

Updated March 26, 2020



Instructions for 2019-Novel Coronavirus Specimen Collection and Shipping

All laboratory testing must first be approved by the Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH) before collection of specimens. Call KDPH at 502-564-3261 during regular business hours or 888-973-7678 after hours and on weekends to determine if individuals meet the Patient Under Investigation (PUI) criteria and obtain approval for testing.

Results will be available within one (1) business day after receipt of specimens.

If you have access to Outreach (preferred), please order the test code "NCOV". Please ensure the approval number is included when placing the order. Print a copy of the requisition and submit with the specimen.

If you do not have access to Outreach, please complete the Virology paper requisition (Lab Form 275) available on the DLS website <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dls/Pages/default.aspx> and submit with the specimen. Please write the approval number at the top of the requisition.

Please note that these instructions do not apply to commercial or other labs who may have their own guidance. There are limited collection supplies (swabs, VTM) as you would have been experiencing at your facilities. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation to conserve and judiciously utilize the resources.

Currently, acceptable specimens for testing are both upper and lower respiratory specimens. **DLS will only test one upper respiratory and one lower respiratory specimen per patient.** Ensure all specimens are labeled with two identifiers, as well as specimen type and date of collection. Additional specimen types, including serum, may be collected and DLS will provide storage until additional assays are approved.

- Lower respiratory: Bronchoalveolar lavage, tracheal aspirate, or sputum
 - Collect 2-3 mL in a sterile, leak-proof, screw-cap container.
- Upper respiratory: Nasopharyngeal swab (preferred), oropharyngeal swab, nasal mid-turbinate swab, anterior nares swab, nasopharyngeal wash/aspirate or nasal aspirate
 - Use only synthetic fiber swabs with plastic shafts. Calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts are unacceptable.
 - Place swab immediately into sterile tubes containing 2-3 mL of viral transport media, Amies transport medium, or sterile saline.
 - If multiple swabs are collected, combine specimens into a single vial at collection.
 - Collect 2-3 mL of wash/aspirate in a sterile, leak-proof, screw-cap container.

Store all specimens at 2-8°C after collection and ship overnight to DLS on ice pack to the following address: Kentucky Division of Laboratory Services, Attn: Virology, 100 Sower Blvd, Suite 204, Frankfort, KY 40601.

Specimens must reach DLS to be tested within 72 hours of collection when stored at 2-8°C. See collection and packaging guidance on the DLS website for "Multishipper with Cold Pack Virus-Swab" for detailed instructions regarding swab collection and illustrated steps of packaging. The requisition form for ordering additional collection kits and packaging materials is also available on the DLS website.