

<b>SAMPLES WITHOUT ORDERS</b>
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Joseph Medical Center, Tacoma, WA | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Anthony Hospital Gig Harbor, WA | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Harrison Medical Center, Bremerton, WA  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Francis Hospital, Federal Way, WA | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Elizabeth Hospital Enumclaw, WA | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Harrison Medical Center, Silverdale, WA |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Clare Hospital Lakewood, WA       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Highline Medical Center Burien, WA  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PSC                                     |

**PURPOSE**

To provide instruction for documenting investigative activities for specimens delivered to the lab without orders, with unclear orders, or with ambiguous orders.

**BACKGROUND**

Laboratory testing cannot be performed without an order. Specimens are occasionally delivered to the laboratory from inpatient or Emergency Department locations prior to orders being placed. The laboratory is responsible for contacting the ordering location and requesting an order. All attempts made to obtain orders must be documented.

Outpatient specimens may arrive with unclear orders or ambiguous orders. Orders which are unclear or ambiguous must be clarified before testing/ reporting and billing can be performed.

It is the laboratory's responsibility to make every attempt to obtain viable orders and document its attempts to obtain an order prior to testing.

**RELATED DOCUMENTS**

CHI-FH PolicyStat 770 Generic First Steps

Beaker Guide

**STEPS**

***Inpatient Specimens without Orders***

1. Specimens arrive in the laboratory via pneumatic tube and / or delivered by a healthcare provider in a biohazard bag. All specimens should be labeled with two patient identifiers per policy.
2. If the specimen does not have a laboratory testing label, look for the orders in the Laboratory Information System (LIS).
3. If an order cannot be located, order an "extra" in the LIS (refer to the Beaker Guide for step by step instructions). The extra order will correlate to the tube color or specimen type delivered to the laboratory.
4. Call the hospital unit and confirm the order for testing.
5. The date, time, and name of the person notified of the need for an order is documented in the LIS.
6. Approximately every 15 minutes the laboratory should review available orders. If an order has not been placed after 30 minutes, the laboratory will call the unit and make a second request for an order. The time and person notified of the second attempt is documented in the specimen update under the Extra order specimen ID.
7. Step 5 is repeated until an order is available or until the specimen has been without an order for one hour.
8. After one hour the laboratory will store the specimen.
9. Once an order is received and assuming the specimen meets storage and stability requirements, the order is added to the existing accession number.

## ***Specimens Collected in the Emergency Department***

1. The Emergency Department may send blood specimens to the laboratory without orders. These samples are held in the lab until the Emergency Department physician determines laboratory testing is needed.
2. Following the process for ordering “extras” outlined above, the lab will place an order for all tubes sent without laboratory labels.
3. Samples will be processed and stored.
4. Once the Emergency Department determines that testing needs to be performed on an extra specimen, add-on orders will be placed and nursing staff will complete the collection task for the appropriate tubes.
5. Laboratory testing labels will be generated in the Emergency Department and sent to the laboratory or the laboratory can print the added order labels.
6. Laboratory staff will locate the extra tube and add the test to the extra tube accession number.
7. It is the responsibility of the laboratory to monitor the integrity of samples held and waiting for possible orders.

## ***Outpatient Samples – Unclear or Ambiguous Orders***

1. During Client Services Business Hours
  - a. Every attempt will be made to contact the provider prior to collection of the sample.
  - b. At times the patient sample may be collected and integrity maintained while attempting to contact the ordering provider.
    1. Samples may be collected if other tests are not in question and sample requirements are the same.
    2. Consult with a manager, supervisor, coordinator, lead, or pathologist for direction, if available, so that the requested order can be evaluated further.
    3. Never collect the sample if you are not completely sure of the order.

Note: Explain to the patient that more information is needed about the order before a sample can be collected. The patient may choose to wait while the provider is contacted or may want to be called back.
  - c. At no time will testing be completed / reported and billing processed until the order is clarified.
    1. If the sample was collected and viability will be compromised, the testing may be completed “off line”. For example, the request was not ordered in the Laboratory Information System, not reported, not billed until the order has been verified.
  - d. When order clarification is received, laboratory staff must document the full name of the person clarifying the order per CHI Laboratory Compliance Addendum.
2. Outside of Client Services Business Hours

Specimens often arrive at the laboratory after hours which have been collected by non-laboratory personnel. These samples are registered and processed. During the outpatient registration process, an order may be deemed unclear or ambiguous. The following steps should be followed to ensure Client Services has all the appropriate information when calling the provider for clarification.

  - a. If appropriate, create a follow up task and include documentation of all pertinent information including samples received and the issue requiring clarification and location of the sample.
  - b. After the follow up information has been entered into the LIS, check the specimen for probable stability conditions that may be a consideration for the sample received.
  - c. Order an “extra” sample for all samples received. Once the specimen is labeled with the laboratory ordered “extra” label and documentation completed, the specimen will be processed and stored.
  - d. Samples considered irretrievable should be stored in the refrigerated Test in Question (TIQ).

- e. Microbiology samples should be taken to microbiology for off-line set up; the original sample is returned to the refrigerated TIQ for storage.
- f. If an “extra” is not ordered, place the sample in the appropriate TIQ bucket or other designated storage area.

3. Processing and Testing Samples Off Line

Some samples may be viable for testing before order clarification can occur. Partial testing may need to be completed in these cases.

Guidance from a tech in charge, supervisor, or manager is required when requesting tests to be run off line.

- a. The test is performed by the technologist and the specimen is retained after testing in a biohazard bag along with a copy of the test results (results are placed in the front pocket of the biohazard bag). The biohazard bag is marked with a one week expiration date and placed in the TIQ bucket until order clarification is achieved.
- b. After order clarification, the sample is registered with the clarified orders, an accession number is generated, and the test results are entered into the LIS by the testing personnel.