

## NCSLPH New Specimen Transport Process FAQs December 2022

1.0 General Information		
#	Question	Answer
1.1	Where can I find more information about the new specimen transport process?	A 1-pager with pertinent information on new submission processes was included with the shipping supplies that were received by Local Health Departments 12/01/22-12/02/22, and is available on our homepage: <a href="https://slph.dph.ncdhhs.gov/doc/RevisedSpecimenSamplePackagingGuide-22.pdf">https://slph.dph.ncdhhs.gov/doc/RevisedSpecimenSamplePackagingGuide-22.pdf</a>
1.2	Where can I find the webinar slide show?	The slides shared on the new specimen submission process are available at: <a href="https://slph.dph.ncdhhs.gov/doc/NCSLPH-Medical-Courier-Tutorial.pdf">https://slph.dph.ncdhhs.gov/doc/NCSLPH-Medical-Courier-Tutorial.pdf</a>
1.3	When does the new specimen transportation process go live?	The go live date for new specimen transportation process is 12/05/22.
1.4	Who should I contact regarding Medical Courier pickup?	Please communicate all medical courier logistics related questions to Tresa Agee at 636-561-2581. Questions regarding packaging, testing, or processing should be communicated to NCSLPH customer service at 919-733-3937, or Regional Consultants: Tracey Shives (336-3064302), April Ponder (828-289-8519), Karen Wall (910-322-8120, or Linda Cleve (252-414-3078)
1.5	What are the scheduled pick up times for local health departments?	The medical courier will give you the scheduled time when they visit on Dec 1 or 2, 2022 in person. Your final pick up time may change during the launch period, but you will be notified of the final established pickup time for your facility by December 16, 2022.
1.6	Will this courier impact our monthly expense for courier cost?	STAT courier service is free of charge for LHD. The LHD will not be charged for the medical courier service.
1.7	Will we get results or reports from the new courier?	No, the medical courier will only transport specimens/samples to NCSLPH for testing. They only ship one direction to SLPH. Continue to use MSC for state mail, reports, supplies, etc. Results are also available through CELR.
2.0 Old Submission Process		
#	Question	Answer
2.1	What do we do with leftover boxes?	Keep boxes onsite in case you need to package frozen samples. If you have a large amount of boxes, ship back to SLPH via MSC courier at the address below:  <div style="text-align: center;">                     North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health                      1918 Mail Service Center                      Raleigh, NC 27699-1918                 </div>
3.0 Weekend and Holiday Schedules		
#	Question	Answer

3.1	Can specimens collected Friday afternoon be frozen and sent Monday?	Please reference the <a href="#">NCSLPH Specimen Storage and Shipping Guidelines</a> or <a href="#">SCOPE</a> document to ensure that the specimen type(s) collected can be received frozen. If the specimen can be frozen, please send an email to <a href="mailto:dispatch@stat-courier.com">dispatch@stat-courier.com</a> and <a href="mailto:SLPH.courier@dhhs.nc.gov">SLPH.courier@dhhs.nc.gov</a> with the following information: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Account #: 1124 (NCSLPH)</li> <li>2. Name of the local health department</li> <li>3. Number of frozen specimens that will need to be picked up</li> </ol> Place the specimens with requisitions together into a courier bag labeled “Keep Frozen” and place in the freezer until the courier arrives on Monday. Confirm that the courier has a dry ice cooler and can transport frozen specimens before handing off the frozen specimens. If the courier, for some reason does not have a dry ice cooler in their vehicle, leave the specimens in the freezer until the courier can arrange for dry ice frozen transport of specimens.
3.2	Can we use Saturday pickup for specimens?	No. UPS will not be providing Saturday pickup services.
3.3	How will specimen shipping work around holidays?	Stat courier will pick up from all sites according to the State/county holiday schedule. A memo will be sent prior to each holiday to detail operating schedule. If specimens need to be frozen over the holidays, please refer to step 3.1 for instructions.
<b>4.0 Packing and Shipping</b>		
<b>#</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
4.1	When will we receive the courier bags?	An initial supply of bags was delivered to Local Health Departments on 12/01/22-12/05/22. Future supplies can be ordered through the Supply Ordering Portal: <a href="https://slphreporting.dph.ncdhhs.gov/labportal/">https://slphreporting.dph.ncdhhs.gov/labportal/</a>
4.2	How many courier bags and labels will we receive initially?	You will initially receive 20 courier bags with associated labels.
4.3	What do we do if we run out of State-supplied courier/labels bags?	Supplies can be ordered through the Supply Ordering Portal. Should you run out, the medical courier will have a limited supply as back up.
4.4	Is there a maximum number of specimens that can be placed in a courier bag?	The number of specimens placed in the courier bag should be limited to an amount that will allow the bag to securely close.
4.5	Do we need to put only one specimen and requisition form in one bag?	Specimen bags should contain one specimen to be tested for one test. However, for CT/GC testing, the SLPH will accept multiple specimens from the same patient that are collected from different anatomical sites in one specimen bag.
4.6	Do submitting organizations need to purchase their own dry ice or will the State supply this if needed?	The SLPH will not be providing dry ice for the shipment of specimens.

4.7	Should we ship specimens the same day as collected or next day?	<p>Specimens should be shipped as soon as possible after collection. If specimens are collected prior to STAT courier arrival, specimens should be prepared for pick up by the courier on the same day. For specimens collected on Fridays after the courier has picked up specimens, or for storage over a holiday, depending on the testing to be performed on the specimens, the specimen should be stored (room temperature (15-25°C), cold (2-8°C) or frozen (<math>\leq 20^{\circ}\text{C}</math>) according to <a href="#">NCSLPH Clinical Specimen Storage and Shipping Guidelines</a> until the next courier pickup. If specimens must be frozen until the next STAT courier pick up, please notify STAT Dispatch at <a href="mailto:dispatch@stat-courier.com">dispatch@stat-courier.com</a>, with the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Account #: 1124 (NCSLPH)</a></li> <li>2. <a href="#">The county health department location</a></li> <li>3. <a href="#">The number of froze specimens that will need to be picked up</a></li> </ol> <p>The courier will arrange to have a dry ice container in their vehicle to keep specimens frozen for transport back to NCSLPH. Please make sure to write “Keep Frozen” or a “Keep Frozen” label on the specimen bag for clear instruction to keep the specimens frozen during transport and storage at NCSLPH.</p>
4.8	Will we no longer place specimens into the SLPH mailbox?	Correct. Only rabies will go to the MSC state courier drop box. All others will be hand delivered to the medical courier.
4.9	Will MSC mailbox continue to be used?	Yes, MSC is still picking up and dropping off mail, reports, supplies, etc. to LHDs. The only difference is that all specimens/samples for testing at NCSLPH will now be transported from LHD to NCSLPH by the medical courier. If clinical specimens inadvertently get sent to NCSLPH via MSC, if packaged improperly or there is a delay getting to the State Lab, specimens may be rejected because they do not meet temperature and/or time requirements for testing. We are using a medical courier to reduce the number of rejected specimens.

5.0 Specific Tests		
#	Question	Answer
5.1	What do we do with hemoglobin electrophoresis and blood spot tests?	<p><b>Dried blood spot specimens collected on the Newborn Screening (NBS) filter paper card</b> should be collected and dried per instructions on the NCSLPH website and in the <a href="#">SCOPE</a> document. Specimens should be shipped within 24 hours of collection. UPS Overnight Air Delivery is the preferred method of shipping. NCSLPH provides all NBS submitters the opportunity to enroll in the UPS CampusShip program. For more information regarding enrollment please contact <a href="mailto:Jennifer.tawes@dhhs.nc.gov">Jennifer.tawes@dhhs.nc.gov</a> or call 919-807-8938.</p> <p><b>Dried blood spot specimens collected on the Hemoglobin Screening filter paper card</b> should be dried per instructions on the NCSLPH website and in the <a href="#">SCOPE</a> document and the specimens should be submitted to the NCSLPH using STAT medical courier.</p> <p>Dried blood spot specimens will be rejected if received &gt; 14 days post collection.</p>
5.2	How should we ship blood lead specimens?	Blood lead specimens submitted through the local health departments can now be sent via STAT courier. Specimen bags can be placed in Room Temperature courier bags (they do not need to be boxed). Other facilities submitting blood lead specimens should continue to box their specimens and ship them via the State DOA Courier at ambient temperature for receipt at the SLPH within 28 days of collection.
5.3	Are there any changes to submitting environmental health animal specimens for rabies testing?	Shipping rabies specimens remains the same. Continue to use the same packaging and send them to NCSLPH through MSC state drop box, UPS, or Animal Control. Do not send Rabies specimens via the STAT courier.
5.4	Will TB still go into cans?	Yes, TB will go into the same individual packaging. Cans themselves will be placed into the large courier bags at appropriate temperature (refer to SCOPE for specifics on temperature).
5.5	Are herpes cultures still shipped in boxes?	Herpes cultures can be sent in the courier bags and do not need to be boxed. Please refer to the revised packaging guidelines one pager on our website for specifics.
5.6	How do viral cultures and GC plates get sent to SLPH?	These samples will be shipped individually packaged in a CLEAR bag, following the revised one pager guidelines posted on our website ( <a href="#">Revised Specimen/Sample Packaging Guide</a> ). Maintain cultures and plates at appropriate temperature and ship in the large courier bags provided. These samples do not need to be individually boxed.
5.7	Do water samples from environmental health (like well water) need to be packed in boxes?	Continue to ship environmental water samples through the MSC state courier drop box with the same packaging, OR STAT courier will pick up environmental samples if they are at the local health department when the STAT courier arrives. STAT courier will only pick up from local health departments.



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

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