



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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PROVIDER HEALTH ADVISORY

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Expedited Referral for COVID-19 testing

The San Luis Obispo County Public Health Department Laboratory (PHL) is now able to test specimens for COVID-19. In order for a patient to be tested by the Public Health Department, they **MUST** be referred by a provider. We will not accept patients calling and asking to be tested. Please do not ask your patients to call the Public Health Department (PHD).

If you feel that a patient needs to be tested, and wish to have the PHD collect the specimen and test, **the County Public Health Department must be contacted prior to them coming to the PHD.** When contacting the PHD to refer for testing, please give the following information:

- Provider referring patient
- Patient name
- Date of Birth
- Symptoms - (MUST include Fever **OR** signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g. cough or shortness of breath))
- Contact information for patient

If a provider wishes to test for 2019-nCoV, they must first contact the County Public Health Department. **In all cases, the County Public Health Department must be contacted prior to sending patients or specimens for testing.**

Testing Guidelines for providers collecting specimens

All PUIs: Collect two upper respiratory samples.

- Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab AND oropharyngeal (OP) swab.
- Use only synthetic fiber swabs with plastic shafts. Do not use calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts, as they may contain substances that inhibit PCR testing.

Public Health Department

2191 Johnson Avenue | San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 | (P) 805-781-5500 | (F) 805-781-5543

www.slopublichealth.org

- Place swabs immediately into sterile tube containing 2-3 ml of viral transport media .
- NP and OP specimens may be placed in a single vial. Refrigerate specimens at 2-8° C and ship overnight to testing lab on ice pack.

Please contact the County Public Health Department immediately to report confirmed or suspect cases:

- 805-781-5500 (M-F, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.)
- 805-781-4553 (weekends and after hours)

Complete specimen collection and transport instructions are available at:

www.slocounty.ca.gov/Corona-sars-Cov2-PCR

More information for health care providers is available at

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/index.html>.