

WASHINGTON STATE PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORIES

MEASLES, MUMPS, & RUBELLA SPECIMEN TESTING PROTOCOL

STEP	ROLE(S)	ACTION
1	Healthcare Provider / Submitter	Contact Local Health Jurisdiction (LHJ) of the patient's residence to report suspect case.
2	LHJ	<p>Notify WA DOH Office of Communicable Disease Epidemiology (CDEpi) Vaccine-Preventable Disease (VPD) Program about the suspected case.</p> <p>During Business Hours: Call: 206-418-5500 (ask to speak with WA DOH VPD Team) Email: vpd-cde@doh.wa.gov</p> <p>Outside of Business Hours (Holidays, after 5pm on weekdays, weekends, etc.): Call: 206-418-5500 (WA DOH CDEpi on-call)</p>
3	LHJ & WA DOH CDEpi	<p>Review suspected case's clinical attributes and testing guidance (notifiable conditions guidelines). Determine if testing at Washington State Public Health Laboratories (WA PHL) is warranted. Contact WA DOH CDEpi to discuss testing and to communicate approval.</p> <p>Approvals by WA DOH CDEpi and the LHJ are required for testing to proceed. Specimens will be held at the lab until the required approvals are received for specimen(s) to be included in the next testing run. If testing at WA PHL is not approved, LHJ should instruct the submitter to <u>NOT</u> send specimen(s) to WA PHL. If testing is not approved but the specimen still arrives to WA PHL, those specimens will be rejected and discarded.</p> <p><i>Please note: Although measles RT-PCR testing is now available commercially, suspected measles cases should always be reported to the LHJ immediately for testing decision-making. DOH recommends that all diagnostic testing for measles, mumps, and rubella be performed through the public health system.</i></p>
4	Submitter	<p>Send LHJ-approved specimen to WA PHL in accordance with the WA PHL specimen collection and submission guidance instructions. All specimens need to be submitted through Lab Web Portal (LWP). Submission Instructions for:</p> <p>Measles RT-PCR (link here); Measles Specimen Shipping Guide (link here) Mumps RT-PCR (link here) Rubella RT-PCR (follow guidelines for measles above) Serology: Measles IgG or IgM; Mumps IgG or IgM; Rubella IgG or IgM</p> <p><i>Please note: WA PHL Central Accessioning (CA) is open Monday-Friday 8am-5pm (non-holidays) and Saturdays 8am-12pm. WA PHL CA is typically not open on WA DOH observed holidays. If you anticipate specimens arriving outside of WA PHL CA operation hours, please coordinate this with WA DOH CDEpi.</i></p>
5	WA PHL, WA DOH CDEpi, & LHJ	<p>The daily cutoff for specimen arrival and approval is 3pm. For turnaround time purposes, specimens that arrive or are approved after 3pm will be considered "arrived" or "approved" on the next business day.</p> <p>Refer to "Testing Turnaround Time Algorithm" below to determine when results will be available.</p> <p>Current posted turnaround times (and other valuable testing info) are available on the WA PHL Lab Test Menu and listed as follows:</p>

EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/2025

LAST UPDATED: 06/2025

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measles RT-PCR: 1 business day • Mumps RT-PCR: 3 business days • Rubella RT-PCR: 1 business day once specimen reaches the Minnesota Department of Health Public Health Laboratories • Serology (measles, mumps, & rubella): 2-5 business days <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Please note that measles IgM testing may have a longer turnaround time. See the “Testing Turnaround Time Algorithm” for more information. <p>Please note: If determined through consultation between LHJ and WA DOH that a test result may warrant time-sensitive public health action, the timeframes above may be expedited and run as priority on a case-by-case basis.</p>
6	WA PHL, WA DOH CDEpi & LHJ	<p>If a specimen arrives with no pre-approval, WA DOH CDEpi will contact the LHJ. The LHJ should then contact the healthcare provider to obtain clinical and epidemiologic information about the patient from whom the specimen was collected.</p> <p>Once information is available, proceed with Step 3.</p>

TESTING TURNAROUND TIME ALGORITHM

When a pre-approved specimen is **received by 3pm** on the business days indicated in black below, **the latest business day** on which a result will be available is as follows (unless specimen is run as a priority). **Specimens that arrive on the weekend or around [WA DOH observed holidays](#) may have delayed results.** WA PHL can support measles PCR testing on weekends and holidays, however, this will need to be discussed and coordinated with the WA DOH CDEpi on-call staff. Please consult WA DOH CDEpi with any questions (206-418-5500), 24/7.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Measles PCR	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Monday
Mumps PCR	Thursday	Friday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Rubella PCR*	*	*	*	*	*
Serology** (measles IgG, mumps IgG and IgM, & rubella IgG and IgM)	Monday of the following week**	Tuesday of the following week**	Wednesday of the following week**	Thursday of the following week**	Friday of the following week**

* Rubella PCR is run at the Minnesota Department of Health Public Health Laboratories (MDH PHL) where the posted turnaround time is 1 business day. Turnaround time begins when specimen reaches MDH PHL. Shipping and testing may take up to a week.

** In the event that the LHJ and WA DOH CDEpi determine results of PCR negate the need for serology, WA PHL will not test serum specimens. Due to a national shortage of measles IgM test kits, measles IgM test requests will be forwarded to CDC lab for testing – please allow for 10 business days for results.



DOH 420-260

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