

**University of California, Davis  
Health System, Sacramento  
Department of Medical Pathology & Laboratory Medicine**

***HANDLING OF VERBAL ORDERS/REQUESTS  
OR UNCLEAR ORDERS***

**Administrative Procedure 515.A**

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**PURPOSE:**

To establish a standard means of handling verbal orders or unclear laboratory test requests in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine.

**POLICY:**

The Department of Pathology accepts verbal orders in situations in which it is impossible or impractical for the ordering provider to enter the order in the EMR. All verbal orders for laboratory tests must be followed by a provider's written order. Laboratory staff will not enter verbal orders into EMR.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. Verbal orders may only be issued by licensed or registered physician, Intern (PGY1), Nurse Practitioner (NP), Physician Assistant (PA) or CRNA.
2. Laboratory staff will notify the requesting provider that an EMR or written order must be received by the Laboratory within 30 days of the verbal order.
3. The verbal order will be confirmed by reading back the following:
  - a. Patient name
  - b. Patient medical record number
  - c. Requested test(s)
  - d. Requesting provider name and PI#
4. All verbal requests for testing must be documented in LIS as a comment in the requisition. Use appropriate LIS canned text to enter date/time order received and name of person taking the verbal order.
5. Verbal requests for add-on testing or new testing may be performed prior to receiving the written confirmatory order due to timeliness of testing requirements. Results should only be reported once the written or electronic order has been received by the Laboratory.

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6. If written/electronic order has not been received after completion of testing, the testing personnel should attempt to contact the clinician at least one more time. After that, refer to Client Services for follow up with clinician. This includes difficult-to-obtain specimens such as CSF, Bone Marrow, and aspiration fluids. Lab will maintain the written authorization or documentation of efforts made to obtain written authorization.
  7. Specimens held pending written or electronic confirmation of verbal order will be stored with all other specimens from that date. Specimens will only be discarded after normal storage time and resolution of the initial verbal order either by receiving the written or electronic order, or by physician cancelling the original verbal request.
  8. All orders for lab tests that are unclear or ambiguous must be confirmed with the ordering clinician prior to analysis or cancellation.

**REFERENCES:**

UCDHS Hospital Policies and Procedures Patient Care Standards IV-75 Physician Orders  
TJC (The Joint Commission)

College of American Pathologists CAP Accreditation Program

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**PROCEDURE HISTORY**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Written/ Revised by</b>	<b>Revision</b>	<b>Approved Date</b>	<b>Approved By</b>
11/18/96	D. O'Sullivan	New	11/18/96	R. Green
11/97	D. O'Sullivan	Annual Review	11/97	R. Green
11/98	D. O'Sullivan	Annual Review	11/98	R. Green
5/00	D. O'Sullivan	Annual Review	6/00	R. Green
6/99	D. O'Sullivan	Annual Review	6/99	R. Green
8/00	D. O'Sullivan	Annual Review	8/00	R. Green
10/01	D. Wright	Annual Review	10/01	R. Green
6/02	D. O'Sullivan	Annual Review	6/02	R. Green
10/03	D. O'Sullivan	Annual Review	10/03	R. Green
10/04	D. Wright	Revised	10/04	R. Green
10/05	D. O'Sullivan	Annual Review	10/05	R. Green
9/06	D. Wright	Annual Review	9/06	R. Green
10/07	D. Wright	Revised	10/07	R. Green
06/08	C. White	Reviewed	06/08	R. Green
06/09	C. White	Annual Review	06/09	L. Howell
06/10	C. White	Annual Review	06/10	L. Howell
06/11	C. White	Annual Review	06/11	L. Howell
09/11	C. White	Revised	09/11	L. Howell
10/12	T. Cox	Revised: added read back requirement	10/12	L. Howell

