

Criteria for Acceptance of Patient Specimens by Public Health Laboratories

*Public Health Laboratories
Public Health Ontario*

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1. Who can submit:

Legislated Health Care Professionals authorized to submit a specimen and receive a report defined by *Section 9 (1) Ontario Regulation 682 of the Laboratory and Specimen Collection Centre Licensing Act* indicates *Section 9 (1)* refers to five types of requestors who can order tests from a laboratory.

- a. a legally qualified medical practitioner or a dentist,
- b. a midwife, in respect of a test specified in Appendix B of the *Ontario Regulation 682*,
- c. a person who lawfully practices a health profession in a jurisdiction outside Ontario, if in that jurisdiction a laboratory may lawfully examine specimens at the request of that person,
- d. of an insurer or an agent within the meaning of the *Insurance Act*, in respect of HIV Antibody testing, or
- e. a registered nurse who holds an extended certificate of registration under the *Nursing Act, 1991*, in respect of a test specified in Appendix C of the *Ontario Regulation 682*.

2. Definitions:

- a) Non-critical specimen — routine specimens
- b) Critical specimens difficult or impossible to recollect (i.e., CSF, tissue, autopsy material)

3. Criteria for determining Acceptance of Non-Critical Specimens

- a) Patient identifiers; preferably patient name in full and / or identification number must be on both specimen container and requisition and must match one another. The exception is outbreak specimens, which are received with a numeric outbreak number and no patient name. For smear specimens, the patient identifier (patient initials are acceptable due to space limitations) must be written on the frosted portion of the slide. Patient initials are also acceptable for specimen containers with space limitations e.g. Bordetella specimen containers
- b) A second identifier is essential to distinguish between individuals with the same name, i.e., date of birth or OHIP number or date of collection (mo / day / yr). This second identifier must be on both requisition and container
- c) Legally authorized (as specified in *Ontario Regulation 682 of the Laboratory and Specimen Collection Centre Licensing Act*) requester's name. Patient test requisition forms received from a clinic staffed by rotating physicians (e.g. Hassle - free clinic) shall include the name of the attending physician. Patient reports may be addressed to the Coordinator of the Clinic
- d) Test(s) must be requested or implied (i.e. specimen in a test specific transport media such as SAF for parasitology)
- e) The specimen packaging meets the minimum Federal Regulation – Transportation of Dangerous Goods packaging requirements
- f) The specimen is not leaking

4. Criteria for determining Acceptance of Critical Specimens

- a) Any critical specimen that is received without patient identifiers will be processed if tests specified but will not be reported, until a signed waiver has been received from the health care provider.

5. Verbal Requests for Additional Tests

- a) No additional test will be added to previously submitted specimens except under exceptional circumstances. If additional tests are required, please submit a new specimen with an appropriately completed Public Health Laboratory (PHL) Test Requisition form as follows:
 - 1. HIV and/or HTLV serology: Use the “HIV Serology Test Requisition”
 - 2. Prenatal serology (including Rubella, Hepatitis B, Syphilis and HIV): Use the “Prenatal Test Requisition”
 - 3. For all other serology requests: Use the “General Test Requisition”