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MEMORANDUM

TO: Local Health Departments & Regional Offices of the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), Hospital Laboratories, Hospital Administrators, PIOs, ED Personnel, Nursing Directors, EMS Staff, Laboratory Staff, ID/INEDSS, EMS Partners and IL Local EMAs

FROM: E. Matt Charles
Chief, Division of Laboratories *SMC*

DATE: March 4, 2020

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Sample Submission to IDPH

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Division of Laboratories is now testing for COVID-19 at all three of its laboratories located in Carbondale, Chicago and Springfield. Below contains guidance for specimen testing at IDPH Laboratories:

Specimens to be Collected:

The only specimens to be submitted for patients on the initial screen include: 1 nasopharyngeal (NP) and 1 oropharyngeal (OP) swab. Each swab should be individually placed in a vial of viral transport media (containing 2-3 mL of fluid). If the patient is positive on the initial screening performed at the IDPH Laboratories, additional specimens will be requested, such as sputum and serum. Please do not send these samples until requested.

Forms to Include with Specimens:

All submissions require approval from the Local Health Department which will provide a patient-specific authorization number. Each specimen should have its own [Communicable Disease Laboratory Test Requisition Form](#). Prior to submission, ensure all sections of the form are complete as missing fields may delay testing. The authorization code should be placed at the top of the form.

Laboratory Turn Around Time:

The laboratory will make every attempt to test specimens received by 11 am on the day received. Specimens received after 11 am will be tested on the following business day. The laboratories are performing testing Monday through Friday. Saturday testing is only permitted if a critical need arises.

Please refer to prior guidance from IDPH regarding appropriate swabs, storage temperatures and shipping. If you have specific questions relating to the content of this communication, please contact Kristin Goldesberry (Springfield Laboratory Manager) at 217-524-6228, Chris Vogt (Carbondale Supervisor) at 618-457-5131 or Dr. Mohammad Nasir (Chicago Laboratory Manager) at 312-793-4760. Contact your Local Health Department to discuss any Persons Under Investigation.