Packaging and Shipping Biological Substance, Category B Specimens (i.e. COVID-19) (Pictorial Guidance Document)

Does Not Substitute for Training
This guidance is to be used as an aid in packaging and shipping a biological substance, category B specimen (e.g. a nasopharyngeal swab for COVID – 19 testing).

- The training required for packaging and shipping Category B specimens and/or dry ice (≤ 5.5 lbs) is:
  - **Must know and follow packaging instructions**
- The material in this pictorial shows an example of how to correctly package a shipper that is supplied by the WSLH. Other packaging material you purchase from a different manufacturer will have its own directions that must be known and followed, but should be similar.
Biological Substance, Category B UN3373

Note: This is the shipper the WSLH uses. Your facility may use a different brand of shipper. It should have similar contents.
Step 1

- After making sure the cap is screwed tightly on the tube, wrap the disinfected specimen in absorbent material that is capable of absorbing the entire contents of the specimen.
Step 2

- Place the specimen wrapped in absorbent in the secondary container. This is typically a plastic bag with a biohazard label. (OSHA requires the biohazard label on the interior of the package on the primary or secondary container.)

**DO NOT** place multiple specimens in a single bag, rather place each specimen in a separate bag.
Step 3

- Remove the paper strip and fold over the sticky top. Press down to seal the bag tightly. (The secondary container must be leak proof and sift proof, so make sure there are no holes, tears or punctures in the bag.)

If shipping liquid by air, the primary or secondary container must be marked with 95 kPA pressure differential.
Step 4

- Place the WSLH Requisition Form A in the outer pocket of the secondary container. *(For COVID-19 also include the prioritization form.)*

- **DO NOT** place papers on the inside of the bag with the specimen. If the specimen leaks the paper will be soiled.
Step 5

- Wrap secondary container in cushioning material such as bubble wrap to prevent breakage of the specimen. This is especially important if shipping multiple specimens in the same package.
Step 6

Place cold pack or dry ice in bottom of the box.

- Specimens collected, shipped, and received at the WSLH within 72 hrs. must be shipped on chilled cold packs to maintain refrigerated temperature.
- If time to receipt at the WSLH is going to be >72 hrs., specimens must be frozen & shipped on dry ice.

Specimens received at room temperature will be rejected.
Step 7

- Place cushioned specimens in the Styrofoam box on top of the cold packs or dry ice.
- Multiple specimens may be shipped in a box as long as they are in separate bags and cushioned well to prevent breakage.
- Place lid on Styrofoam box, but **DO NOT** tape the lid shut.
Step 8

- Close the box according to the manufacturers directions and use one piece of tape to seal the box shut.
- **DO NOT** tape all edges of box, especially if shipping on dry ice.

**WARNING:**
Placing tape on all the edges of a box containing dry ice doesn’t allow sublimation of the dry ice and creates a bomb.
Step 9

- Label the package with a **UN3373 Biological Substance, Category B label**
- In addition to labeling with the **shipper address** and the **consignee address**, you must include **emergency response information consisting of a responsible person’s name and phone number**. The responsible person must be available during normal business hrs. and be knowledgeable of the package content and how to safely handle a spill.
Step 10

- If shipping a frozen specimen on dry ice you must also place a dry ice label on the box.
- Write on the dry ice label the kgs. of dry ice in the package.
- DOT and IATA prefer all labels to be on the same surface of the package.
- Labels may not overlap each other or wrap around to another surface of the box.

Not pictured is the shipper’s and consignee’s address label including the emergency response information.
The transport of UN3373 Biological substance, Category B specimens by ground is regulated by the Department of Transportation (DOT).

Failure to follow DOT shipping regulations may result in substantial fines.

Proper packaging keeps the transporter, the consignee receiving the package and the community safe from exposure to infectious substances and hazardous materials.