



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMAND-CENTRAL
2899 SCHOFIELD ROAD
JBSA FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEXAS 78234-7583

MCHB-RS-FAD

20 March 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Animal SARS-CoV-2 Diagnostic Testing Sample Submission Guide

1. **Background:** The Department of Defense Food Analysis & Diagnostic Laboratory (DoD FADL) will conduct SARS-CoV-2 Animal Diagnostic testing utilizing real-time reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR). This test is available upon request by veterinarians ONLY after approval by state animal and public health officials. All presumptive positive samples will require confirmatory testing by the U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL). Exceptions for confirmatory requesting requirements include domestic household cats or dogs from states, territories, or tribal nations that have previously had a confirmed case in that species. Please reference USDA APHIS website (www.aphis.usda.gov) for more information on selection criteria.

2. **Sample Authorization:** DoD FADL will reject any samples that are submitted without prior coordination. Email estimated sampling dates and details to PHC-C FADL at USARMY.JBSA.MEDCOM.LIST.PHC-RABIES-FAVN-SA@MAIL.MIL. Include the tracking number and an attached electronic copy of the Molecular Diagnostic Test Request Form (D-204, version 17 MARCH 2021) with "Animal COVID TEST" as the subject of the email.

3. **Sample Collection:** Nasopharyngeal, oropharyngeal and rectal swab samples for RT-PCR are accepted. Collect and submit duplicate samples from each site. Place each sample in individual vials with 2-3-mls of viral transport media (VTM). Utilize a synthetic fiber swab (i.e. nylon, dacron), aluminum or plastic shaft (calcium alginate swabs are unacceptable and cotton swabs with wooden shafts are not recommended) and a sterile transport tube. If VTM is not available, use 2-3-mls of sterile saline. Tightly seal sterile transport tube to avoid cross contamination. If available, separated serum for antibody testing should be placed in a small plain plastic tube (minimum volume 0.5-ml) for submission. For long term storage, separated serum may be frozen; otherwise refrigeration is appropriate. FADL does not provide sampling kits for SARS-CoV-2 Diagnostic Testing in animals.

4. **Labeling & Storage:** Label each sterile transport tube with animal identification, owner name, date collected and site swabbed utilizing permanent, waterproof ink. This information should mirror information provided on the Molecular Diagnostic Test Request Form (D-204). Place samples in an insulated box with freezer packs for

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overnight delivery. Swabs may be refrigerated at 2-8°C for 72 hours or frozen for longer-term storage. Follow appropriate packaging and shipping regulations. For hand-delivered samples, prior notification via email is required and the samples must be packaged per shipping regulations above.

5. Sample Submission:

a. Required Documentation: Samples must be accompanied by a completed Molecular Diagnostic Test Request Form (D-204). To obtain a copy of this form, please download from the FADL homepage at <https://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/labsciences/fad/Pages/default.aspx>. Forms should be saved locally before filling out. The submitting veterinarian on Form D-204 will be the Point(s) of Contact (POC) for any questions regarding the samples.

b. Ship samples to:

DoD Food Analysis and Diagnostic Laboratory
ATTN: Diagnostic Receiving Section (Molecular)
2899 Scholfield Road, Suite 2630
JBSA, Fort Sam Houston, Texas 78234-7583

6. Result Interpretation.

a. Negative: SARS-CoV-2 was not detected in the sample provided.

b. Presumed Positive: SARS-CoV-2 was detected in the sample provided.

Consideration for confirmatory testing by USDA NVSL.

c. Inconclusive: A specimen is considered inconclusive for SARS CoV-2 when the animal sample shows a cycle threshold of less than or equal to 40.0 cycles (CT ≤40.0 cycles) for only one, but not both N1/N2. Consider for confirmatory testing.

d. Invalid: A sample result of 'Invalid' indicates that no canine cells and/or virus was detected within the sample. The POC will be notified to repeat laboratory sampling and submission.

7. Contact Information: For any questions pertaining to the DoD FADL SARS-CoV-2 MWD Diagnostic Testing Program email USARMY.JBSA.MEDCOM.LIST.PHC-RABIES-FAVN-SA@MAIL.MIL or call 210-295-4322 (ref. MAJ Christopher D. Bass/Deputy Director, FADL).

MICHELLE E. THOMPSON
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Director

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