



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**  
***DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES***  
***BUREAU OF PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORIES***

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**NEW HAMPSHIRE PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORIES (NH PHL)**  
**Specimen Acceptance Criteria for SARS-CoV-2 Testing**  
**Effective September 1, 2022**

In order to increase NH PHL testing efficiency and staff safety, specimens submitted for SARS-CoV-2 testing that do not meet the below criteria **will be rejected** upon receipt at NH PHL:

- The specimen collection tube and swab expiration dates have not passed before the specimen is received at NH PHL.
- The tube is labelled with:
  - the patient name (no abbreviations or nicknames) or other unique patient identifier (e.g., medical record number)
  - the date of birth
- The tube is legibly labelled in pen or with a preprinted label.
- The tube is tightly capped and not leaking.
- The transport bag containing the tube is fully sealed closed to keep the tube inside the bag and safe for handling in case the tube does leak.
- The requisition form is filled out legibly, completely and correctly, and the patient information is consistent between the tube and the form.
- The form is placed in the outer pouch of the bag and is not in the same compartment as the tube.
- The date of collection is within 72 hours of specimen receipt at NH PHL, with the exception that the specimen was frozen upon collection and is indicated so on the form.

**Please ensure that specimens are maintained at refrigerated temperatures once collected, and that they are transported in a cooler with an ice pack to maintain cold storage.** CDC guidance states to store specimen tubes at 2-8°C for up to 72 hours after collection; if a delay in testing or shipping is expected, store specimens at -70°C or below. For more information, see the following link:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html>.

**As a reminder, specimen submission for SARS-CoV-2 testing requires providers to be pre-authorized by NH PHL.** For questions or concerns regarding SARS-CoV-2 testing and specimen criteria, please reach out to the NH PHL Quality Manager at 603-271-4661.