



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Public Health

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Laboratory of Public Health

Memo

To: NC Local Health Directors, NC Local Health Department Laboratory Managers

From: Scott M. Shone, PhD, HCLD(ABB)

Date: December 8, 2025

Re: Distribution of Specimen Collection Kits for Novel Influenza A(H5N1)

On December 9, 2025, the North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health (NCSLPH) will begin distributing specimen collection kits for novel influenza A(H5N1) highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) testing to all NC Local Health Departments (LHD). Collection supplies are intended to help prepare all NC LHDs to respond to a potential HPAI event in their jurisdiction for the 2025-2026 influenza season. These kits will be delivered to LHD laboratories during business hours via the NC Department of Administration (DOA) Medical Courier. NCSLPH will contact counties that do not use the NC DOA Medical Courier to arrange alternative shipment for the supplies.

Each LHD will receive one collection kit box that contains:

- 10 Ultrafine flock swabs for nasopharyngeal (NP) and conjunctival specimen collections (Puritan #25-3317-U)
- 10 Elongated flock swabs for nasal and oropharyngeal (OP) specimen collections (Puritan #25-3606-U)
- 15 Tubes of Remel M4RT Viral Transport Media (Thermo #R12700)
- 1 Category B shipper with cold packs (Therapak #37813)

Materials will be sent in a Category B shipper. **Please save the shipper and cold packs for later use to send collected specimens back to NCSLPH for testing.** Provided materials may be stored at 2° to 30°C prior to specimen collection. For HPAI information on specimen collection, storage, and transport post-collection refer [here](#). Prior approval for testing is required from the Epidemiologist on Call. Clinicians should contact the Epidemiologist on Call at 919-733-3419 to discuss any patient(s) displaying clinically compatible symptoms with known HPAI exposure. Once approval for testing is granted, laboratories should contact the Bioterrorism and Emerging Pathogens (BTEP) Duty Phone at 919-807-8600 to coordinate logistics prior to specimen collection and submission to NCSLPH.

For any questions, please contact slph.flu@dhhs.nc.gov.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH • STATE LABORATORY OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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