

PHEL Orders and Reporting

Frequently Asked Questions:

PHEL Online Orders and Reporting System

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Universal Frequently Asked Questions

1. Where can I request an account?

<https://www.nj.gov/health/phel/public-health-lab-testing/laboratory-information-management-system/portalaccess.shtml>

2. After I request an account, how long until my account is created?

We work diligently to create accounts as quickly as possible in the order of which it is received. With this being said, we try to get accounts created within two business days.

3. When requesting an account, does each person need to request one individually or can you request multiple accounts at once?

You will request an account through the form linked in question #1. You can share the account request link and each person can request their own account, **or** you could upload a spreadsheet with the names, phone numbers, email addresses, and designated access levels of everyone who will need an account in the form.

4. How do I know what test to request?

The tests available to you in the system should be the same as the current tests which are available to check off on the paper requisition form.

5. What do I do if I don't see the test I need?

Users are assigned to tests based on their location. If you think a test you need is missing, email the LIMS-IT.services@doh.nj.gov email and request access and we can check your account settings are correct.

6. Can I submit an order and edit the collection date or history later?

If your order was submitted but the specimen has not left your possession, please enter a new order and attach the correct requisition sheet to the specimen accordingly.

If your order was submitted but the specimen has left your possession, please email our specimen receiving team ASAP at PHEL.specimenreceiving@doh.nj.gov.

7. Will there be an alert when a result is ready to view?

Not currently. You will continue to receive results the same way you have traditionally received them (e.g., through fax or email).

8. When results are available will they be transmitted back to the ordering facility, or will they need to be retrieved manually?

Results will still be transmitted to the ordering facility in the same way you have traditionally received results (e.g., through fax or email).

9. Where can I view results?

The ability to review results is not currently available. Once this feature is turned on, you will be able to view a copy of the lab report under order history. In addition, your facility will also continue to receive results through fax or email).

10. Can I change where my results are sent?

Email LIMSIT-Services@doh.nj.gov with your facility name, the current destination of your results (e.g. current fax or email address) and any requested changes. It is recommended that you send results to a generic or mutually accessible account instead of to an individual.

11. Are patients previously submitted on paper in the system?

If you have sent patient specimens to PHEL the past ~7 years, then that patient is in the system.

12. How do I label the specimen container?

The specimen must be labeled with two pieces of patient identifying information (e.g., Name and DOB). Please continue to label specimens as you currently are doing. Printed labels, or handwritten labels, or written directly onto the container are all acceptable.

13. Does the system create a label for the specimen container?

The system does not automatically print labels at this time, we are discussing opening this feature up for those who have the capability to print labels.

14. Does this system allow for agency EMR interface instead of manual data entry into the DOH online system?

Not at this time, but this feature may be possible in future updates.

15. Do I need to print out the requisition form?

Yes, after ordering a test for a patient please print the requisition form and attach it to the specimen before sending to PHEL.

16. When the order is placed where is the requisition slip downloaded to?

The requisition slip will pop up automatically when you click save, and you can either print or download it as a PDF wherever you want, then submit the slip with the specimen. You can also search under 'Order history' to print or download another copy of the requisition slip at any time.

17. Can more than one person enter information for demographics and tests?

Yes, you may pre-enter the patient if they don't already exist within the system, then order the test at a later time.

18. How will rejected samples appear?

Samples which are rejected by the lab will appear as a result in the system – you will see the rejection report sent to you through fax or email as previously.

19. What procedure do I follow if the system is down, and I need to submit an order?

If at any point you have trouble entering an order into the system, contact the LIMS-IT.services@doh.nj.gov email. If we are unable to resolve your issue promptly, you may submit a sample with a paper requisition slip due to technical issues.

20. If I have, for example, 3 specimens, do I have to enter them individually 3 times?

If you have 3 specimens for 3 separate patients, then they must all be entered individually. If the three specimens are from the same patient, you can enter all 3 tests on the same order.

Hospital and Commercial Laboratory Frequently Asked Questions

1. Will COVID-19 variant identification/sequencing be an option to choose in the ordering field?

Yes, please select "SARS-CoV-2 Whole Genome Sequencing Variant Identification" when ordering. You must select a reason for sequencing per the state guidelines, for example a vaccine breakthrough sample, outbreak associated specimen, or outside lab surveillance. Refer to the NJ PHEL technical bulletin here ([SARS-CoV-2 Technical Bulletin](#)) for the most up-to-date details on what samples should be submitted to the state for variant identification.

2. Can I continue to use batch ordering for submitting whole genome sequencing?

A batch ordering feature is not currently available online.

3. I send positive COVID or influenza samples every week, will I use this system, and what order options do I choose?

Yes, please select "SARS-CoV-2 Whole Genome Sequencing-Variant Identification" when ordering. If you send weekly positives, fill in the reason for sequencing as 'Outside Lab Surveillance'.

4. If I do not have all the patient history because I am from the laboratory, can Infection Control later edit and enter the needed history?

You cannot submit an order until all required fields are filled. Specimen information can be edited until the order is saved/submitted. However, the required fields are specific to each test and is information that is required to perform testing, therefore it should be information available in the laboratory (e.g., specimen source, type etc.). If you have additional clinical information available, you may enter it in the optional fields.

If a clinical question is required and you do not have the information available, this information should be provided to you by Infection Control or your local/state health department prior to submission.

5. After I submit an order, can Infection Control add on and edit data or history later?

If your order was submitted but the specimen has not left your possession, please enter a new order with correct data and attach the correct requisition sheet to the specimen.

If your order was submitted but the specimen has left your possession, please email our specimen receiving team ASAP at PHEL.specimenreceiving@doh.nj.gov.

6. What is the 'Outbreak #' Field?

The Outbreak # field is specifically for outbreak or case investigation numbers assigned by the state CDS program. They will typically start with E-XXXXXX or I-XXXXX. Please do not put other information in this field if you do not have an outbreak number assigned.

7. What do I do for specimens going directly to the CDC or other external laboratory?

If you are sending a specimen for external laboratory testing to PHEL, please select the test order called Reference Laboratory Test Request. Fill out as much information as is known regarding what type of testing is being requested (e.g. pathogen and/or laboratory it is being send to such as CDC or NYDOH Wadsworth Center).

8. Will Epidemiology and CDS have access to ordering tests and viewing results for different locations, as sometimes they order tests for a facility?

Yes. CDS will have their own access granted. Local health departments are not currently enrolled in the system but may be at a future date.

9. Is the sample ID the same as the SID# which historically has been assigned by the specimen receiving laboratory at PHEL?

Yes. The sample ID is generated by the system (e.g., V210000001) is the PHEL specimen ID.

10. Is the order ID# the same as the sample ID#?

The Order ID is not the same as the Sample ID (SID#). An Order ID is generated for each order, which may contain more than one sample. A sample ID number for each sample is also generated at the time of each order.

11. Is the sample ID and order ID from our hospital, or is the order ID generated when you save a requisition?

The specimen ID generated by the system (e.g., V210000001) is the PHEL specimen ID, not the hospital SID#. Both an order ID and PHEL sample ID is generated with each requisition.

12. Our laboratory sends blood parasites to the state for confirmation, would we use this electronic test ordering and reporting system?

Yes. The correct test code for this is Malaria/Babesia (Blood) and Malaria/Babesia (Smear). If available, please submit both as a blood sample and smear for testing.

13. Where do I enter a CT value for positive COVID samples?

This field will be added to the system as a clinical question.

STD Clinic Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I know what the chart number is?

It is the same as the 'Patient ID' on the paper slips. If you do not use a chart number, do not leave this field blank- enter 'Not Provided'.

2. Is it possible to enter demographic information during patient registration then add ordered tests when they see the provider later during the visit?

Yes, you can enter patient info, then save and search the patient's name when you're ready to order the test.

3. What if I don't know the race/ethnicity of the patient, can I leave that demographic field blank?

If the race or ethnicity is unknown, or not recorded by your clinic, select 'None Given' from the drop-down list. Do not leave these fields blank.

4. If I am sending multiple samples from the same patient to the laboratory, can they all go in the same bag?

Yes, but it is extremely important to first ensure that the caps on the tubes are properly tightened and secure to prevent any leakage during transit, that could contaminate the caps of other specimens. It is also important to avoid touching the silver foil top of the specimen tube caps during collection, or other handling of the tubes.

5. Do I still need to place the old slips in the syphilis specimen tubes?

You no longer will place the old slips in the tube, please now place the new requisition form printed from the system in the tubes.

6. What are the STD specimen submission times and when do they expire?

Urine must be added to the Hologic Aptima Urine Specimen Transport Tube within 24 hours of collection. Once added to the tube, urine specimens are stable for 30 days after collection.

Swab specimens are stable for 60 days after collection.

All specimens can be stored at room temperature. Acceptable storage temperature range is between 2° and 20° C.

7. Will there still be a state courier?

Yes, there will still be a state courier, the way you deliver specimens to the lab is not changing.

8. If a patient is transgender and identifies as male but has biological female genitalia, how do I select cervical specimen if the patient sex is listed as male?

You must select the sex that corresponds with biological sex at birth—the system is programmed to not allow a cervical specimen from a male patient for example. When in doubt, urine is a gender-neutral specimen type.

There is a separate field to enter the patient's gender identity.

9. Is there a transgender option in demographics that can be utilized for trans-male and trans-female patients?

There are separate fields for biological sex at birth and gender identity. Fill these out as appropriately as possible.

10. How do I submit specimens and enter demographic information for a client that is transgender or does not want to identify?

In that case a urine specimen can be submitted. If a urogenital swab specimen is submitted, you must select the sex that corresponds with their biological sex at birth and the sample type entered must be the site of the specimen collection that corresponds to their biological sex at birth in order to comply with FDA approval for this assay.

11. How do I submit a sample for Hologic Aptima Combo CT/GC testing (formerly called Genprobe) and Trichomonas testing?

If a specimen is being submitted for both Aptima CT/GC Combo testing and Trichomonas testing, only one specimen tube needs to be collected and submitted for both tests, as long as the collection source is acceptable for both tests.

Trichomonas testing can be performed on female or male urine specimens, Female endocervical swab specimens collected using the Aptima Unisex Swab Specimen Collection Kit or Female vaginal swab specimens collected using the Aptima Multitest Swab Specimen Kit (orange label) only.

12. Can I use the Aptima orange tube and swab?

The Hologic Aptima Multitest Swab Specimen Collection Kit comes in an orange package and contains a specimen transport tube with an orange label and one specimen collection swab with a pink shaft. This collection kit is only to be used for collection of throat specimens, rectal specimens, or female vaginal specimens.

13. What is the correct collection kit for urine trichomonas testing?

Female or Male urine specimens can be submitted for Aptima Trichomonas vaginalis testing using the Hologic Aptima Urine Specimen Transport Tube. Be sure the client has not voided within 1 hour prior to specimen collection. It is important to take care not to spill any of the clear liquid already contained in the tube while adding the urine, as this liquid is a preservative.

TB Clinic Frequently Asked Questions

1. Does test number 70010 (mycobacteria culture) include a smear?

Yes, the 70010 mycobacteria culture includes a smear.

2. Will we still use the pink requisition slip for Sputum samples?

No, PHEL will no longer be accepting the pink slips. You will order a test for the sputum samples through the electronic test ordering and reporting system. If you are unable to order online, there is a new form for TB test requests called the [TBQFT-1](#)

3. Some of our patients require a translator, can we still use the paper requisition forms to gather patient information then enter it into the online system afterwards?

Yes, any workflow that works for your location is okay as long as the entry is submitted correctly before the sample gets to PHEL.

4. What are the labeling criteria for TB specimens?

All specimens must be labeled with patient first and last name, date of birth, and collection date/time. Please make sure this information exactly matches what is entered into the system when ordering a test.

Rabies Clinic Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who should create an online account?

All local health departments should maintain a generic rabies ordering account to submit samples. Animal Control Officers, Veterinarians or other professionals who handle domestic or wild animals within the LHDs jurisdiction should contact their LHD to request login information.

If you are an ACO group, veterinary office or other agency who submits a large number of samples per year, reach out to Rabies.PHEL@doh.nj.gov and we can assign individual login information on a on a case-by-case basis.

2. How do I create an online account?

Sign up for an account by filling out the form available at <https://www.nj.gov/health/phel/public-health-lab-testing/laboratory-information-management-system/portalaccess.shtml> then await a confirmation email with further instructions.

3. How do I submit a Rabies sample online?

Once you have a PHEL Online Ordering and Reporting Portal account, you will be able to submit samples online. For instructions, refer to the documentation available online at <https://www.nj.gov/health/phel/public-health-lab-testing/laboratory-information-management-system/> or in the Document Library available in the MyNJ portal, which has full PDF instructions and additional documentation. A PDF of instructions will also be provided upon registration.

4. Who do I contact with questions about Rabies sample submission?

Rabies.PHEL@doh.nj.gov

5. Who do I contact with technical support?

LIMSIT-Services@doh.nj.gov

6. What paperwork do I submit with the sample?

When you save and submit an online order, a pop-up box will appear with a PDF of the requisition form that you just generated. That form should be printed and submitted with the specimen.

7. How do I get my results?

Results are sent to the LHD of the primary municipality that is selected in the first drop-down box via either fax and/or email. Results are not directly submitted back to the submitter, veterinarian, animal control, or other agency.

If you need a result, please contact Rabies.PHEL@doh.nj.gov

8. Will the “View Results” section begin to show information moving forward?

The ability to review results is not currently available. Once this feature is turned on, you will be able to view a copy of the lab report under order history. In addition, your facility will also continue to receive results through fax or email.

9. Will we be contacted, with this new system, with negative test results as well as any positive test results?

Both positive and negative results will continue to be sent to the primary municipality selected through fax and/or email, the same way same as currently in use. Positive results will also receive a phone call.

10. What do we do with the live bats?

Bats should be humanely euthanized prior to submission. If you are a local public health, veterinary or animal control partner who need assistance with this, please email us at rabies.phel@doh.nj.gov.

11. I work in several municipalities where we (the LHD) rarely submit specimen ourselves. Were the ACOs and veterinarians invited to this webinar? They are typically completing the old paper versions of these requisitions.

ACOs and veterinary partners were encouraged to join this webinar, although the invitation went directly to LHDs. If you have a ACO or veterinary partner that you work with frequently, please feel

free to forward this documentation available at <https://www.nj.gov/health/phel/public-health-lab-testing/laboratory-information-management-system/> to help complete coverage within your jurisdiction.

12. I cover several towns, can I use just one account for all towns, or do I need a separate account for each town? (it does include 2 different countries)

You can pick one account to use, but if the LHDs ever divide rabies responsibilities, then they will both need to create their own login.

13. I am Health officer for two health departments. Should I set up an account for each use or use one account for both?

You can pick one account to use, but if the LHDs ever divide rabies responsibilities, then they will need to create their own log-in.

14. If we use a generic account is there a way to know who is completing the form?

Not at this time.

15. Will wildlife centers be able to set up an account?

We would encourage wildlife centers to reach out to their local health department to get log-in credentials. If they submit a high volume of rabies specimens annually, they may reach out to rabies.PHEL@doh.nj.gov to discuss the need for their own account.

16. Will the results go to the town of the health department serving the town?

Results will go to the LHD with jurisdiction for the municipality selected in the very first drop-down box.

17. So, an animal control company will be able to choose whichever municipality the specimen comes from in the system, and not have to log into each individual municipality?

Correct, regardless of which account you use to login, all rabies specimen results will be sent to whichever municipality is selected in the first dropdown box.

18. Can we save the document with “save as” for particular town not to have to repopulate over and over?

When you select the name of the town/municipality, requisite fields for that jurisdiction will auto-populate. When you begin typing the name of the town, veterinary practice or ACO, the field automatically searches and shows only relevant matches to select from.

19. So, we, as the local health should give a veterinarian physically in our municipality our login. Then the veterinarian will enter the information of the submitted animal even if it is in a different municipality or county?

Correct, the veterinary practice can contact their local health department for login information, and they can select the most relevant municipality for the animal submitted. Results will go to the municipality selected, not the login location.

20. Is there a deadline when all local health departments must use the electronic test reporting and ordering system?

No. We will continue accepting paper VIR-16 forms for the time being, however, we encourage all jurisdictions to switch to the online portal as soon as possible.