State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health

RON CHAPMAN, MD, MPH
Director & State Health Officer

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
Governor

October 24, 2013

Dear Laboratory Director,

Laboratories have a regulatory requirement to electronically report to public health findings suggestive of diseases listed in 17 CCR §2505. These reports must contain "...the date the specimen was obtained, the patient identification number, the specimen accession number or other unique specimen identifier, the laboratory findings for the test performed, the date that any positive laboratory findings were identified, the name, gender, address, telephone number (if known) and age or date of birth of the person from whom the specimen was obtained, and the name, address, and telephone number of the health care provider for whom such examination or test was performed."

Complete patient demographic data is crucial in order to allow automated disease information systems to accurately route incoming lab reports to the proper public health jurisdiction. Failure to include the patient's name, gender, address, and date of birth in the initial electronic laboratory report requires manual follow up and investigation which drains valuable time and resources from the local public health office, the reporting laboratory, and the requesting health care provider.

Thank you,

Gil F. Chavez, MD, MPH
State Epidemiologist
Deputy Director for Infectious Diseases

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