strongly urges health care providers to evaluate and streamline their internal result reporting processes. The Department of Health will report SARS-CoV-2 test results back to the submitting laboratory as soon as they are available. Submitting laboratories will receive a phone call for all “Positive” SARS-CoV-2 results followed immediately by a secure fax for laboratories that have a SDPHL secure fax agreement in place. Submitting laboratories will not receive a phone call for “Negative” SARS-CoV-2 results. However, submitting laboratories will receive official results by fax for “Negative” results. “Inconclusive” and “Invalid” results will not be reported; testing for specimens determined to be “Inconclusive” or “Invalid” must be repeated. In many instances, SARS-CoV-2 test results will be reported after hours. Submitting laboratories and health care providers are strongly encouraged to have a plan in place to ensure communication immediately after SARS-CoV-2 results are available to the submitting laboratory. This may require after hour notification to health care providers. Please note: laboratories without a SDPHL secure fax agreement in place will receive results via mail which will delay physician and patient notification. Laboratories without a secure fax agreement in place are strongly encouraged to develop secure fax capabilities and establish a fax agreement with the SDPHL. Please call the SDPHL at 605-773-3368 to establish a secure fax agreement.

**Sunday Operation at the SDPHL:** SDPHL will provide SARS-CoV-2 testing on Sunday, March 15. SDPHL will accept specimen deliveries from 8am-5pm.

**Weekend Courier Schedule:** Limited courier services will be available on Sunday, March 15. The Sunday courier schedule was published in [Lab Alert #7](#).

**Oropharyngeal (OP) Swab Submissions:** OP swabs are no longer required for the SARS-CoV-2 Testing. OP swabs submitted after 3/12/2020 will not be tested by the SDPHL. SDPHL will continue to test NP swab specimens and combined NP/OP swab specimens.

**Respiratory Pathogen Panel (RPP) Testing at the SDPHL:** RPP should only be ordered for SARS-CoV-2 PUIs with moderate to severe symptoms.

**Asymptomatic Patients:** Asymptomatic individuals DO NOT meet SDDOH PUI definition. Specimens submitted to the SDPHL for SARS-CoV-2 testing from asymptomatic individuals will not be tested.

**Specimen Rejection Criteria:** SDPHL will continue to reject inappropriately collected specimens, specimens without appropriate information, and specimens that lack a SARS-CoV-2 Laboratory Requisition and PUI Evaluation Form or SDPHL Medical Microbiology Requisition. SDPHL will NOT test specimens if requisitions lack symptom information; these patients will be considered asymptomatic and are not eligible for testing.

**Anticipated SARS-CoV-2 Turn-Around Time:** For all SARS-CoV-2 testing that results in a “Positive” or “Negative” value, official results will be available within 36 hours of specimen receipt. This is subject to change based on SARS-CoV-2 test volume.

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.