



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Laboratory Guidelines

General Information

After identifying a potential patient under investigation (PUI), immediately notify facility infection prevention and KDHE (877-427-7317); contact RCHD Disease Investigation Line (785-317-0474 or epi.surveillance@rileycountyks.gov)

KDHE will determine if testing for COVID-19 is necessary; due to limited supply of testing kits, only patients with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 will be considered. KDHE will also coordinate with KHEL to receive specimen. Specimens may be shipped via courier or hand delivered.

It is recommended to collect **only a nasopharyngeal swab**

Testing for another respiratory pathogens should be conducted and should not delay specimen submission to KHEL. It is recommended to collect specimens for COVID-19 testing separately from influenza and RVP testing.

Completion of the KDHE COVID-19 Testing Approval Form is required.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Recommendations for Specimen Collection

- Gloves
- Full face shield or goggles
- Particulate respirator
- Fluid-resistant gown

Packaging and Shipping

Specimens obtained from PUIs must be packaged, shipped, and transported according to International Air Transport Association (IATA) Dangerous Goods Regulations, consistent with Category B Specimen guidelines. Store specimens at 2-8°C and ship ice pack. Label appropriately, to include: Patient ID number, unique specimen ID, Specimen type, and Date sample was collected

If a specimen is frozen at -70° C ship overnight on dry ice.

Specimens should be transported in a rigid, leak-proof container

Complete Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID) Testing Approval Form

Nasopharyngeal Swab (NP Swab)

Use only synthetic tip swabs with non-wooden shafts

- Insert swab in the nostril parallel to the palate. Leave in place for a few seconds to absorb secretions; swab both nasal areas
- Place swab immediately into sterile tubes contains 2-3ml of viral transport media (VTM)
- Ship cold on ice packs at 2-8°C
- Storage: refrigerate at 2-8°C up to 72 hours. If arriving at KHEL \geq 72 hours after collection, freeze at \leq -70°C
- Ship to Kansas Health & Environmental Laboratories 6810 SE Dwight Street Topeka, KS 66620

Transport device: sterile leak-proof container
If swabs are NOT in VTM or M4 they will be rejected