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SUBJECT: Idaho Influenza Surveillance and Solicitation of Clinical Specimens

Idaho Bureau of Laboratories (IBL) continues to serve as a World Health Organization Influenza Collaborating Laboratory providing influenza surveillance on behalf of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the State of Idaho. Surveillance is performed to detect the frequent genetic and antigenic shifts rapidly identify the appearance of novel strains; to detect the emergence of antiviral resistance; and to provide the information needed to formulate vaccine components each year.

IBL is once again asking our partners in the medical community to participate in virologic surveillance by submitting a subset of influenza positive respiratory specimens to us throughout the flu season. The CDC is reporting an increased number of novel Influenza variants detected during the past few seasons, and has requested that Public Health Laboratories increase the number of submissions for the current surveillance season. IBL is requesting that laboratories submit 5-10 representative, previously tested influenza positive specimens per week to support our influenza surveillance efforts. If needed, IBL can provide shippers, sample collection kits, and shipping support to participating laboratories to facilitate sample submission. IBL will be testing all influenza sample submissions for Influenza A, B, and SARS-CoV-2. Patient results from this assay will be reported back to the provider.

Nasopharyngeal or nasal swabs submitted in viral transport media are the specimens of choice. A complete list of acceptable specimens can be found on the IBL [Influenza SARS-CoV-2 Sampling and Submission Guide](#). Please take a moment to ensure that you are using the most up to date submission form, as we have updated several of our testing menus recently. You can download the Submission Form from the IBL website clinical testing page, or directly using this link: [Clinical Test Request Form \(statelab.idaho.gov\)](#).

Influenza surveillance is free of charge and collection kits can be ordered using the [Online Supply Order Form](#) on the IBL website. If you would like more information about participating in the Idaho influenza surveillance program, please contact the IBL Influenza testing group at 208-334-0594. To learn more about influenza activity in the state, visit <http://flu.idaho.gov>.

Thank you for your participation and help supporting the this critical surveillance activity in our state.

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