

# MLS Laboratory Update: Updated Guidance for Submission of SARS-CoV-2 Specimens for Sequencing

MARCH 23RD, 2023

## Purpose of this Message:

MDH-PHL is updating the submission guidance for whole genome sequencing (WGS) of positive SARS-CoV-2 specimens.

## Action Item:

Please review the following information and submit specimens (according to the criteria below) from patients who have a positive SARS-CoV-2 test result from either PCR or other rapid molecular methods tested at your facility.

## Background:

Due to the changing dynamics of COVID-19 in MN, MDH-PHL is requesting an increase in submission of positive SARS-CoV-2 specimens for sequencing to maintain adequate genomic surveillance throughout the state.

## Additional Information:

Starting this week, ALL laboratories (regardless of size): Submit up to 40 **positive** specimens per week with a Ct  $\leq$  30.

If your testing method does not generate a Ct value, please submit any positive specimens.

Note: MDH-PHL is no longer asking specifically for specimens from vaccine breakthrough cases or suspected re-infection. Those specimens can be submitted as part of the weekly submission for surveillance.

### Specimen submission guidelines:

- Specimens should be submitted using **COVID-19 Special Request (2621) Submission Form** located on our [Forms for the Infectious Disease Laboratory page](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/forms.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/forms.html>).
- For further submission details please see the **COVID-19 Special Request Form Guidance** document also located on our [Forms for the Infectious Disease Laboratory page](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/forms.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/forms.html>).
- A new specimen should not be collected for this surveillance.
- Acceptable specimen types: upper and lower respiratory specimens
  - Refer to guidance document for details on specific specimen types requested.

- Specimens must be submitted in a suitable transport medium. Refer to guidance document for details.
- Specimens must be submitted to MDH-PHL within 7 days of collection (preferred), or frozen within 7 days of collection and shipped frozen.
  - Specimens can be batched for shipping
- Submission requested for Minnesota residents only.
- Specimens sequenced elsewhere do not need to be submitted if sequencing data is publicly available.

**Questions:** Please contact:

Sean Wang, DVM, Ph.D.

Sequencing and Bioinformatics Supervisor

Infectious Disease Laboratory

[sean.wang@state.mn.us](mailto:sean.wang@state.mn.us)

651-201-5050

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Minnesota Laboratory System  
Minnesota Department of Health, Public Health Laboratory  
601 Robert St. N, St. Paul, MN 55164-0899  
651-201-5200

[health.mnlabsystem@state.mn.us](mailto:health.mnlabsystem@state.mn.us)

[www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/mls/index.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/mls/index.html)

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