

DSHS COVID-19 Testing: 3-13-2020

Public Health Testing

- # of test performed in Texas Public Health Labs: 152
- # tested at CDC: 68 (including 13 pending results)
- First public health testing in Texas came on-line: March 3, 2020
- DSHS started testing: March 5, 2020

Testing criteria

DSHS public health labs will test individuals (including health care workers) who have fever and/or symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath) AND:

- have had close contact with a confirmed case;
- have traveled to a location with ongoing transmission of COVID-19;
- have risk factors for poor outcomes from COVID-19; or,
- are hospitalized with fever and symptoms suspicious for COVID-19 even if they do not have any risk factors.

Public Health Lab Capacity

All public health testing: 273 people per day (if one specimen per person)

- It was 136 if assuming two specimens which is how all labs began.

Laboratory	Completed verification?	Daily Sample Throughput
Dallas County	Yes	17
Lubbock	Yes	20
Tyler	Yes	21
Houston	Yes	29
San Antonio	Yes	72
STL	Yes	15-20
El Paso	Yes	29
Corpus Christi	No	10
Tarrant County	Yes	18
DSHS Austin	Yes	52

How long does it take to get tested?

It depends.

- Once the specimen is received, it takes 24-48 hours for a result.
 - This includes processing the specimen, extracting the RNA, running the PCR and reporting.
- Specimen collection and shipping not in a lab's control.
- Testing may occur multiple times per day.
 - Not efficient if small numbers.
 - May deplete supplies and materials.
- Not all testing can go to public health labs or the system will be overwhelmed; commercial and hospital-based lab testing must be part of the equation even if it takes a couple of days.

Commercial Labs Testing

of tests performed through commercial Labs: Unknown

Commercial Labs/Capacity

- Lab Corp (~1200 per day nationally; working to increase capacity)
- Quest (receiving about 1000 specimens per day; 3600 nationally today; 3500 per night through their labs in Texas – start date for Texas 3/23)
- CPL
- Mayo Clinic
- ARUP

What are we doing?

- DSHS is reviewing criteria and processes for testing to maximize public health testing that has been coming on-line over the last week.
- Commercial testing is available.
 - Commercial testing may be sent to labs outside Texas.
 - Results may take several days.
 - It is our understanding that the charge is based on Medicare rates (Labs are working with insurance companies relating to charges.)