



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Public Health

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Laboratory of Public Health

Memo

To: Submitters of Clinical Specimens to the North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health
From: Scott M. Shone, PhD, HCLD (ABB) – Laboratory Director
Date: July 22, 2024
Re: Revised Specimen Requirements for Blood Lead Testing

The North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health (NCSLPH) is implementing changes to the clinical specimen submission, packaging, and shipping procedures and policies for blood lead testing.

Effective August 5, 2024, the acceptance criteria for blood lead clinical specimens will change to require capillary specimens be received at the NCSLPH within seven (7) days from the date of collection and venous specimens be received at the NCSLPH within fourteen (14) days from the date of collection. Providers should not batch specimens over multiple days for shipment. Specimens must arrive at NCSLPH ambient (15 to 38 °C), cold (2 to 8 °C), or frozen (-15 to -25 °C). All clinical specimens submitted to NCSLPH must be labeled with two patient identifiers that match information submitted on a completed [Blood Lead Analysis Request, DHHS form 3707](#).

Specimens received after August 5, 2024, outside of the required temperature range and/or are received greater than the required timeframe post-collection will be rejected for blood lead testing. Appendix A in [NCSLPH SCOPE: A Guide to Laboratory Services](#) will be updated to reflect these changes.

The NCSLPH recognizes that these changes will impact current processes and procedures. As a result, the NCSLPH will be implementing pre-paid shipping boxes for providers submitting blood lead specimens who do not use the NC DOA Medical Courier. These pre-paid shipping boxes may be ordered from the NCSLPH website: <https://slphreporting.dph.ncdhhs.gov/labportal/>. Local Health Departments should continue to use the current blood lead boxes for transport of blood lead specimens through the medical courier in accordance with current policies and procedures.

These changes to the Blood Lead clinical specimen acceptance criteria reflect a quality improvement initiative to help assure accurate and reliable test results. If you have any questions, please contact the NCSLPH Customer Service team at 919-733-3937 or check the [NCSLPH Hemachemistry website](#) for additional guidance.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH • STATE LABORATORY OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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