1. Fully freeze the provided cold packs.  
   *The Remel media (pink liquid) can be kept at room temperature until specimens are collected.*

2. Wear appropriate PPE and collect a nasopharyngeal (NP) swab:  
   Insert swab into nostril parallel to palate until resistance is met.  
   Leave in place a few seconds then slowly remove swab while rotating.  
   Place swab tip into media vial, snap or cut off excess shaft, and secure cap.

3. Write or print the following information on the specimen label on the vial:  
   - **Patient First and Last Name**  
   - **Collection Date**  
   - **Date of Birth** (or another unique identifier)  
   - **Swab Type**

4. Seal the specimen and absorbent sheet(s) inside the provided specimen bag.

5. Fill out the COVID-19 Form completely and slide into sleeve on back of bag.  
   *Form and specimen label information must match.*

6. Refrigerate specimen at 2-8°C until shipping. Refrigerated specimens must be tested within 72 hours and shipped on cold packs.  
   *If longer storage is needed, freeze specimen at -70°C and ship instead on dry ice, following IATA PI 954. The small kit boxes are not suitable for dry ice.*

7. Place frozen cold packs and individually bagged specimen(s) in the insulated shipping container and seal with clear tape.

8. Place the provided UN3373 Category B label on the outer shipping container at a 45° angle, like this:

9. Return specimens by either:  
   1. Overnight by UPS. Print label the day of shipment using our Complete View Returns account.  
      *UPS does not deliver on Sundays.*  
   2. Hand deliver to our loading dock (right-side door) from 8am - 5pm Mon. - Fri., 8am - 12pm Sat.  
      *If delivering after hours, use the left-side door and ring bell for State Capitol Police to respond.*

   *The State Courier cannot ship COVID-19 specimens.*

   All individuals packaging and shipping Category B Biological Substances, such as COVID-19 specimens, must have documented training.

Email us at slph.covid19@dhhs.nc.gov or call us at 919-733-3937 if you have questions.