
NEW MEXICO HEALTH ALERT NETWORK (HAN)

ADVISORY

Updated testing criteria for COVID-19

March 13, 2020

Key Points

- **COVID-19 testing no longer needs to be approved by the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH).** COVID-19 testing is now available at TriCore, LabCorp, Quest Diagnostics, and the NMDOH Scientific Laboratory Division (SLD).
- **Please continue to notify NMDOH if you are seeing a high-risk patient at 505-827-0006.** High-risk patients are those with travel in the prior 14 days to a location with a CDC level 3 travel health notice due to high levels of community spread (currently Europe, China, South Korea, and Iran) or contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case. Note: there are currently no domestic locations with CDC travel notices. We request early notification of high-risk patients so that we can expedite testing if needed and assist with home monitoring.
- Only 1 specimen, a nasopharyngeal swab, is now needed for COVID-19 testing.

We do not recommend testing persons without symptoms of a respiratory infection. Testing capacity and testing supplies could be limited and we need to prioritize testing for persons with symptoms. Test results may not be accurate for persons without symptoms and do not reflect the risk of becoming infected in the future. **If you are requesting COVID-19 testing by the Scientific Laboratory Division (SLD), NMDOH you will need to complete the submission form and complete the information on patient symptoms. You can find a pre-filled SLD specimen submission form [here](#).** Providers will be called with SLD results when they are completed. Depending on the transportation time, it could be 24-48 hours. Please do not call NMDOH for results. We will prioritize calling positive results first.

It is good general practice for all healthcare workers to monitor yourself for symptoms of respiratory infection if you have direct patient contact. If you are a healthcare worker with symptoms of fever, cough and/or shortness of breath, please isolate yourself, notify your employer, and contact your own healthcare provider regarding testing and follow up care.

Because this is a rapidly changing situation, we recommend that you regularly check the CDC websites on [COVID-19](#) and [Traveler Information](#) for the latest information. We ask that you forward this alert to your colleagues and advise them to subscribe to the New Mexico Health Alert Network to receive public health alerts on COVID-19 detection and infection prevention.

For more information, consult the [CDC guidance for high risk individuals](#) and [CDC guidance for long term care facilities](#)

EPIDEMIOLOGY AND RESPONSE

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Resources

- [New Mexico Department of Health COVID-19 Webpage](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 Webpage](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Healthcare Professionals](#)
- **New Mexico Health Alert Network:** To register for the New Mexico Health Alert Network, go to <https://member.everbridge.net/index/453003085613008#/login> and click “Sign Up” at the bottom of the page. Provide all information on each screen, click on “Save and Continue,” and click on “Finish” at the end to begin receiving important health alerts and advisories.