COVID-19 Testing at the Ohio Department of Health Laboratory

Specimen Collection:
- Please check all materials that have been provided prior to use to ensure that specimen collection tubes are **NOT** leaking and swabs are **NOT** damaged. If damaged, email COVIDTesting@age.ohio.gov immediately to request new supplies.
- Any swab that is submitted for testing must be stored in an accepted type of media (viral transport media, universal transport media, sterile saline, sterile PBS (phosphate buffered saline), or Aimee's media).
- The ODH Laboratory cannot accept any swab with a wooden shaft or that contains calcium alginate.
- After collecting the specimen using the swab and place the swab in the tube of media and break/cut the swab at the scored indicator line so that the lid of the tube can be fully/tightly sealed for transport. If using scissors to cut the swab, ensure that scissors are cleaned between each cutting.
- Each specimen tube must be packaged in an individual biohazard bag, with nothing else contained within the bag. There should be a flap or pouch on the outside of the biohazard bag – please place the required paperwork that corresponds to that specimen in that pouch. If no pouch exists, please double bag the specimen, placing the paperwork in the outside bag.

Requisite Identification for Each Sample:
- **Two patient identifiers** must be labeled on each specimen collection tube (full name and date of birth). Additional identifiers are helpful but not necessary.
- **This information listed on tubes must be legible**. Any tubes with illegible labels will not be tested.
- Each specimen must be accompanied by the appropriate paperwork – a barcoded SARS-CoV-2 Specimen Submission Form. Make sure to keep this form in the outer flap or pouch of the biohazard bag.
- The patient information (full name and date of birth) listed on the specimen tube must **exactly** match the information provided on the paperwork.
- Contact odhlabportal@odh.ohio.gov to obtain the correct paperwork – you will need to obtain an account and be granted access to our electronic lab submission portal (https://ohid.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/ohid/). Information entered into this system is used to populate a PDF document which can be printed and sent along with the specimen. Additionally, data is electronically transferred from the portal to the testing laboratory.
- **All information on the form must be completed electronically to generate the required barcoded PDF.**

Transportation:
- **Specimens must be kept cold after collection and during transport to the laboratory.** Please make sure that specimens are refrigerated after collection. They should be packaged on cool packs for transport to the laboratory.
- Specimens may be held refrigerated for up to 72 hours. Specimens must be received at the testing laboratory within three days of collection.
- Specimens must be frozen if they are not received by laboratory within three days of collection, in order to remain viable. Frozen specimens should be packaged on dry ice for transport to the laboratory.

Results:
- Results will be sent to the submitter using secure fax. The ODH Laboratory will not call with results.
- The ODH Laboratory requires each submitter have a secure fax attestation form on file before faxing out any results. You should receive this form via fax within 1-2 days of specimen receipt at the ODH Laboratory. If you have not received this form or results, please contact odhlabportal@odh.ohio.gov.

General Information:
- Send any questions to odhlabportal@odh.ohio.gov.
- Hours (excluding holidays): Sunday-Saturday, 7:00am-5:30pm.