San Joaquin County Public Health Services
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A DIVISION OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 8, 2025

To: Medical Providers and Clinical Laboratories

From: Maggie Park, MD, Public Health Officer

SUBJECT: **Influenza Testing for 2025-2026 Season**

The 2025-2026 influenza season has started. See these guidelines for diagnostic testing and influenza reporting: www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/pages/immunization/influenza.aspx

The San Joaquin County Public Health Laboratory (SJCPHL) is a member of the California Sentinel Provider Influenza Surveillance Program.

- SJCPHL is requesting you save the influenza positive samples **already tested negative for SARS-COV-2** for confirmation and further Influenza subtyping by SJCPHL. **Submission of at least two Flu positive samples per week** for seasonal flu surveillance is recommended.
- The submission of respiratory specimens to SJCPHL can be randomly selected from **influenza positive fatal cases**, **hospitalized/intensive care cases** or **cases from acute respiratory outbreak situations** or influenza like illnesses (ILI) in any person where history of travel or recent close contacts or exposures within 10 days of symptom onset suggest concern for variant or novel influenza infection.
- SJCPHL provides flu typing and surveillance service **at no cost to the submitters**.

SJCPHL also offers the following laboratory diagnostic tests on a fee-for service basis:

Test	Specimen	Fees
Influenza Diagnostic RT-PCR	**NP Swab**	**$75.00**
CDC FLU-SARS COV2 RT-PCR (3 targets SARS-COV-2, Influenza A, Influenza B)	**NP Swab, OP Swab, Nasal Swab, Anterior Nares Swab, Mid turbinate Swab**	**$105.00**
BioFire Respiratory Viral Panel (RVP) PCR (22 targets) Adenovirus; Coronavirus 229E; Coronavirus HKU1; Coronavirus NL63; Coronavirus OC43; Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) ; Human Metapneumovirus Human Rhinovirus/Enterovirus; Influenza A virus; Influenza A virus A/H1 ; Influenza A virus A/H3; Influenza A virus A/H1-2009; Influenza B virus; ; Parainfluenza virus 1; Parainfluenza virus 2; Parainfluenza virus 3; Parainfluenza virus 4; Respiratory syncytial virus; Bordetella parapertussis; Bordetella pertussis; Chlamydia pneumoniae; Mycoplasma pneumoniae	**NP Swab**	**$191.00**

Table 1

SPECIMENS FOR SUSPECTED INFLUENZA VIRUS/ SURVEILLANCE TESTING

1. **Collection timing:**
   - Specimens must be collected within the first 24-72 hours of onset of symptoms and no later than 5 days after onset of symptoms. For patients suspected of having avian or novel influenza, specimens may be collected no later than 10 days after symptom onset.

2. **Specimens to be collected:**
   - Nasopharyngeal swab, nasal aspirate, or a combined nasopharyngeal swab with oropharyngeal swab.
   - If these specimens cannot be collected, a nasal swab or oropharyngeal swab is acceptable.
   - For patients who are intubated, an endotracheal aspirate or bronchoalveolar lavage may also be collected.

3. **Swab specimens:**
   - Swab specimens should be collected using swabs with a synthetic tip (e.g., polyester or Dacron®) and an aluminum or plastic shaft. Swabs with cotton tips and wooden shafts are NOT recommended; **swabs made of calcium alginate are NOT acceptable**.

4. **Media/Storage Temperature:**
   - Put the appropriate swab specimen in a standard container with 2-3 ml of viral transport media (**VTM**). Immediately place the specimen on ice or cold packs (**2-8°C** /refrigerated condition) for transport to the laboratory within 3 days of testing. Please freeze the specimens for storage periods beyond 3 days.

5. **Labeling:**
   - Label viral transport media tube with **patient's name, source of specimen, and date specimen was collected.** Please make sure the **caps are tight** before transport.

6. **Forms:**
   - Complete the San Joaquin County specimen submittal form. The information you provide about the specimen/patient is the data that will be entered into the final laboratory testing result in a national surveillance database.

     https://cms.sjcphs.org/programs-and-services/public-health-laboratory

Please contact SJCPHL at 209-468-3460 for questions, information, and instructions regarding submission of respiratory specimens for surveillance testing, collection protocol, and kits.