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

MESSAGE ID:	**MSHAN-2020310-00430-ALT (Health Alert)**
RECIPIENTS:	**All Physicians, Hospitals, ERs, ICPs, NPs, and Healthcare Providers - Statewide**
DATE:	**Tuesday, March 10, 2020**
SUBJECT:	**Updated COVID-19 Testing Priorities and Addition of SAR-CoV-2 to the Reportable Disease List, Mississippi March 10, 2020**

This guidance supersedes previous guidance and recommendations provided in the MSDH Health Alert dated February 29, 2020.

- SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, has now been added to the Mississippi List of Reportable Diseases and Conditions as a Class 1A disease requiring MSDH notification by phone within 24 hours of diagnosis.
- COVID-19 testing is available at the Mississippi Public Health Laboratory (MPHL). MSDH has the necessary testing capacity to support the state's COVID-19 response and MPHL is actively performing testing to identify cases in Mississippi.
- Expanded capacity for testing is also becoming available at several commercial laboratories through an FDA Emergency Use Authorization. This additional capacity allows Mississippi clinicians access to testing a wider group of symptomatic patients.
- All physicians, providers and healthcare facilities in Mississippi should *Identify* patients with signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19 and determine whether the patient should be tested; *Isolate* patients using appropriate infection control and *Call* MSDH if COVID-19 is suspected at 601-576-7725 (601-576-7400 after hours, holidays and weekends).
- Patients with COVID-19 have presented with fever and/or symptoms of acute respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing).

COVID-19 Testing Priorities at the Mississippi Public Health Laboratory* (prior approval required):

• Patients, including healthcare personnel, who within 14 days of symptom onset had close contact with a suspect or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient, or who have a history of travel from affected geographic areas (see https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html) within 14 days of their symptom onset.
• Hospitalized patients who have signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19 (and without alternative explanatory diagnosis (e.g., influenza)).
• Other symptomatic individuals at higher risk for poor outcomes, including those who are ≥ 65 years, immunocompromised or have chronic medical conditions (e.g., diabetes, heart disease, receiving immunosuppressive medications, chronic lung disease, chronic kidney disease).

*For patients who do not meet the above priorities, clinicians may also elect to submit samples to a commercial laboratory for SARS-CoV-2 testing. Submission of samples to commercial laboratories does not require prior approval from MSDH. If you have questions, please contact MSDH.

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

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MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Steps for Sample Submission to the Mississippi Public Health Laboratory

Physicians and providers should immediately implement recommended infection prevention and control practices when COVID-19 is suspected based on symptoms and the above priorities (Healthcare Infection Control Guidance).

1. Contact the MSDH Office of Epidemiology at 601-576-7725 (601-576-7400 after hours, holidays and weekends).
2. Complete SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Testing Requisition
3. Complete the COVID-19 Person Under Investigation and Case Report Form and fax to the Office of Epidemiology at 601-576-7497
4. Review the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Specimen Collection and Shipping Guidance. **NOTE: Both an NP specimen using a synthetic swab and a separate OP specimen using a synthetic swab must be collected. NP and OP swabs may be placed in separate vials of viral transport media or both can be placed in a single vial.**
5. Review the Guidelines for Shipping Clinical Specimens Classified as Biological Substance

Regards,

Paul Byers, MD
State Epidemiologist

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Alerting Message Specification Settings

Originating Agency:	Mississippi State Department of Health
Alerting Program:	MS Health Alert Network (MS HAN)
Message Identifier:	MSHAN-2020310-00430-ALT
Program (HAN) Type:	Health Alert
Status (Type):	Actual ()
Message Type:	Alert
Reference:	MSHAN-00430
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

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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)).

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