

PROCEDURE: MICROBIOLOGY RECEIVING & ORDER ENTRY

I. PRINCIPLE

The correct handling of specimens is critical to the laboratory as well as patient care. Placing the correct orders for specimens will directly affect patient outcomes but also will affect the laboratory workflow. Incorrect orders and processing can have a detrimental effect on the lab results as well as being a waste of technologist time.

It is the responsibility of the Microbiology laboratory to review and evaluate orders to be sure that the expected results will reflect the original requests. Processing begins at the time of orders being placed and continues through the various aspects of receiving, processing, routing, etc. Aside from assuring accurate laboratory results, the order entry process is also a vital part of the medical records and billing cascade.

II. ORDER

A. Specimens Delivered with Test Orders

1. Routine Micro Orders - Track, go to Plating List, scan barcode labels and Plate
2. Molecular Orders – Track

B. Specimens with downtime slips or paper requisitions

1. Use LIFECHART for ordering tests
2. Choose correct account number (billing date of service) to search
3. Choose correct label printer for collection label to print out –RIH Micro Lab
4. Enter correct collection date of specimen when placing orders
5. Apply collection label to container
6. Phlebotomy Receive in SoftLab

III. COMMON ISSUES AND EXCEPTIONS

- A. If discrepancy with account numbers or date of service, fax requisition to Registration for an updated account linked to date of service.
- B. In Phlebotomy Receive- you may get “No orders found”, this just means that the specimen was already received at specimen receiving.
- C. Confirm specimen was received by going to Soft Order Entry, on Specimen Tab and make sure the “R” box is checked off.
- D. Special Requests/Pathologies – Appendix C – OE Special Requests
- E. If a specimen that is normally run and resulted at Miriam hospital is sent over to Rhode Island Hospital, it is necessary to have the specimen received at a null computer to have patient results sent to patient’s chart.

IV. LABELS

- A. Collection labels should be applied to original container
- B. Be sure that source printed on label is correct.
- C. Blood culture collection labels must be applied vertically on bottles

V. ROUTING SPECIMENS

- A. All routine micro specimens are sent to planter to be processed or split.
See Appendix AP1 - Microbiology Order Entry
- B. Specimens for urine cultures are held until UA has been completed, then they are pulled and plated for culture if the UA was positive
See Appendix AP84 – Urine Culture reflex workflow

- C. Molecular specimens are held for processing-
See *Appendix AP22 – MOLECULAR TESTS*
- D. Sendout tests sent to reference lab:
 - a. Stool Ova and Parasites (OP1)
 - b. Worm Identification
 - c. Cyclospora/Isospora
 - d. Other Parasites

VI. SPECIMEN TRACKING

- A. Use specimen tracking to send and receive from another site
- B. Refer to specimen tracking procedure

VII. SPLITTING SPECIMENS WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS

- A. All specimens should be put in clear biohazard specimen bags for transport to other departments.
- B. Be sure specimens are labeled correctly so planter will know specimen is shared and needs to be forwarded to another department.

VIII. PRIORITIZING SPECIMENS

- A. STAT specimens, tissues, body fluids, and any surgical specimens delivered from OR should be processed as a priority.
- B. Routine specimens should be logged in as they arrive in the micro department

IX. RELATED APPENDIX RESOURCES

- A. [Appendix AP1 – Microbiology Order Entry](#)
- B. [Appendix AP2 - Central Testing and Outreach Services Ordering Guide](#)
- C. [Appendix AP5 – Soft QA Specimens](#)
- D. [Appendix AP6 – Logging in Autopsy Specimens](#)
- E. [Appendix AP22 – Molecular Tests Performed at Coro Molecular Micro](#)
- F. [Appendix AP84 – Urine Culture reflex workflow](#)

X. REVISIONS

- A. 11/29/2023 – Added guidance for Urine Culture reflex testing workflow