
PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY
COVID-19 TESTING AVAILABILITY
MARCH 17, 2020

Current Situation

As of this writing, the County of Riverside has recorded 16 COVID-19 cases and three deaths associated with COVID-19. The majority of cases and all deaths have occurred in the Coachella Valley. The most current case count is at rivcoph.org/coronavirus.

Reporting Requirements

Under emergency amendments to California Code of Regulations §2500, **clinicians and clinical laboratories must report all positive results for COVID-19 and anyone who meets criteria for a Person Under Investigation (PUI) at the time of testing.** PUI criteria include any one of the following situations:

- Fever **AND** lower respiratory symptoms such as cough, **AND** travel to an affected country or region in the last 14 days (currently including countries under CDC travel advisories and certain areas of Washington state or New York)
- Fever **OR** lower respiratory symptoms such as cough, **AND** exposure to a **confirmed** case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Critical pulmonary disease such as ARDS or pneumonia where workup for other diagnoses has failed

If you have a PUI under these criteria, or are reporting a positive result even if they do not meet PUI criteria, please **complete a PUI form** and notify the Department of Public Health by phone at 951 358 5107 during business hours and 951 782 2974 after hours.

Testing Options for COVID-19

Clinicians who are able to perform testing with appropriate PPE, including hospitals and emergency departments, may send specimens to commercial laboratories regardless of whether they meet PUI criteria. It is **no longer necessary or recommended** to collect specimens under **negative pressure**. Currently specimens will be accepted by Quest or LabCorp, but neither lab will *collect* specimens. Please evaluate those you test for PUI criteria and report those who do to the Department of Public Health at the time of testing. **Collection kits are specific to Quest and LabCorp. Contact the labs directly to obtain additional collection kits and swabs.**

The Department of Public Health cannot provide you with collection kits. The turnaround time for commercial labs ranges from 2-5 days depending on testing load.

Riverside University Health System (RUHS) is currently offering COVID-19 testing for select patients. Due to a limited number of COVID-19 testing kits, RUHS can only test patients who meet certain criteria. In particular, patients must be either **symptomatic** (fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose or congestion, difficulty breathing) **OR** have had **exposure risk** (contact with a person with diagnosed COVID-19 or travel to an affected geographic area). As long as individuals meet criteria and testing kits are available, individuals **can schedule an appointment** for testing by calling 1-800-945-6171. This service is **starting** tomorrow, **March 18**. Location may vary; an appointment is **required**.

High-risk individuals who meet the PUI definition above may be referred for testing directly by the Department of Public Health at specific locations. For information please call 951 358 5107.

We appreciate your help in keeping all residents of Riverside County healthy.

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