



Long Term Care Facility Guidance for COVID-19 Variant Testing

1. COVID-19 variant testing in Oklahoma is only performed at the OSDH Public Health Laboratory (PHL). The PHL variant test results include all of the COVID variants (not just Delta).
 - a. All positive results may be sent in for variant testing
 - i. When there are fully vaccinated positives identified, these individuals would be better candidates for variant testing
2. Approval for variant testing by an Acute Disease Service epidemiologist is no longer needed. If COVID-19 variant testing is desired, facilities can pursue one of the following options:
 - a. Specimens may be forwarded directly if a facility is utilizing a reference laboratory
 - b. Contact their county health department (CHD) for submitting specimens (drop-off) or to have staff receive a specimen collection for initial testing. **If working through the county health department, please call ahead so arrangements can be made for a scheduled time to visit.**
 - c. Alternately they can contact Vanessa Grimaldo in the PHL via email at Vanessa.Grimaldo@health.ok.gov to arrange for a lab courier including the following details:
 - Facility Name:
 - Contact Name:
 - Phone:
 - Email:
 - Address:
 - Desired Pick-Up date:
 - Description of item being picked up: ex. COVID PCR test specimen or COVID variant testing specimen
 - d. The PHL will confirm the positive test, then test to determine if it is due to an earlier (not current or new) COVID infection. If the PHL COVID-19 test result is either negative or indicates an earlier infection, the specimen will not be tested any further for variant testing.
 - e. Allow at least one week for variant testing results.
 - f. Variant results are for internal use by OSDH to learn more about the nature of the COVID-19 virus. Variant testing is not yet FDA approved, so the results can only be given verbally to the sender and/or to the person who was tested.
3. Isolation for 10 days after symptom onset and/or a positive COVID test is needed regardless of the variant result. Quarantine processes for close contacts still need to be followed.