UPDATE to COVID-19 Testing to Include Asymptomatic, High Risk Groups

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) has expanded the criteria for testing at the Bureau of Clinical Laboratories (BCL) to add testing for certain asymptomatic, high risk groups and individuals.

Tests to be performed by the BCL must meet the following criteria:

The patient is a resident (includes symptomatic and asymptomatic) of a long-term care facility and the facility has laboratory-confirmed cases in residents or staff, or

- Hospitalized patients with symptoms*
- Healthcare facility workers, workers in congregate living settings, and first responders with symptoms*
- Residents in long-term care facilities or other congregate living settings, including correctional and detention facilities and shelters, with symptoms*
- Persons without symptoms who have underlying medical conditions or disability placing them at a higher risk of complications, residency in a congregate housing setting such as a homeless shelter or long-term care facility, or screening of other asymptomatic individuals based on a case by case review and approval by the state health department or local health jurisdiction.

*Symptoms consist of either cough or shortness of breath (difficulty breathing) or at least two of the following; fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, and new loss of taste or smell.

Providers may order testing for persons not meeting the above criteria but are asked to use a commercial or clinical laboratory they have an agreement with. Providers in need of specimen collection kits or viral transport medium should contact the ADPH Center for Emergency Preparedness (CEP) Duty Officer at 334-239-1556.

In order to conduct timely case investigations and contact tracing, providers should report positive results to ADPH using the Novel Coronavirus Report Form. Delays in reporting cause increased risk of continued transmission.