



May 12, 2022

To All Oregon Clinical Laboratory Partners,

During the initial COVID-19 pandemic, Oregon experienced a decrease in enteric (e.g., Shiga toxin producing *E. coli*, *Salmonella*) and other disease transmission and sample submission to the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory (OSPHL). Disease transmission and sample submission are now increasing to more typical levels in Oregon.

Please review the message below to ensure all samples submitted to OSPHL follow submission requirements. Recent incorrect sample submissions compromise the public health system's efforts to identify and stop related outbreaks. Complete sample submission guidance is provided on the OSPHL Lab Test Menu (www.healthoregon.org/labtests).

Please share this information with laboratory and referrals department staff who may need this information.

Submit Pure Isolates

OSPHL has noticed an increase in isolates mixed with other organisms submitted.

Please ensure that the organism is subbed to appropriate media without inhibitors to ensure you are submitting a single colony that is not mixed with other organisms. It is best practice to retain a pure subculture in case a subsequent pure culture is needed.

Submit Samples Timely

Please submit clinical samples as soon as possible. Avoid batching samples into single shipments.

The viability window for many organisms important to public health response can be quite short. Laboratories that do not reflex culture these organisms should pay particular attention to timely sample transport.

Complete Forms Submitted with Sample Correctly

When the correct tests are not chosen, public health cannot recover the isolate to conduct pathogen surveillance or identify outbreaks associated with the sample submitted.

Use current specimen submission forms.

Always ensure that the correct order choice/test is chosen on the OSPHL General Microbiology Test Request Form and use the most current version, available at www.bitly.com/phl-forms.

Choose the correct pathogen.

A common error is to choose Shigella when Shiga toxin producing E. coli is intended or vice versa. These pathogens and their workup in the lab are not interchangeable.

Choose the correct type of test.

For enteric sample submissions, isolates are preferred.

- If submitting a primary sample in broth or transport media (i.e., Cary Blair), request pathogen culture.
- If submitting an isolate, request pathogen ID.

*TESTS REQUESTED — Please choose one:		
ENTERICS — CULTURE OR ISOLATE IDENTIFICATION		
	Original material:	Isolate:
<i>Aeromonas</i> spp.		<input type="checkbox"/> ID (AERID)
<i>Campylobacter</i> spp.	<input type="checkbox"/> Culture (CAMC)	<input type="checkbox"/> ID (CAMID)
<i>E. coli</i> O157		<input type="checkbox"/> ID (O157ID)
Enteric Pathogen Screen	<input type="checkbox"/> Culture (ENTC)	
<i>Plesiomonas shigelloides</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Culture (PLEC)	<input type="checkbox"/> ID (PLEID)
<i>Salmonella</i> spp.	<input type="checkbox"/> Culture (SALC)	<input type="checkbox"/> ID (SALID)
Shiga toxin producing <i>E. coli</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Culture (STECFUL)	
<i>Shigella</i> spp.	<input type="checkbox"/> Culture (SHIC)	<input type="checkbox"/> ID (SHIGID)
<i>Vibrio</i> spp.	<input type="checkbox"/> Culture (VIBC)	<input type="checkbox"/> ID (VIBID)
<i>Yersinia</i> spp. (non- <i>Y. pestis</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/> Culture (YERC)	<input type="checkbox"/> ID (YERID)

Include your lab's results.

Including a copy of your test results helps public health identify and correct errors when they occur.

We understand that many laboratories are short-staffed or have implemented workflow changes during the COVID-19 pandemic response when enteric and other pathogen circulation was less prevalent. We respectfully request that you review your procedures to ensure they align with public health guidance.

Please do not hesitate to contact our teams with any questions. We are here to help!

- Oregon State Public Health Laboratory
 - o Client Services – Sarah Humphrey King, Client Services Coordinator, at 971-217-3522 or sarah.m.humphrey@dhsosha.state.or.us
 - o General Microbiology Section – Karim Morey, Lead Microbiologist, at 503-693-4142 or karim.e.morey@dhsosha.state.or.us
- Oregon Acute and Communicable Disease Prevention – Julie Hatch, Laboratory Surveillance Coordinator, at 971-673-1044 or julie.hatch@dhsosha.state.or.us

Sincerely,

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