



**LAC DPH Health Advisory:
First Case of 2019 Novel Coronavirus
(2019-nCoV) in Los Angeles County.
Clinical Guidance.
January 26, 2020**



*This message is intended for all healthcare providers.
Please distribute as appropriate.*

Key Messages

- The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LAC DPH) has confirmed its first case of 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Los Angeles County in a non-resident traveler from China. Currently, there are five confirmed cases in the U.S.
- Providers should immediately report any patients that meet the criteria for patients under investigation (PUI) for 2019-nCoV to LAC DPH Acute Communicable Disease Control (ACDC).
- ACDC approval is required before specimens can be submitted for 2019-nCoV testing.
- This LAHAN communication provides updated guidance on 2019-nCoV testing and supersedes the January 17, 2020 LAHAN. Additional guidance to evaluate PUI will be provided via LAHAN as soon as it becomes available from the CDC.

Current situation

The first cases of 2019-nCoV in LA County and Orange County have been confirmed in travelers from Wuhan City, China. Both presented for care after feeling unwell. They did not have any contact with each other in California and appear to be unrelated. The LA County case is currently hospitalized in LA County. LAC DPH is working to identify persons who may have had close personal contact with this individual, to monitor them for signs and symptoms of illness and to take measures to prevent transmission. This individual was a non-resident traveler, and there is currently no evidence of person-to-person transmission in LA County.

LAC DPH is working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other federal, state and local agencies to monitor 2019-nCoV.

Actions Requested of Providers

- Report to ACDC immediately any patients that meet the criteria for patients under investigation (PUI) for 2019-nCoV [see Criteria]. **Approval from Acute Communicable Disease Control is required before specimens can be submitted to the LAC PHL for testing.** All 2019-nCoV laboratory testing is currently performed by the CDC.

- Review the specimen collection instructions carefully to ensure correct and adequate samples are collected to increase the likelihood of detecting infection [see Laboratory/Specimen Collection]. Specimens that are not collected properly or transported in correct media will not be viable and will not be accepted.
- Obtain a detailed travel history from the patient including cities and provinces if they recently traveled to China.

Infection Control Guidelines

- A patient under investigation (PUI) should wear a surgical mask and be evaluated in a private room with door closed (ideally an airborne infection isolation room if available).
- Healthcare personnel should use standard precautions, contact precautions, airborne precautions, and use eye protection.
- The facility's infection control personnel should be notified immediately.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/infection-control.html>

Criteria to Guide Evaluation of Patients under Investigation (PUI) for 2019-nCoV

Fever (>38°C/100.4°F) and symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing)	and	In the last 14 days before symptom onset, a history of travel from Wuhan City, China. <i>–or–</i> In the last 14 days before symptom onset, close contact with a person who is under investigation for 2019-nCoV while that person was ill.
Fever (>38°C/100.4°F) or symptoms of lower respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing)	and	In the last 14 days, close contact with an ill laboratory-confirmed 2019-nCoV patient.

Laboratory/Specimen Collection

Collection of upper respiratory and lower respiratory specimens for testing is recommended. Specimens should be collected as soon as possible once a PUI is identified regardless of symptom onset. Proper infection control measures should be used when collecting specimens. ACDC can assist with referral to hospital if specimens cannot be collected in the outpatient setting. A laboratory test request form prefilled for 2019-nCoV testing is available at <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/nCorona2019.htm>.

A. Upper respiratory tract specimens

- **1 nasopharyngeal (NP) swab AND 1 oropharyngeal (OP) swab**
Use only synthetic fiber swabs with plastic shafts. Do not use calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts, as they may contain substances that

inactivate some viruses and inhibit PCR testing. Place swabs immediately into sterile tubes containing 2-3 ml of **viral transport media**.

NP and OP specimens **MUST** be kept in separate viral transport media vials. Refrigerate specimens at 2-8°C.

Nasopharyngeal swab: Insert a swab into the nostril parallel to the palate. Leave the swab in place for a few seconds to absorb secretions. Swab both nasopharyngeal areas with the same swab. Place swab directly in viral transport media.

Oropharyngeal swab (e.g., throat swab): Swab the posterior pharynx, avoiding the tongue. Place swab directly in viral transport media.

– **Or** –

- **Nasopharyngeal wash/aspirate or nasal aspirate**

Collect 2-3 mL into a sterile, leak-proof, screw-cap sputum collection cup or sterile dry container. Refrigerate specimen at 2-8°C.

B. Lower respiratory tract specimens from patients with productive cough

- **Sputum**

Have the patient rinse the mouth with water and then expectorate deep cough sputum directly into a sterile, leak-proof, screw-cap sputum collection cup or sterile dry container. Refrigerate specimen at 2-8°C.

– **Or** –

- **Bronchoalveolar lavage, tracheal aspirate**

Collect 2-3 mL into a sterile, leak-proof, screw-cap sputum collection cup or sterile dry container. Refrigerate specimen at 2-8°C.

For more information on specimen collection, handling and testing view the CDC interim guidelines at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html>.

For information on biosafety guidelines for handling and processing specimens associated with 2019-nCoV, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/lab-biosafety-guidelines.html>.

Reporting

Los Angeles County DPH Acute Communicable Disease Control:

- Weekdays 8:30am–5pm: call 213-240-7941.
- After-hours: call 213-974-1234 and ask for the physician on call.

Long Beach Health and Human Services:

- Weekdays 8am-5pm: call 562-570-4302.
- After hours: call the Duty Officer at 562-500-5537.

Pasadena Public Health Department:

- Weekdays 8am-5pm (closed every other Friday): call 626-744-6089.
- After hours: call 626-744-6043.

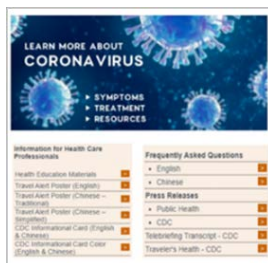
Additional Resources

CDC Coronavirus main website

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

LAC DPH Coronavirus website

<http://www.ph.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/>

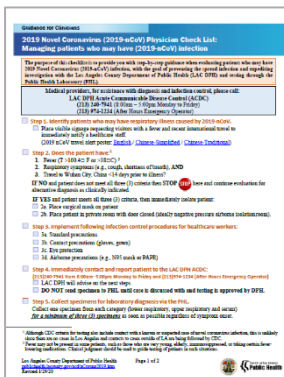


Includes:

- FAQs for patients in multiple languages
- Press releases
- Additional resources

LAC DPH Coronavirus webpage for Health Professionals

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/nCorona2019.htm>



Includes

- Travel alert posters in multiple languages
- Provider checklist for managing nCoV Patient Under Investigation (PUI)
- LAC DPH Public Health Laboratory Test Request Form —Prefilled for 2019-nCoV Testing
- CDC Interim 2019-nCoV PUI Form

This communication was sent by Sharon Balter, MD, Director, Division of Communicable Disease Control and Prevention, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

To view this and other communications or to sign-up to receive LAHANs, please visit

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/lahan>