



STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wadsworth Center The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza P.O. Box 509 Albany, New York 12201-0509

Richard F. Daines, M.D.
Commissioner

James W. Clyne, Jr.
Executive Deputy Commissioner

PROCEDURES FOR SUBMISSION OF SPECIMENS TO THE WADSWORTH CENTER FOR DEFENDANT HIV TESTING

In accordance with the Defendant Testing Guidance Document, specimens from defendants may be submitted to the Wadsworth Center for HIV RNA and antibody testing. Specimen stability, particularly for RNA testing, is affected by elevated temperatures. Carefully follow all instructions provided below to ensure specimen integrity. Please call the Bloodborne Viruses Laboratory at (518) 474-2163 for further information.

1. **Specimen mailing kit:** The Wadsworth Center Bloodborne Viruses Laboratory will provide the appropriate specimen mailing kits, including blood collection tubes. Call the laboratory at (518) 474-2163 to request an HIV specimen mailing kit. Specify that the kit is needed for a defendant testing specimen.
2. **Requisition form:** Complete the HIV Requisition Form supplied with the specimen kit. **“Defendant testing specimen”** should appear in the comments section. Write **the number of days/weeks/months since the exposure** in the additional comments section of the form. Be sure to include the patient’s name, the submitting physician’s name, license number, address and phone number, the date and time of blood collection on the requisition form.
3. **Blood collection:** Specimen quality is of utmost importance, if RNA testing will be requested. Specimen stability is affected by elevated temperatures, and during the warmer months, specimen integrity could be compromised by elevated temperatures. Also, exposure to very cold temperatures during shipment could result in whole blood becoming frozen in the collection tube, making the specimen unusable for RNA testing. The Bloodborne Viruses Laboratory must receive the specimen within 48 hours of collection, and the temperature of the specimen must not exceed 25°C (approximately room temperature) during shipment. If the specimen cannot be shipped on the day of collection, the blood specimen should be refrigerated (not frozen) and the Bloodborne Viruses Laboratory must be contacted at (518) 474-2163 for additional instructions.
 - a. Collect blood in the sterile 10-ml plastic EDTA blood collection tube (lavender-top) provided in the specimen mailing kit. A full tube of blood is required, but if a full tube cannot be collected, you may collect two partial tubes. The specimen mailing kit contains 2 blood collection tubes.
 - b. In order to process the sample, **the patient’s complete name must be on the requisition form and the specimen tube.** Follow all directions supplied with the specimen mailing kit for packaging the blood tubes.

4. **Shipping:** Send the shipping container with the specimen by overnight express, priority mail, or hand delivery to:

Bloodborne Viruses Laboratory
Attn: Defendant Testing
New York State Department of Health, Wadsworth Center
David Axelrod Institute
120 New Scotland Avenue
Albany, NY 12208.

Notify the Laboratory by phone at (518) 474-2163 that a defendant testing specimen has been shipped and provide the courier tracking number. If no one is available to take the call, leave this information on the laboratory's voicemail and include the submitter's name and contact information in the message.

5. **Delivery:** If a specimen is delivered after normal working hours, the telephone located outside the front door of the David Axelrod Institute may be used to contact security personnel. A security officer will come to receive and refrigerate the package until the Bloodborne Viruses Laboratory personnel can retrieve the specimen.
6. **Reporting:** The Bloodborne Viruses Laboratory will report test results to the medical provider of record listed on the requisition form. Results will be sent by regular mail as soon as testing has been completed. Local submitters may opt to pick up the test report in person. Please call the laboratory at (518) 474-2163 for special instructions on picking up reports.