

May 16, 2023

RE: SARS-CoV-2 test criteria changing at the WSLH

After more than three years, the world is now in a very different stage of the COVID-19 pandemic. The U.S. COVID-19 Public Health Emergency has ended,¹ and the World Health Organization has determined that COVID-19 no longer constitutes a public health emergency of international concern.² As COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths continue to decline, public health organizations are updating their approaches to the disease. In addition, SARS-CoV-2 testing is widely available at health care facilities and through at-home testing. Therefore, the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene (WSLH) is transitioning SARS-CoV-2 test criteria to be in line with testing for influenza and other respiratory viruses at the WSLH. **Beginning on June 12, 2023, WSLH will only test samples for SARS-CoV-2 that meet the following criteria:**

- Surveillance samples requested by the WSLH
 - WSLH currently requests that each clinical laboratory submit 5 positive SARS-CoV-2 samples per week
- Post-mortem cause of death investigations
- Public Health outbreak investigations as directed by state, local, and tribal public health departments. Pre-approval is required.
- Other testing as directed by public health departments

Samples that meet the above criteria will be tested using a multiplex assay that includes SARS-CoV-2, influenza A, and influenza B. Submitters will receive results for all three of these viruses.

Sincerely,



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1. <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2023/05/09/fact-sheet-end-of-the-covid-19-public-health-emergency.html>
2. [https://www.who.int/news/item/05-05-2023-statement-on-the-fifteenth-meeting-of-the-international-health-regulations-\(2005\)-emergency-committee-regarding-the-coronavirus-disease-\(covid-19\)-pandemic](https://www.who.int/news/item/05-05-2023-statement-on-the-fifteenth-meeting-of-the-international-health-regulations-(2005)-emergency-committee-regarding-the-coronavirus-disease-(covid-19)-pandemic)

