

General Specimen Submission Instructions

1. Services provided by the Microbial Diseases Laboratory (MDL) supplement the diagnostic and reference services of the local public health laboratories. Local health departments should be prepared to supply the necessary containers, forms, and information to laboratories and physicians in their jurisdiction.
2. Contact MDL before collecting and submitting specimens as needed. MDL Points of Contact may be found on the Reference Services List (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/Reference-Services-in-Microbiology-MDL.pdf>).
MDL General Phone Line: (510) 412-3700
MDL General Email: MDL.Submissions@cdph.ca.gov
3. Complete the electronic MDL submission form found here (https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/MDL_General_Electronic_Submission_Form.pdf). The electronic submission form must be filled out completely and accompany submitted specimens. Failure to do so may prevent or delay testing.
4. Specimens must be labeled with at least two identifiers (i.e. Patient name, MRN, accession number, etc.) that can be matched with the submission form.
5. Specimens should be shipped, or transported via courier, following applicable packaging and shipping regulations for Infectious Substances.

Specimens should be shipped to:

Microbial Diseases Laboratory – Specimen Receiving
California Department of Public Health
850 Marina Bay Parkway
Richmond, CA 94804

6. If refrigeration or freezing is required, be sure refrigerant is adequate for the time in transit. Indicate on the outside of the box if it is to be refrigerated or frozen upon arrival at MDL.
7. Follow other instructions related to specific tests as indicated in the Reference Services List and/or Test Catalog.
8. **Submissions to the Centers for Diseases Control & Prevention.** Specimens that are to be sent to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) may be sent directly to the CDC after approval by the local public health laboratory, or MDL.

- a. **Prior** to sending specimens to CDC, email your request or notification to the general MDL email address at: MDL.Submissions@cdph.ca.gov unless directed otherwise by consultation with a MDL point of contact.
- b. The CDC Form 50.34 must accompany specimens submitted to the CDC. This form is available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/laboratory/specimen-submission/form.html>
- c. Enter the following in the **State PHL** box on the Form 50.34:
Institution Name: CDPH, Microbial Diseases Laboratory
The rest of the State PHL information will prepopulate the form after making the selection.
- d. To ensure that test reports are routed appropriately, it is very important to fill in the submitter information accurately and completely, including point of contact and secure fax number. **All required information must accompany the specimens (s).**

9. Potential Bioterrorism/Biothreat Agent Protocol

- a. Potential biothreat agents include:
 - i. *Bacillus anthracis*, *Burkholderia pseudomallei*/*B. mallei*, *Brucella species* (*B. abortus*, *B. melitensis*, *B. suis*), *Francisella tularensis*, *Yersinia pestis*, botulinum neurotoxin producing species of *Clostridium*, botulinum neurotoxin
- b. For details on submission and testing of biothreat agents, refer to MDL websites
 - i. (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/TestOrderAdultBot.aspx>) for botulinum neurotoxin producing species of *Clostridium*, botulinum neurotoxin
 - ii. (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/TestOrderBacterialBioterrorismAgent.aspx>) for other potential biothreat agents listed above
- c. Contact your local Public Health Laboratory or MDL for assistance. Pre-approval **IS REQUIRED** before submitting samples to CDPH-MDL for testing.
- d. Use MDL Submission Form (https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/MDL_General_Electronic_Submission_Form.pdf) and follow General Specimen Submission Instructions noted above.