



MLS: Laboratory Update

Minnesota State Government Shutdown – Public Health Laboratory Services June 30, 2011

Purpose of this Message:

As a valued partner of the Minnesota Department of Health, Public Health Laboratory (MDH-PHL), we are providing an update to you regarding our plan for laboratory services during the state government shutdown. Please note that there is newborn screening specific information in this message – please forward to your Laboratory and Nursery Manager.

Current Status

As you are probably aware, no agreement has been reached on the state’s biennial budget. Therefore, MDH-PHL is implementing its shutdown plan.

The court has ruled on the list of critical services that would be allowed to continue in a limited fashion during the time the state government is in shutdown status. Laboratory testing that falls under the critical services of “core public health laboratory capacity” and “respond to public health emergencies” will continue.

MDH-PHL is making every attempt to minimize any disruption to our partners, however, due to significantly reduced laboratory staffing, delays in testing and reporting are possible.

Hours of Operation

Hours of operation will not change. Courier deliveries will be accepted as usual.

Diagnostic Testing Services

Diagnostic services are a priority, therefore testing for diagnostic purposes will continue (i.e. *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, newborn screening, rabies, syphilis, etc.) however delays in reporting are possible. Significant findings will be reported immediately by telephone. Mailed reports may be delayed.

Surveillance Services

Please continue to submit isolates and clinical material according to the MN Disease Reporting rule <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/reportable/index.html>
Most surveillance isolates will be preserved and tested after the shutdown ends.

Newborn Screening Services

Please continue all newborn screening practices, including newborn hearing screening, as usual. Although we anticipate the reporting of abnormal results without delay, normal testing results may not be reported as timely. If you do not need to order newborn screening cards during the shutdown, please wait until full services are resumed. We will accommodate facilities that urgently need cards.

Who to Contact with Questions

If you need to contact MDH-PHL, please continue to use the phone numbers that you would normally use, however because of limited staffing, if you are unsuccessful in obtaining assistance in a reasonable timeframe, please call:

Clinical Laboratory: Billie Anne Juni, Manager of the Clinical Laboratory at 651-201-5035

Newborn Screening: 651-201-5466 or 800-664-7772 or health.newbornscreening@state.mn.us

Where to Find Updated Information About the Shutdown

The MDH external website www.health.state.mn.us will continue to be available as a resource, but will not be updated during the shutdown. For updated information about the status of the shutdown, please go to: <http://www.bereadymn.com/>

When the shutdown is over, MDH-PHL will send an MLS message to notify your laboratory when all services have been restored. MLS messages sent during the shutdown will only be delivered via email, the messages will not be faxed.

Thank You

Thank you for your understanding during this challenging time.

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This is an update from the Minnesota Department of Health – Public Health Laboratory (MDH-PHL) and the Minnesota Laboratory System (MLS). This message is being sent to MLS laboratory contacts serving Minnesota residents. You are not required to reply to this message.

****Please forward this to all appropriate personnel within your institution and Health System****

The content of this message is intended for public health and health care personnel and response partners who have a need to know the information to perform their duties. It is for official use only. Do not distribute beyond the intended recipient groups as described in this message.