



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**This is an official
MS Health Alert Network (HAN) Alert**

MESSAGE ID: MSHAN-20201116-00474-ALT (Health Alert)

RECIPIENTS: All Physicians, Hospitals, ERs, ICPs, NPs, and
Healthcare Providers – Statewide

Monday, November 16, 2020

SUBJECT: SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Laboratory Results—
Updates to Required Reporting

Key Messages and Updates

- **All COVID-19 test results from any test methodology (PCR, antigen, antibody) are now reportable within 24 hours of test result.**
- **After December 1, 2020, MSDH will no longer accept faxed COVID-19 laboratory reports or direct submission of CSV files.**
- **After December 1, 2020, MSDH will only accept reports of COVID-19 results through electronic means or through direct entry into the MSDH reporting web portal (see options below and refer to Reporting COVID-19 Test Results to the Mississippi State Department of Health at <https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/static/resources/11590.pdf>).**
- **MSDH is also requiring certain data elements that must be reported with every COVID-19 laboratory report consistent with the CARES Act standards. See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/reporting-lab-data.html> for a full list of required data elements.**
- **MSDH will work with facilities on an as needed basis to assist with determining the most appropriate method for submitting reports. Contact the MSDH Office of Epidemiology at COVID19.LabTesting@msdh.ms.gov to determine if you're ready to migrate to one of the accepted reporting solutions.**
- **Telephone reporting of individual test results is not required; however, COVID-19 related deaths are still reportable by telephone to 601-576-7725.**

Dear Colleagues,

On March 7, 2020, by emergency order, SARS-CoV-2 infection (COVID-19) was added to the List of Reportable Diseases and Conditions in Mississippi as a Class 1A disease, requiring a report to the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) within 24 hours of test result.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has issued reporting requirements for laboratories to ensure reporting of all COVID-19 test results and to ensure complete demographic data reporting with COVID-19 test results. To find out more about who should report and what data elements should be reported, please see this link <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/reporting-lab-data.html>

570 East Woodrow Wilson • Post Office Box 1700 • Jackson, MS 39215-1700
601-576-8090 • 1-866-HLTHY4U • www.HealthyMS.com

Equal Opportunity in Employment/Services



On November 9, 2020, to align its reporting processes with the federal requirements and facilitate meeting state and federal requirements, MSDH updated the reporting requirements for COVID-19 to include all test results, to specify the data elements required with each report and to specify the acceptable reporting mechanisms that will satisfy successful reporting. See **Reporting COVID-19 Test Results to the Mississippi State Department of Health** at (https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/resources/11590.pdf). See updated reporting requirements below:

- **All SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) laboratory test results from any test methodology (PCR, antigen, antibody), including point of care rapid tests for the detection of SARS-CoV-2, are reportable within 24 hours of test result (telephone reporting of results is not required)**
- **After December 1, 2020, MSDH will no longer accept faxed COVID-19 laboratory results or direct submission of Comma Separated Value (CSV) files—COVID-19 results submitted in this manner will not meet reporting requirements after this date.**
- **After the December 1, 2020 deadline, the only acceptable means for reporting all COVID-19 laboratory results are as follows (see Table for a breakdown of acceptable reporting options by facility):**
 - **Electronic Laboratory Reporting (ELR)**-This option is best for reference laboratories and hospital laboratories for SARS-CoV-2 testing performed by these facilities.
 - **National Flat File (NFF) Conversion**-This option can be used for reference laboratories and hospitals when ELR is not an option and may be ideal with low testing volumes. It will require partnering with the facility's internal information technology program to convert the NFF to an HL7 message which can then be accepted by MSDH. Tools to assist with NFF conversion are available through the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) at https://preparedness.cste.org/?page_id=136
 - **APHL Informatics Messaging Service (AIMS) Platform**-This option allows a hospital or laboratory to submit COVID-19 results directly to the AIMS platform which in turn are submitted electronically to MSDH
 - **National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) Point-of-Care (POC) Test Reporting Tool**-The NHSN reporting tool has been developed specifically for reporting point of care rapid results from nursing homes and other eligible long-term care facilities.
 - **On-line Reporting Portal** -The online reporting portal is ideal for clinics and providers to submit manual entry of COVID-19 test results directly to the MSDH surveillance system. The current version requires clinics and providers to request secure access to utilize this option. Go here to request an account: https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/14,15382,194.html



- All required data elements must be reported with each laboratory report, as outlined in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (June 4, 2020 implementation guide) available at <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/covid-19-laboratory-data-reporting-guidance.pdf>). Reports are not considered complete unless all data elements are received. Incomplete reports lead to delays in public reporting, delays in timely investigation, and unnecessarily divert public health resources to determine missing information.

Table: Reporting Options by Facility Type

COVID-19 Lab Results Sender	ELR	MSDH Reporting Portal	NFF/HL7	AIMS	NHSN
Hospitals	X	X	X	X	
Reference Labs	X	X	X	X	
Clinics and Providers (POC)		X	X		
Other non-traditional facilities performing POC		X	X		
Nursing Homes (CMS-Certified required)					X
NHSN eligible, non-nursing home LTCF*		X			X
Other LTCF (non NHSN eligible)		X			

*Assisted living, ICF-IID

Please do not hesitate to reach out to the MSDH Office of Epidemiology with questions or need for assistance.

Regards,
Paul Byers, MD
State Epidemiologist



Alerting Message Specification Settings

Originating Agency: Mississippi State Department of Health
Alerting Program: MS Health Alert Network (MS HAN)
Message Identifier: MSHAN-20201116-00474-ALT
Program (HAN) Type: Health Alert
Status (Type): Actual ()
Message Type: Alert
Reference: MSHAN-00474
Severity: Unknown
Acknowledgement: No
Sensitive: Not Sensitive
Message Expiration: Undetermined
Urgency: Undetermined
Delivery Time: 600 minutes

Definition of Alerting Vocabulary and Message Specification Settings

Originating Agency: A unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.

Alerting Program: The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.

Message Identifier: A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation (MSHAN-yyymmdd-hhmm-TTT (**ALT=Health Alert**, **ADV=Health Advisory**, **UPD=Health Update**, **MSG/INFO=Message/Info Service**)).

Program (HAN) Type: Categories of Health Alert Messages.

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

Health Info Service: Provides Message / Notification of general public health information; unlikely to require immediate action.

Status (Type):

- Actual: Communication or alert refers to a live event
- Exercise: Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert
- Test: Communication or alert is related to a technical, system test and should be disregarded



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Message Type:

Alert: Indicates an original Alert
Update: Indicates prior alert has been Updated and/or superseded
Cancel: Indicates prior alert has been cancelled
Error: Indicates prior alert has been retracted

Reference: For a communication or alert with a Message Type of “Update” or “Cancel”, this attribute contains the unique Message Identifier of the original communication or alert being updated or cancelled. “n/a” = Not Applicable.

Severity:

Extreme: Extraordinary threat to life or property
Severe: Significant threat to life or property
Moderate: Possible threat to life or property
Minor: Minimal threat to life or property
Unknown: Unknown threat to life or property

Acknowledgement: Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the timeframe in which a response is required (Yes or No).

Sensitive:

Sensitive: Indicates the alert contains sensitive content
Not Sensitive: Indicates non-sensitive content

Message Expiration: Undetermined.

Urgency: Undetermined. Responsive action should be taken immediately.

Delivery Time: Indicates the timeframe for delivery of the alert (15, 60, 1440, 4320 minutes (.25, 1, 24, 72 hours)).