

March 19, 2020

Dear Provider,

First, we would like to thank you for all the hard work you all are doing to prepare for the COVID-19 pandemic and also for the care you are providing for COVID-19 positive patients.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many providers (hospitals and clinics) have started drive-thru and other types of COVID-19 screening and sample collection clinics. In the first week, New Mexico has had an impressive increase in COVID-19 testing, one of the highest rates in the world. This is greatly appreciated and hopefully will help to flatten the coronavirus epidemic curve. Early diagnosis is a critical component for containment and mitigation strategies and we want to continue to aggressively identify the COVID-19 virus to prevent secondary transmission in New Mexico.

**At the same time, we are in a pandemic and it is ABSOLUTELY necessary that all COVID-19 screening and sample collection efforts be coordinated with the Department of Health (DOH).** Therefore, pursuant to the March 19, 2020 Public Health Emergency – [Executive Order 2020-004](#), the DOH is issuing the following directive, effective immediately, requiring compliance by applicable providers. Specifically, this means that:

- Any COVID-19 testing sites currently operating should immediately call or email Dan Burke at 505-827-2412 or 505-986-8030 (Daniel.Burke@state.nm.us)
- Any clinic or hospital considering starting a new testing site, drive-thru or other model, must FIRST be cleared by the DOH. Do this by calling Aja Sanzone, MD at 505-629-2375 (Aja.Sanzone@state.nm.us).
- Please leave a name and number for a call back if we miss your call.

Information that is required to start or continue an existing test site will include:

- Implementation plan including date(s), times, location;
- Screening and testing criteria;
- A plan for ensuring an adequate supply of sample collection materials (nasopharyngeal swabs, viral transport media tubes); and,
- A plan for ensuring adequate PPE for those performing nasopharyngeal swabs.

Each screening/specimen collection site must report on a DAILY basis of operation to DOH. Additional guidance regarding an online reporting tool will be issued by DOH on the data collection process.

- Patients seen per day;
- Samples collected per day;
- Samples sent to lab per day;
- PPE supply – remaining units (e.g., gowns, gloves, surgical masks, N95 masks); and,
- Sample collection equipment (nasopharyngeal swabs, viral transport medium vials with label – usually together in a plastic bag) – remaining units.

**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

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Attached is an excel spreadsheet briefly describing steps in the process for obtaining COVID-19 testing. If you have any questions, please contact Aja Sanzone, MD at 505-629-2375 ([Aja.Sanzone@state.nm.us](mailto:Aja.Sanzone@state.nm.us)).