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## Laboratory Response Network Profile

**The County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Laboratory (SLOPHL)** serves as the Laboratory Response Network (LRN) reference laboratory for the identification of biologic agents of terrorism (BT agents) for San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties. We have been serving in this capacity since early 2009 as one of 14 local public health laboratories providing LRN services to multi-county jurisdictions in California. You can contact us at **(805) 781-5510**.

### **Our Mission:**

Our role is to accurately determine the presence or absence of suspected bioterrorism agents and assist clinical and other diagnostic laboratories - called sentinel laboratories - in ruling out these agents by basic microbiologic techniques or by rapidly referring specimens and culture isolates for testing. We also facilitate training and communication to ensure timely responses and identification of possible agents.

### **What We Do:**

We perform standardized molecular amplification and conventional biologic tests that have been developed by the CDC and other national laboratories for the identification of the bacterial **agents of anthrax, plague, tularemia, brucellosis, melioidosis, and glanders**. We also perform testing for **varicella**, certain **pox viruses** such as monkeypox and smallpox, and environmental specimens for **ricin toxin**. Our laboratory uses high quality, well-vetted procedures using reagents manufactured by the CDC for these testing purposes with federal grant support.

### **Who We Work With:**

We work with the public health officials of the three counties, as well as local law enforcement, FBI, emergency response officials, hospitals, and diagnostic laboratories – both public and private.

### **Who Can Refer to Our Laboratory:**

Any diagnostic laboratory located in the tri-county area that performs comprehensive microbiologic testing can refer suspect bacterial culture isolates. Environmental specimens can be submitted under the guidance of the FBI, usually coordinated with hazardous materials and environmental health responders.

### **How To Get a Specimen to Our Laboratory:**

We recommend sending samples **Category B via FedEx**. You can also use your contracted courier. We also have a contracted courier system that serves the three counties.

### **To Test or Not to Test:**

If you think the specimen is a potential BT agent after referring to **ASM's Biothreat Agent Bench Cards for the Sentinel Laboratory** and **Sentinel Level Clinical Laboratory Guidelines**, contact SLOPHL for instructions and to arrange for shipment or transport as quickly as possible. Call **(805) 781-5510 Monday – Friday, 8 am to 5 pm. After hours, call (510) 205-8642. On weekends and holidays, call (805) 305-8188.**

### **How Do I Get Results?**

Results are communicated to the submitting facility and the designated county public health officials for your jurisdiction.