



MEMORANDUM

Date: October 30, 2024
 To: Medical Labs and Infection Preventionists
 From: Maggie Park, MD, Public Health Officer *mp*

SUBJECT: SARS-CoV-2 Whole Genome Sequencing Surveillance 2024-2025

Dear Health Partners,

The California Department of Health (CDPH) is encouraging health care providers to collect and submit specimens for the whole genome sequencing from individuals with SARS-CoV-2 virus infection per Title 17 Section 2505 Subsection (p). San Joaquin Public Health Services is collaborating with the State’s COVID-19 Net Program and is involved in the whole genome sequencing (WGS) surveillance of SARS-CoV-2 positive specimens **at no cost** to the submitter.

Why sequencing information is important:

- Knowing the prevalence of circulating variants of interest or consequence can help Public Health and healthcare providers better understand the epidemiology of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in our area
- Linking sequence information with routinely collected surveillance information can help Public Health detect new potential variants
- Sequence information from outbreaks can help Public Health understand the chain of transmission and trace potential exposures
- Sequence data can drive Public Health policy and programs to prevent additional cases

We are requesting that you **submit two (2) original SARS-CoV-2 positive specimens every week**. Please coordinate delivery for arrival at the San Joaquin Public Health Laboratory **by Wednesday or Thursday**.

Randomly select from COVID-19 positives, or use one of these criteria for specimen submission:

- Recent international travel, or exposure to people with recent international travel
- Possible re-infection i.e., recurrence of symptoms with positive molecular testing at least 90 days after initial infection
- Infection >14 days after completing a vaccination series



Specimen quality is essential for good sequencing results. Please use the below listed criteria listed for all WGS submissions:

- Sample must be positive for SARS-CoV-2
- Specimens must have a Ct value ≤ 30 or and RLU value of ≥ 1100
- Ct values or RLU values should be indicated on the submittal form when available

Link for the San Joaquin County Public Health Laboratory:

https://www.sicphs.org/disease/public_health_laboratory.aspx

For information or questions regarding WGS testing or specimen transport, please call the San Joaquin County Public Health Laboratory at (209) 468-3460.