



COVID-19 Testing Framework for Iowa

Updated 03/19/2020



Healthcare providers can test patients, as they deem appropriate for COVID-19 infection at national reference laboratories. If healthcare providers choose to test a patient through a national reference laboratory, there is no need to call IDPH for approval. The specimens should be sent directly to the reference laboratory in accordance with the laboratory's guidance. If a patient's tests positive for COVID-19 through a national reference laboratory, the ordering healthcare provider must notify IDPH immediately prior to patient notification by calling 800-362-2736. Reference laboratories will charge patients for this testing; public health has no funding to cover the costs of these tests.

The State Hygienic Laboratory will continue to perform COVID-19 testing in accordance with one of the following criteria (these criteria may broaden as the pandemic expands and additional testing resources become available).

- All hospitalized patients with fever and respiratory failure and no alternate diagnosis
- Older adults (>60 years of age) with fever and respiratory symptoms (cough, difficulty breathing) and chronic medical conditions (e.g., diabetes, heart disease, immunosuppressive medications, chronic lung disease, or chronic kidney disease).
- Persons with fever or respiratory illness who live in congregate setting (i.e., long term care facilities, dormitories, residential facilities, correctional facilities, treatment facilities)
- Essential services personnel with fever or respiratory illness (i.e., healthcare providers, fire and EMS, law enforcement, residential facility staff)

If patients meet the testing criteria, please submit the specimen to the State Hygienic Laboratory in accordance with the following guidance, <http://shl.uiowa.edu/dcd/covid19.xml>.

There is no longer a requirement to contact IDPH for testing approval prior to submission to the State Hygienic Laboratory. To conserve limited public health resources, please ensure that ONLY specimens from patients meeting the testing criteria above are submitted to the State Hygienic Laboratory. The cost of this testing is assigned to the public health system.

Please ensure you are using appropriate infection control guidance when collecting specimens, which includes at a minimum contact and droplet precautions with eye protection.