COVID-19 Testing: Healthcare Provider Guidance (last updated 3/19/20)

COVID-19 testing
Testing for COVID-19 is available at:
- Arizona State Public Health Laboratory (ASPHL) for patients who meet the Persons Under Investigation (PUI) criteria below AND
- At commercial laboratories (LabCorp, Quest Diagnostics, and others) for patients who do not meet PUI criteria and healthcare providers would like to test. Do not call Public Health to obtain this testing.

To obtain approval for testing at ASPHL:
The patient must meet the PUI criteria below AND the provider must contact Maricopa County Department of Public Health.

Testing can be ordered by healthcare providers through commercial laboratories without Public Health approval. Healthcare providers should follow their facility’s protocol for ordering send-out commercial laboratory tests.

Healthcare providers caring for a patient with fever and/or acute respiratory symptoms should:
- Obtain detailed travel history, including all national and international travel, for the 14 days prior to symptom onset;
- Consider adding travel screening, including all countries under CDC Travel Warning Level 3, to your patient triage protocol;

Criteria to Guide Evaluation of Persons Under Investigation (PUI)

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<tr>
<th>Clinical Features</th>
<th>Plus</th>
<th>Epidemiologic Risk</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fever1 OR signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or shortness of breath) NOT requiring hospitalization</td>
<td>AND Any person, including health care workers2, who has had close contact3 with a laboratory-confirmed4 COVID-19 patient within 14 days of symptom onset</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fever1 AND signs/symptoms of a lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough or shortness of breath) NOT requiring hospitalization in a person with a high-risk occupation5 OR who lives in a congregate setting1</td>
<td>AND No source of exposure has been identified</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fever1 AND severe acute lower respiratory illness (e.g., pneumonia, ARDS) requiring hospitalization, radiographic confirmation of bilateral pulmonary infiltrates, &amp; without alternative explanatory diagnosis (negative respiratory viral panel, including influenza)6,7</td>
<td>AND No source of exposure has been identified</td>
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1Fever may be subjective or confirmed.
2For healthcare personnel, testing may be considered if there has been exposure to a person with suspected COVID-19 without laboratory confirmation
3Close contact is defined at the CDC website: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/clinical-criteria.html
4Documentation of laboratory-confirmation of 2019-nCoV may not be possible for travelers or persons caring for patients in other countries.
5Category includes single or clusters of patients with severe acute lower respiratory illness (e.g., pneumonia, ARDS) of unknown etiology in which COVID-19 is being considered
6Also consider testing for Coccidioidomycosis and Legionella
7Healthcare personnel, school personnel, childcare worker, jail/prison personnel, or other similar occupation
8Jail/prison, long-term care facility or nursing home, university housing, or other similar setting

For all patients who meet COVID-19 PUI criteria:
1) Healthcare personnel entering the room should use droplet, contact, and standard precautions, plus eye protection (e.g., goggles or a face shield) and patients can be evaluated in a private room with the door closed (unless performing aerosol-generating procedures, which should be performed in an AIIR);
2) Immediately notify your healthcare facility’s infection control personnel;
3) If you are seeking approval for COVID-19 testing through the state public health laboratory only, notify Maricopa County Department of Public Health at (commercial testing does not require public health notification):
   a. Monday–Friday 8AM–5PM — call (602) 506-6767 and ask for a Surveillance Nurse or;
   b. After 5PM and on weekends — call (602) 747-7111 and ask for the Provider On-Call.
4) Collect specimens for testing for COVID-19:
   a. Preferred specimen - nasopharyngeal [NP] swab in universal/viral transport medium (if transport medium is not available, the NP swab can be placed in a sterile tube filled with sterile saline)
   b. Acceptable alternative specimens if the patient is hospitalized – oropharyngeal [OP] swab, lower respiratory specimen (e.g., BAL, tracheal aspirate)
   c. The preferred method of shipment is frozen at -70 °C or below. However, samples can be shipped refrigerated at 2-8 °C and are stable at this temperature up to 72 hours.