



M E M O R A N D U M

Date: October 19, 2023

To: Medical Providers and Clinical Laboratories

From: Maggie Park, MD, Public Health Officer *Maggie Park*

SUBJECT: Influenza Testing for 2023-2024 Season

The 2023-2024 influenza season has started. See these guidelines for diagnostic testing and influenza reporting: www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/pages/immunization/influenza.aspx

The San Joaquin County Public Health Laboratory (SJCPHL) is a member of the California Sentinel Provider Influenza Surveillance Program.

- SJCPHL recommends laboratory testing when there is a strong suspicion of Influenza.
- SJCPHL is requesting you save the influenza positive samples **already tested negative for SARS-COV-2** using the Multiplex Flu/SC2 or other assays for further Influenza subtyping by RT-PCR and surveillance.
- SJCPHL is also requesting submission of respiratory specimens from **influenza positive fatal cases, hospitalized, intensive care cases or cases from acute respiratory outbreaks situations** or influenza like illnesses (ILI) in any person where history of travel, or recent close contacts or exposures within 10 days of symptom onset, suggest concern for variant or novel influenza infection.
- SJCPHL provides flu typing, surveillance service **at no cost to the submitters.**

SJCPHL also offers additional laboratory diagnostic tests on a fee-for service basis:

Influenza Diagnostic RT-PCR	\$66
CDC FLU-SARS COV2 RT-PCR (3 targets SARS-COV-2, Influenza A, Influenza B	\$100
BioFire Respiratory Viral Panel (RVP) PCR (22 targets) Adenovirus; Coronavirus 229E; Coronavirus HKU1 ; Coronavirus NL63; Coronavirus OC43 ; Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) ; Human Metapneumovirus ; Human Rhinovirus/Enterovirus; Influenza A virus; Influenza A virus A/H1 ; Influenza A virus A/H3; Influenza A virus A/H1-2009; Influenza B virus; ; Parainfluenza virus 1; Parainfluenza virus 2; Parainfluenza virus 3; Parainfluenza virus 4; Respiratory syncytial virus; Bordetella parapertussis; Bordetella pertussis; Chlamydia pneumoniae; Mycoplasma pneumoniae	\$191.34

Please contact SJCPHL at 209-468-3460 for questions, information, and instructions regarding submission of respiratory specimens for surveillance testing, collection protocol, and kits.



SPECIMENS FOR SUSPECTED INFLUENZA VIRUS/ SURVEILLANCE TESTING

1. Specimens must be collected within the first 24-72 hours of onset of symptoms and no later than 5 days after onset of symptoms.
2. **Specimens to be collected:** Nasopharyngeal swab, nasal aspirate, or a combined nasopharyngeal swab with oropharyngeal swab.
 - If these specimens cannot be collected, a nasal swab or oropharyngeal swab is acceptable.
 - For patients who are intubated, an endotracheal aspirate or bronchoalveolar lavage may also be collected.
3. Swab specimens should be collected using swabs with a synthetic tip (e.g., polyester or Dacron®) and an aluminum or plastic shaft. Swabs with cotton tips and wooden shafts are NOT recommended; swabs made of calcium alginate are NOT acceptable.
4. Specimens should be placed into sterile viral transport media and immediately placed on ice or cold packs (2-8°C /refrigerated condition) for transport to the laboratory.
5. Label viral transport media tube with **patient's name, source of specimen, and date specimen was collected**. Please make sure the **caps are tight** before transport.
6. Note: **INFLUENZA REFERENCE SAMPLES SHOULD ONLY BE IN VTM or UTM.**
 - Specimens in other media, including but not limited to, saline, PBS, or Molecular Transport Media (MTM) are NOT acceptable.
 - Additionally, clinical specimens that have been heat inactivated are NOT acceptable.
7. Complete the San Joaquin County specimen submittal form. The information you provide about the specimen/patient is the data that will be entered into the final laboratory testing result in a national surveillance database.

Note: Specimens must arrive at the Public Health Laboratory frozen or can be transported on ice / cold packs at 2-8 °C if collected within 3 days of testing.

For information or questions regarding specimen transport, please call at (209) 468-3460