



Medical Society of Delaware  
LEADING THE WAY TO A HEALTHY DELAWARE

# COVID-19 UPDATES

## DPH Updates Testing Protocol for COVID-19

March 13, 2020

**The Medical Society of Delaware (MSD) has received many questions regarding coronavirus (COVID-19) testing. MSD is working closely with the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) to ensure Delaware physicians have the most current information during the COVID-19 crisis. DPH shares the following:**

DPH is encouraging physicians to utilize expanded testing resources for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) that are available in Delaware, including LabCorp as well as the DPH Laboratory. No prior approval is required for submitting testing to commercial labs. DPH Updates Testing Protocol for COVID-19

The Delaware Division of Public Health is encouraging physicians to utilize expanded testing resources for COVID-19 that are available in Delaware, including LabCorp as well as the DPH Laboratory. No prior approval is required for submitting testing to commercial labs.

With the addition of commercial lab testing now available, Delaware has enough capacity to accommodate its current testing needs. Providers can use flu kits to collect a nasal swab. Commercial labs are required to report testing and results to DPH.

For specimen collection, 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 inactivate some viruses and inhibit PCR testing. Place swabs immediately into sterile tubes containing 2-3 ml of viral transport media. Nasal and oral specimens may be kept in separate vials or combined at collection into a single vial.

With the expanding spread of COVID-19 throughout the United States, and increased access to testing, the criteria for testing for COVID-19 have been expanded to include more symptomatic persons, even in the absence of travel history to affected areas or known exposure to another case.

In an effort to quickly detect and respond to community spread of the virus in Delaware, physicians should monitor for fever and/or symptoms of acute respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing). Priorities for testing may include:

- \* Hospitalized patients who have signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19
- \* Symptomatic individuals such as, older adults (age  $\geq$  65 years)
- \* Individuals with chronic medical conditions and/or an immunocompromised state that may put them at higher risk for poor outcomes (e.g., diabetes, heart disease, receiving immunosuppressive medications, chronic lung disease, chronic kidney disease).
- \* Any persons including health care personnel, who within 14 days of symptom onset had close contact with a suspect or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient, or who have a history of travel from affected geographic areas where COVID-19 has been detected, including the hot spots within the United States.

Please also find included in this message a form for requesting additional supplies from the Division of Public Health. Please note, supplies are limited, but DPH will do its best to meet the needs of the community.

[State Health Operations Center \(SHOC\) Resource Request](#)

[PPE Request Policy and Procedures](#)

PROCEDURES:

1. Complete the State Health Operations Center (SHOC) Resource Request Form (see attached), as completely as possible.
2. Sign the N95 Acceptance Letter.
3. Provide documentation from your normal PPE supplier stating that they are unable to supply your agency's need due to supply chain issues.
4. Scan and email the completed paperwork to [OEMS@delaware.gov](mailto:OEMS@delaware.gov) or fax the completed request form to: 302-223-1330
5. The request will be forwarded to the warehouse staff for completion.
6. Requesting agency will be notified when the order has been filled with a pickup location.
7. Due to the large volume of requests, please allow 7-10 business days for processing.

[Printable DPH Testing Guidelines.](#)

*For more information and resources regarding COVID-19, MSD has created a Coronavirus resource page on our website. [View resource page.](#)*

Medical Society of Delaware  
900 Prides Crossing  
Newark, Delaware 19713  
(302) 366-1400

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