

See below Georgia DPH COVID -19 information;

COVID-19 telephone # for the public in addition to the referral line for physicians:

Public: (844) 442-2681

Physician Referral # (866) 782-4584

Physician contact instruction to GA DPH:

Clinicians who suspect COVID-19 infection in a patient may contact the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) at 1-866-PUB-HLTH (1-866-782-4584) to request testing at the Georgia Public Health Laboratory (GPHL). The testing request system is also available online at

<https://dph.georgia.gov/covid-19-online-testing-request>

The clinician will be asked to complete an online form containing demographic, exposure, and clinical information, and a medical epidemiologist will review the request within 24 hours. At this time, laboratory testing for COVID-19 performed at the GPHL MUST be approved and coordinated by DPH following

triage. If testing is approved, laboratory submission forms and instructions will be emailed. Only requests initiated by a provider can be considered. Patients should not be directed to contact the Georgia Department of Public Health about COVID-19 testing. Referral for testing should be sent in by the patient's physician.

Those that are hospitalized due to respiratory illness of unknown etiology, DIRECT contacts (a person that was within 6 feet of a confirmed case for greater than 10 minutes), and healthcare workers that were exposed will be prioritized to receive testing at GPHL at this time. These criteria may change as GPHL testing capacity increases.

We recommend performing a rapid influenza test and respiratory viral panel (if available) prior to requesting testing at GPHL.

For appropriate sample collection guidelines, please see:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/covid-19-online-testing-request>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/lab/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html>

Many facilities have the appropriate swabs,

viral transport media, and PPE needed to collect clinical specimens for COVID-19 testing. NP swabs are the only clinical specimens needed, according to recent CDC guidance. DPH does not send supplies for sample collection. The patient does not need to be referred to an ED.

Patients with mild illness who do not require medical care or who are not a DIRECT contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case (meaning the person has NOT been within 6 feet of a confirmed case for greater than 10 minutes, will not meet criteria to be tested at GPHL but can be tested at commercial labs—see below: These patients should self-isolate at home until symptoms resolve. If respiratory symptoms worsen, they may need to be re-evaluated. Guidance for safe home care can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-homecare.html>

If you want to test these patients for COVID-19, commercial laboratory testing is the best option. Commercial laboratories are expected to conduct a substantial number of COVID-19 tests going forward. Currently, the primary source of testing is LabCorp, but we expect other laboratories will be testing in the near future as well, including Quest and ARUP. Neither LabCorp nor Quest will collect specimens at their facilities. Providers should contact LabCorp or Quest

regarding supplies needed for testing. CDC has updated the risk assessment and recommendations for HCP exposed to a COVID-19 patient to allow for additional flexibility as described below:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html>

Facilities could consider allowing asymptomatic HCP who have had an exposure to a COVID-19 patient to continue to work after options to improve staffing have been exhausted and in consultation with their occupational health program. These HCP should still report temperature and absence of symptoms each day prior to starting work. Facilities could have exposed HCP wear a facemask while at work for the 14 days after the exposure event if there is a sufficient supply of facemasks. If HCP develop even mild symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they must cease patient care activities, don a facemask (if not already wearing), and notify their supervisor or occupational health services prior to leaving work.

Georgia DPH is currently setting up testing sites in local health districts and the chapter understands communication will be sent to community physicians. DPH does not want the test site locations known to the public as they do not accept walk ins for testing and testing based

on referral for high risk only.

For more information:

Georgia DPH COVID-19 guidance and up-to-date information:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/novelcoronavirus>

<https://dph.georgia.gov/covid-19-online-testing-request>

<https://dph.georgia.gov/covid-19-daily-status-report>

Georgia Department of Public Health

Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp

**Attached is a letter from G.Waldon
Garriss MD, Governor Georgia Chapter**

Please take good care all and stay well.

Attachments:

NOTE: The links below will direct your browser to the location where the documents attached to this email have been posted.

[COVID-19 Letter](#)