

NCSLPH New Specimen Submission Process FAQs

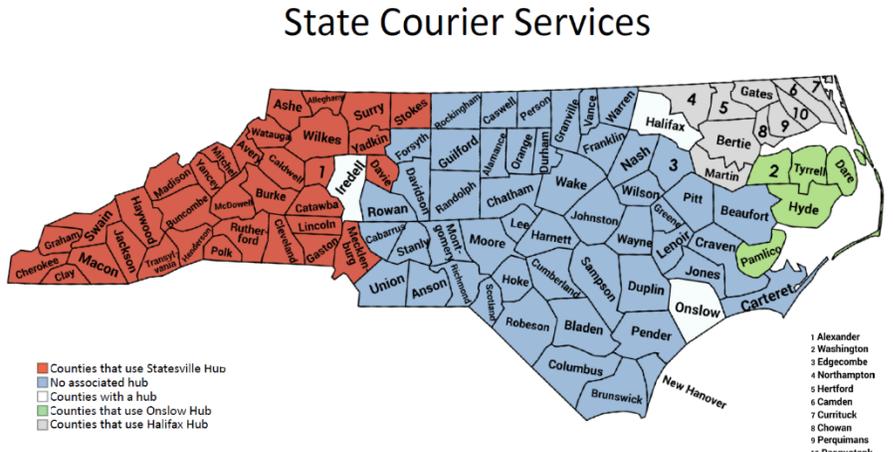
1.0 General Information		
#	Question	Answer
1.1	Where can I find more information about the new specimen submission process?	A 1-pager with pertinent information on new submission processes was included in the shipping supplies that were sent to Local Health Departments on 05/26/21, and is available on our homepage: https://slph.ncpublichealth.com/doc/NCSLPHShippingClinicalSpecimens.pdf
1.2	Where can I find the webinar slide show?	The slides shared on the new specimen submission process are available at: https://slph.ncpublichealth.com/doc/Clinical-Specimen-Shipping-Tutorial.pdf
1.3	Where can I find the new specimen submission forms?	The new specimen submission forms are available at this location: https://slph.ncpublichealth.com/forms.asp
1.4	When does the new specimen submission process go live?	The go live date for new specimen acceptance criteria is 06/07/21.
1.5	When can we start using the new specimen submission forms?	The new forms can be submitted starting 06/01/21. As a reminder, the new forms require specimen collection time. Please use the 24 hour format (military time) to enter collection time.
2.0 Old Submission Process		
#	Question	Answer
2.1	What do we do with leftover cans?	Leftover cans can be returned to the SLPH through the State DOA Courier. A barcode will not be needed on the box that contains unused cans. Address the box to: North Carolina SLPH MSC 1918 In addition, the box MUST be labeled with a return address or county name/location to obtain a Supply Order credit for color-coded specimen bags.
2.2	Will counties be reimbursed for cans returned?	LHDs will obtain a Supply Order credit for the cost of each can returned if the shipping box used has a return address label with an address or county name/location on the exterior of the package. The credit can be used to order color-coded specimen bags for future use.
2.3	Will specimens submitted using old specimen submission forms be rejected?	When old specimen submission forms are received, the Central Accessioning team at the SLPH will contact submitters to request that a new submission form to be completed and faxed to the SLPH ASAP. If the new form is not received within 3 days, the specimen will be rejected.
2.4	I have a large quantity of cans to send back to the State Lab, more than would fit in our courier box. How do I send all of these back?	The empty cans can be sent back to the SLPH in batches small enough to fit in your courier box when possible.
3.0 Weekend and Holiday Schedules		
#	Question	Answer
3.1	Can specimens collected Friday afternoon be frozen and sent Monday?	Please reference the SCOPE document to ensure that the specimen type(s) collected can be received frozen. If the specimen can be frozen, it should be frozen until packaged on dry ice and shipped Monday for overnight delivery via a private courier.

3.2	Can we use Saturday pickup for specimens?	No. UPS will not be providing Saturday pickup services.
3.3	Is it okay to use Saturday delivery for specimens?	Yes. Specimens collected on Friday can be picked up Friday night and delivered to the SLPH on Saturday morning. This will require a Saturday delivery label which will automatically be generated by the system if the delivery label is printed on a Friday.
3.4	How will specimen shipping work around holidays?	All counties will be required to comply with the State DOA Courier holiday service schedule or with the UPS holiday schedule, depending on the service assigned by location. On the map below, Counties shaded blue and white will use the State DOA Courier Services holiday schedule; whereas, Counties shaded orange, gray, or green will use UPS Services holiday schedule. <div style="text-align: center;"> <h3>State Courier Services</h3> <p>Legend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orange: Counties that use Statesville Hub Blue: No associated hub White: Counties with a hub Green: Counties that use Onslow Hub Gray: Counties that use Halifax Hub <p>Key:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Alexander 2 Washington 3 Edgecombe 4 Northampton 5 Hertford 6 Camden 7 Currituck 8 Chowan 9 Perquimans 10 Pasquotank </div>

4.0 Packing and Shipping

#	Question	Answer
4.1	When will we receive the colored bags?	An initial supply of bags was sent to Local Health Departments on 05/26/21. Future supplies can be ordered through the Supply Ordering Portal.
4.2	How many bags and which colors of bags will we receive initially?	You will initially receive 2 packs of 100 specimen bags colored red, green, and orange, 1 pack of 100 blue specimen bags, and 1 pack of 50 yellow specimen bags. An additional 100 blue and 150 yellow specimen bags will be sent out when these supplies are available.
4.3	What do we do if we run out of State-supplied colored bags?	You can use standard clear specimen bags to submit specimens and use a Sharpie marker to write the test requested on the outside of the specimen bag.
4.4	When will we receive the shipping coolers?	One case of four large coolers and 1 box of 2 small coolers were sent to Local Health Departments on 05/26/21.
4.5	How many coolers will we receive initially?	Initially Local Health Departments will receive six coolers (4 large and two small). These were sent out on 05/26/21.
4.6	Can we use our own coolers if we run out of the coolers the State provides?	Yes, you can use your own Styrofoam coolers. However, they must be shipped within an outer cardboard box, consistent with UN3373 Category B, Biological Substance shipping standards.
4.7	If we use our own coolers, do they need to be put in an outer cardboard box?	Styrofoam coolers must be shipped within an outer cardboard box, consistent with UN3373 Category B, Biological Substance shipping standards.

4.8	Do coolers need to be taped closed before sending?	Yes, the outer cardboard box of the shipping cooler must be taped closed with clear tape.
4.9	Do we need to order new coolers or will they automatically be sent back to us?	Coolers sent to the SLPH will be returned to the submitter via the State DOA Courier if a return address label is used on the outer package.
4.10	Will we automatically get shipping boxes and icepacks returned each time we send them to NCSLPH? If so, will they batch the supplies and send once or twice a week or each day we send a delivery?	The State DOA Courier will pick up used coolers with ice packs from the SLPH each day Monday – Friday for transport to the Local Health Departments if the cooler received has a return address label on the outer package.
4.11	How do we address the labels on the coolers?	Coolers being shipped to the NCSLPH through the State Courier should be labeled with your facility’s return address label, and the following label for transport to the State Lab: North Carolina SLPH MSC 1918 For those Counties approved to use UPS services, you will need to print and attach a UPS label for coolers being shipped to the SLPH using UPS.
4.12	Can we put multiple specimens in a cooler?	Yes, multiple specimens can be placed in one cooler. However cold and ambient specimens should not be shipped together in the same cooler.
4.13	After individual specimens have been placed in the color appropriate bag, can same color bags then be placed into a larger, clear bag for grouping purposes?	Yes, multiple bags of the same color can be grouped together in a larger bag.
4.14	Is there a maximum number of specimens that can be placed in a cooler?	The number of specimens placed in a cooler will vary based on the number of ice packs needed to keep the cooler cold and the number of specimens being sent in cans or color-coded specimen bags.
4.15	Do we need to put only one specimen and requisition form in one bag?	Specimen bags should contain one specimen to be tested for one test. However, for CT/GC testing, the SLPH will accept multiple specimens from the same patient that are collected from different anatomical sites in one specimen bag.
4.16	Do submitting organizations need to purchase their own dry ice or will the State supply this if needed?	The SLPH will not be providing dry ice for the shipment of specimens.
4.17	Should specimens be sent cold, but not frozen?	Please refer to the SCOPE document, where you can find specific information describing the specimen requirements and shipping temperatures for each test on the SLPH testing menu.
4.18	What are the dimensions of the shipping coolers being provided by the State?	The large cooler is 9.5” X 15.5” X 11.5”. The small cooler is 10” X 8” X 11.5”.

4.19	How do I know if I am supposed to use the state courier or UPS to ship specimens?	<p>If you reside in an orange, gray, or green County, you will use both the State DOA Courier and UPS for sample submissions. In these Counties, UPS overnight delivery services can be used to ship specimens for HIV/HCV, Hepatitis Serology, Rubella, Special Serology, Syphilis Serology, Chlamydia/Gonorrhea and will use the State DOA Courier for all other sample submissions.</p> <p>All blue and white Counties will solely use the State DOA Courier for all sample submissions.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">State Courier Services</p> <p>Legend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orange: Counties that use Statesville Hub Blue: No associated hub White: Counties with a hub Green: Counties that use Onslow Hub Gray: Counties that use Halifax Hub <p>Key:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Alexander 2 Washington 3 Edgecombe 4 Northampton 5 Hertford 6 Camden 7 Currituck 8 Chowan 9 Perquimans 10 Pasquotank
4.20	Will ice packs stay in the cooler or will the courier remove them prior to taking the cooler?	The State DOA Courier WILL NOT be opening the coolers or removing ice packs.
4.21	Should we ship specimens the same day as collected or next day?	Specimens should be shipped <u>within 24 hours</u> of collection. HIV / HCV specimens will need to be closely monitored to ensure that the specimen is received and tested within the appropriate time frame.
4.22	If I am a Local Health Department that is supposed to use UPS to ship specimens, how do I get my UPS account number and password?	For Local Health Departments that have been identified to use UPS services versus the State DOA Courier, information on UPS accounts and passwords, pick-up times, and instructions on shipping will be provided starting on 05/28/21.
4.23	If shipping specimens that are both cold and ambient, can the cooler box be placed inside of a larger box with those ambient specimens on the outside of the cooler box, so only one large box is shipped?	Yes. However, the shipping cost will be based on the weight of the container being shipped.
4.24	Why can't the state courier bring their own cooler to transport the specimens like other commercial labs do?	Currently the State DOA Courier is solely transporting a sealed cooler from the LHD to the SLPH. This process is in place to ensure specimen integrity while maintaining UN3373 Category B shipping standards. The SLPH will continue to explore opportunities to streamline specimen submission, packaging, and shipping.

5.0 Specific Tests		
#	Question	Answer
5.1	Can we send our COVID-19 specimens through the State Courier?	No. All LHDs must continue to ship COVID-19 specimens using UPS overnight services.
5.2	Can HIV, Syphilis and GC specimens all go in the same cooler when shipping?	Yes, each specimen must be placed in an appropriate color-coded specimen bag. Sealed specimen bags of all colors that require the same transportation temperature can be placed in the same cooler.
5.3	What do we do with hemoglobin electrophoresis and blood spot tests?	<p>Dried blood spot specimens collected on the Newborn Screening (NBS) filter paper card should be collected and dried per instructions on the NCSLPH website and in the SCOPE document. Specimens should be shipped within 24 hours of collection. UPS Overnight Air Delivery is the preferred method of shipping. The SLPH provides all NBS submitters the opportunity to enroll in the UPS CampusShip program. For more information regarding enrollment please contact Jennifer.tawes@dhhs.nc.gov or call 919-807-8938.</p> <p>Dried blood spot specimens collected on the Hemoglobin Screening filter paper card should be dried per instructions on the NCSLPH website and in the SCOPE document and the specimens should be submitted to the NCSLPH using the State DOA courier.</p> <p>Dried blood spot specimens will be rejected if received > 14 days post collection.</p>
5.4	How should we ship blood lead specimens?	All blood lead specimens should now be shipped in boxes rather than cans and all Counties should still ship them on the State DOA Courier at ambient temperature for receipt at the SLPH within 28 days of collection.
5.5	Are there any changes to submitting environmental health animal specimens for rabies testing? Are they shipped by UPS as well?	Shipping rabies specimens remains the same.
5.6	We have a satellite clinic that will need to send the HIV/HCV combo from their facility. Can they send that UPS and will the State pay for this?	<p>Satellite clinics in blue and white Counties will continue to submit specimens using the State DOA Courier's overnight shipping services. Satellite clinics in orange, gray, and green Counties will need to establish an UPS account for specimen pick-up and shipping.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">State Courier Services</p> <p>Legend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orange: Counties that use Statesville Hub Blue: No associated hub White: Counties with a hub Green: Counties that use Onslow Hub Gray: Counties that use Halifax Hub <p>County Legend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Alexander 2 Washington 3 Edgecombe 4 Northampton 5 Hertford 6 Camden 7 Currituck 8 Chowan 9 Perquimans 10 Pasquotank

5.7	Should parasitology specimens be shipped cold?	Parasitology specimens cans must be packaged with the appropriate number of fully frozen ice packs needed to ensure that these specimens are received cold at the SLPH.
5.8	Can HIV forms be folded?	HIV forms may be folded in half, and then in half again. Please do not fold a form more than twice.
5.9	Can Syphilis specimens be sent on Fridays?	Yes, the SLPH will be available to receive Syphilis specimens on Saturday morning.