



Notice of Change: Idaho Bureau of Laboratories (IBL) Testing for Long-Term Care Facilities

On May 26, 2020, the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's Division of Public Health released a testing update announcing IBL's capacity to accept an increased volume of specimens from long-term care facilities. In the testing update, it was stated that IBL can accept specimens for:

- Symptomatic residents or staff members in a long-term care facility;
- New resident admissions to long-term care facilities; and
- All staff members, regardless of symptoms, in long-term care facilities with one or more newly confirmed cases of COVID-19; asymptomatic residents may be tested also if IBL capacity allows.

IBL is now providing additional information regarding its capacity to support testing in long-term care facilities. IBL can continue to accept specimens as detailed in the May 26th testing update. However, IBL cannot support all long-term care facility testing needs. Specifically, IBL *can no longer* accept specimens for:

- Repeat testing (after the initial round of testing) of asymptomatic staff and residents in facilities with one or more newly confirmed cases of COVID-19, or
- Surveillance testing of asymptomatic staff and residents in facilities with no known cases of COVID-19.

Starting July 1, 2020, long-term care facilities **must contact their local public health district before sending any specimens to IBL.**

- The public health district will determine IBL's capacity to accept the specimens and, if sufficient capacity exists, approve the submission.
- The public health districts may be able to suggest other laboratories that can process the specimens if IBL is unable to accommodate the volume of tests requested.
- However, facilities should have their own back-up plan for testing if IBL does not have capacity to accept the specimens.