

# Shipping Instructions for CDC *Legionella* Testing

## A. Before initial shipment

Consultation regarding CDC support for *Legionella* testing is required prior to initiation of shipments of **non-clinical isolates**. Please contact the Pneumonia Response and Surveillance Laboratory at [legionellalab@cdc.gov](mailto:legionellalab@cdc.gov). Public health laboratories shipping **clinical specimens or isolates** may proceed to Step B.1 below.

## B. After consultation

1. **Email the CDC laboratory** ([legionellalab@cdc.gov](mailto:legionellalab@cdc.gov)) the following shipment information:
  - a. numbers and types of specimens/isolates being sent
  - b. tests you are requesting
  - c. anticipated shipping dates (Monday–Thursday only)
    - i. **Please do not ship on Fridays or the day before a federal holiday.**
2. **Prepare materials** for shipment according to the *Legionella* Specimen Handling Guidelines for CDC Testing (see below).
  - a. **Clinical specimens and isolates**
    - i. Each clinical specimen and isolate must be shipped with a DASH form (CDC Form 50.34: <http://www.cdc.gov/laboratory/specimen-submission/pdf/form-50-34.pdf>).
    - ii. Clinical **specimens** should be shipped at -20°C (dry ice or super cold packs).
    - iii. Clinical *Legionella* **isolates** should be shipped on BCYE slants or plates at 4°C (regular cold packs).
    - iv. Respiratory specimens should be frozen immediately after collection.
  - b. **Environmental *Legionella* isolates** should be shipped on BCYE slants or plates at 4°C (regular cold packs).
    - i. Each isolate from an environmental source must be submitted with an Environmental Specimen Form.
      1. Click on the CDC Form 50.34 link above. This will take you to the DASH form.
      2. Select “Environmental” in the “Specimen Origin” field at the upper left corner of the form. The form will automatically change to the Environmental Specimen Form.
3. **Ship by express/next-day air to:**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Unit 33  
1600 Clifton Rd NE MS-H18-1  
Atlanta, GA 30329-4027  
(404) 639-4921 or (404) 639-2305
4. **Email the tracking number to** [legionellalab@cdc.gov](mailto:legionellalab@cdc.gov).

## LEGIONELLA SPECIMEN HANDLING GUIDELINES FOR CDC TESTING

	*Specimen Type		
	<i>Legionella</i> Isolate	Respiratory Specimens (sputum, BAL, tracheal aspirate, lung tissue, and others)	Urine
<b>Specimen Minimum Requirements</b>	Prior identification as presumptive <i>Legionella</i> genus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BAL &amp; tracheal aspirate: 500 µl</li> <li>Other samples as available</li> </ul>	500 µl
<b>Specimen Preparation</b>	Visible growth on BCYE agar	Fresh frozen (not formalin-fixed) tissue preferred	None
<b>Short-term Storage Before Shipping</b>	≤14 days at 4°C	Freeze immediately at ≤-20°C	≤48 hours at 4°C
<b>Long-term Storage Before Shipping</b>	Freeze at ≤-20°C <i>or</i> Re-streak on fresh agar (consult with CDC)	Freeze at ≤-20°C	Freeze at ≤-20°C
<b>Shipping Conditions</b>	Ship BCYE agar slants or plates with visible growth at 4°C (regular cold packs)	Ship frozen at ≤-20°C (dry ice or super cold packs rated for temps below -70°C)	Ship frozen at ≤-20°C (dry ice or super cold packs rated for temps below -70°C)
<b>CDC Lab Services Available</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>L. pneumophila</i> serogroup determination</li> <li>Monoclonal antibody typing</li> <li><i>Legionella</i> species determination based on <i>mip</i> sequencing</li> <li>Multiplex PCR for detection of <i>Legionella</i> spp., <i>L. pneumophila</i>, and <i>L. pneumophila</i> serogroup 1</li> <li>Additional <b>non-CLIA approved</b> molecular assays upon consultation</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culture (resulting isolates may be tested as described adjacently)</li> <li>PCR</li> <li>DFA</li> </ol>	Urine antigen EIA

\*These are the only specimen types accepted by this lab. NP/OP swabs or any other specimens are NOT accepted.