

## CRITICAL UPDATE: Clinical Specimen Transport/Receipt Temperature Monitoring

11/18/2024

Effective January 1, 2025, specimens submitted to the NDHHS, Laboratory Services that are received outside of the required transport temperature range will not be tested, and a rejection report will be issued. Refer to the [Test Menu](#) under Medical Testing on our website for specific test stability details.

Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) regulations under CFR §493.1232 and §493.1242 require laboratories to maintain and follow policies and procedures that ensure optimum integrity of patient specimens submitted for testing by strictly following specimen acceptability/rejection criteria. Ensuring that specimens are stored and shipped to the testing laboratory at the correct temperature for the requested test method is vitally important to maintain specimen integrity prior to testing. Therefore, Laboratory Services is implementing a specimen receipt temperature monitoring system.

**It is the submitter's responsibility to ensure that specimens are appropriately packaged to prevent leakage and to maintain the appropriate temperature during transit.** Each transport temperature category should be sent in separate transport containers.

- Room temperature/Ambient (15-25°C)
- Refrigerated (2-8°C)
- Frozen (-20°C or colder)

Refrigerated Specimen Transportation Tips for private couriers:

1. Freeze ice packs for no less than 12 hours in a -20°C freezer.
2. Select an appropriately sized transport container (Styrofoam cooler, box/cooler combination, etc.).
3. Put 3-4 fully, frozen ice packs in each transport container.
4. Take time to ensure your specimens are being packaged and transported under appropriate conditions to avoid being rejected. (Each patient specimen should be in a separate biohazard bag, then place the order request form in the side pocket of that bag)
5. Place a supply order online if you need extra transport supplies to help comply with this request. (coolers, cold packs)

For specimens shipped using commercial carriers (i.e. FedEx, UPS, etc.), refer to the IATA/DOT requirements for shipping Category B biological materials.

IATA: [DGR-66-EN-PI650](#)

DOT: [Transporting-Infectious-Substances-Safely-PHH50-0186-0622.pdf](#)

If you have any questions, please contact Heather Sease, Director of Laboratory Quality Management, at 701.328.6279 or 701.328.6272.