



To: Facilities Serviced by HHL and HHL Employees
From: Heartland Health Laboratories, Inc.
Date: February 14, 2022
RE: Reduced Contact and NO Contact Modified Specimen Collection Procedure

Heartland Health Laboratory, Inc. (HHL) is committed to continuing to provide excellent laboratory services amid the COVID19 pandemic. HHL is following and/or exceeding all CDC, CMS, and KDHE guidance.

Purpose

To outline and describe reduced contact methods of obtaining laboratory specimens from facilities that have a patient under investigation or in isolation due to a respiratory illness, or have restricted vendor access which includes the laboratory staff.

To ensure the safety of your community and all other communities we service our Route Phlebotomists and STAT Runners will not draw residents who are positive for COVID or are showing COVID symptoms without a negative COVID test in the past 24 hours. The below process outlines our reduced contact procedure.

Procedure for Facilities with Suspected/Confirmed COVID19 Residents

- If there is a confirmed Positive in the facility, the facility staff **MUST** notify HHL. Notification should be made within 24 hours of positive COVID Test.
 - Notify HHL by:
 - E-mail COVID19@heartlandhealthlab.net
 - Phone 913-643-4278 Option 2 and ask for a Safety Officer
- A resident who is showing two or more COVID19 symptoms and does not have a negative COVID test within the past 24 hours would be considered by HHL as “PUI” Patient Under Investigation.
- **If a resident requires a nasopharyngeal (nasal) swab for Flu or COVID19 the Dedicated facility staff MUST perform the swab**, HHL employees will not be performing nasal swabs.
- **Specimen Collection for PUI and COVID Positive Residents:**
 - **Dedicated facility staff MUST perform phlebotomy and non-blood specimen collection**
 - HHL Staff **WILL NOT** perform phlebotomy or collect non-blood specimens
 - HHL Staff will provide the necessary specimen collection supplies for the draw (vacutainer tubes, tourniquet, needles, swabs), and wait while the samples are collected.
 - If your community holds a CRT contract, your team may contact our CRT team and schedule an appointment for your resident to be drawn by the CRT Phlebotomist.

Procedure for Residents Under observation

- **Non-Symptomatic (Social Distancing)**
 - Resident is under observation upon admission per facility protocol and **not** showing any respiratory symptoms ****Droplet precaution PPE must be provided by the facility if required****
 - HHL Staff may perform phlebotomy and collect specimens
- **Non-Symptomatic (Quarantine)**
 - Resident is under observation due to close contact exposure of a confirmed COVID19 positive and **not** showing any respiratory symptoms ****Droplet precaution PPE must be provided by the facility if required****
 - HHL Staff may perform phlebotomy and collect specimens
- **Symptomatic (Isolation)**
 - If the resident is under observation upon admission per facility protocol and **IS showing Clinical Symptoms**
 - The resident will be considered a PUI
 - **Dedicated facility staff will be required to perform phlebotomy and collect non-blood specimens**
 - HHL Staff **MUST NOT** perform phlebotomy or collect non-blood specimens

Procedure for Facilities Restricting Access to the Facility

- If a facility is **NOT** allowing HHL staff into the facility, per facility protocol
 - The HHL Phlebotomist will drop off the following on scheduled day
 - Draw list
 - Supplies to draw the residents on the draw list
 - Facility staff will draw the residents on the draw list ensuring the samples are spun in the appropriate timeline
 - Document the following on the draw list
 - Time of draw
 - Where the resident was drawn
 - What tubes were drawn
 - Name of person performing venipuncture or specimen collection
 - If a blood sample was unable to be obtained
 - Place the draw list, blood specimens, non-blood specimens in a cooler
 - Have blood drawn by 8:00am
 - Unless another time has been agreed upon by the facility and HHL staff
 - HHL Staff will pick up the specimens and the draw list at the facility at 8:00 a.m.
 - If facility staff is unable to obtain the specimens by 8:10 a.m. a member of the facility staff will deliver the specimens to HHL as soon as possible.
 - Serum tubes must be centrifuged within 1 hour of draw
 - Failure to centrifuge within 1 hour may jeopardize the integrity of the specimen

Some helpful links are listed below.

42 CFR Subpart B – Requirements for Long Term Care Facilities

https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title42/42cfr483_main_02.tpl

CMS Guidance for Infection Control and Prevention of Coronavirus Disease 2019

<https://www.cms.gov/medicareprovider-enrollment-and-certificationsurveycertificationgeninfopolicy-and/gso-20-14-nh.pdf>

Evaluating and Testing Persons for Coronavirus Disease (2019) COVID19

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/clinical-criteria.html>