

KDHE Updated Guidance on Testing for COVID-19

Effective March 23, 2020

Due to the widescale shortages of laboratory supplies and reagents, testing at the Kansas Health and Environmental Laboratories must be prioritized for public health purposes and urgent need. KDHE will be prioritizing specimens for COVID-19 testing, which will be reserved for the following patients that meet Kansas' patient under investigation (PUI) criteria starting 3/23/2020. It is important for health care facilities that are submitting specimens fill out the approval form completely so that a determination of whether the patient meets the following criteria can be made. All other specimens that don't meet this criteria will not be tested.

- Healthcare workers and first responders who have COVID-19 symptoms,
- Potential clusters of unknown respiratory illness, with priority given to long-term care facilities and healthcare facilities,
- Hospitalized patients with no alternative diagnosis,
- Individuals over the age of 60 who have symptoms of COVID-19 with priority given to people who reside in a nursing home, long-term care facility, or other congregate setting, and
- Individuals with underlying health conditions that would be treated differently if they were infected with COVID-19.

For any specimens that were sent to KDHE prior to 3/23/2020, will still be tested. Moving forward healthcare providers should:

- Send specimens to a commercial reference laboratory; determine the laboratory's specific priorities/restrictions for testing by calling the reference laboratory directly.
- Inform all patients who present with symptoms compatible with COVID-19 (e.g., measured fever of 100.4 (F) or greater and lower respiratory symptoms including cough or shortness of breath) who are not a high priority for testing to:
 - Self-isolate at home or another appropriate location for 7 days after illness onset or for 72 hours after resolution of fever (without fever-reducing medication) and significant improvement in symptoms, **whichever is longer**.

