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## COVID-19 – LABORATORY TESTING GUIDANCE

### March 6, 2020

#### Situational Update

Sacramento County Public Health Laboratory (SCPHL) is now able to perform preliminary testing for COVID-19. Presumptive positive results will require confirmatory testing by the CDC. Negative SCPHL results will be considered final, with a few exceptions.

#### Before Specimen Collection

- **Report** suspected cases to Sacramento County Public Health (SCPH) at (916) 875-5881.
- **Obtain approval** from SCPH for COVID-19 testing.
  - SCPH will obtain a Patient Under Investigation (PUI) number, but specimen collection and testing should not be delayed while waiting for a PUI number

#### Specimen Collection

- Specimens must be collected by healthcare workers.
- Specimens to be collected for testing include:
  - Upper respiratory specimen [e.g. nasopharyngeal (NP), oropharyngeal (OP)]
  - Lower respiratory specimen [e.g. bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL), tracheal aspirate]
- ***Specimens can only be received by SCPHL Monday through Friday between 08:00 (8 am) and 16:00 (4 pm).***

#### Results

- Results will generally be available within one (1) to three (3) business days (Monday through Friday).
- SCPHL will prioritize testing for patients with severe symptoms requiring hospitalization.

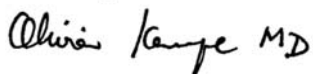
#### Other Considerations

- Typical clinical presentation of COVID-19 is fever (subjective or confirmed) or signs of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or shortness of breath).
- Healthcare providers should test any PUIs for influenza and consider other alternative diagnoses.
- Community transmission is likely occurring within the County and affected geographic areas are rapidly expanding; lack of travel history should not preclude COVID-19 testing.

#### Resources:

- [COVID-19 Coronavirus Specimen Collection and Laboratory Guidance](#)
- [Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers](#)
- [Fact Sheet for Patients](#)
- [SCPH COVID-19 website](#)

Sincerely,



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