DATE: March 6, 2020

TO: Medical Laboratory Directors, Local Health Officers, and Health Care Providers

FROM: Robert A. Myers, Ph.D.
Director, Laboratories Administration

RE: Notification of Extended MDH Laboratories Administration Loading Dock Hours for COVID-19 Specimen Receipt

As part of the COVID-19 response, the MDH Laboratories Administration’s loading dock will be open on Saturdays and Sundays to receive approved COVID-19 specimens. Saturday and Sunday loading dock operational hours will be 07:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. until further notice. Specimens must be packaged in a triple packaging system to ensure that under normal conditions of transport they cannot break, be punctured or leak their contents. Label the outside of the shipping container “Coronavirus Specimen”. Refer to packaging and shipping guidance below.
Basic triple packaging systems include a primary receptacle such as a tube with adhesive tape around the screw cap or a plate with parafilm around the edges. The primary (1st) receptacle, along with required absorbent and cushioning material, is placed inside a secondary (2nd) container. The 2nd container for diagnostic specimens should be a sealed biohazard or Ziploc bag. The 2nd container is then securely placed within an outer shipping container (tertiary (3rd) container), generally a corrugated cardboard box with cushioning material inside to surround the 2nd container. This outermost container bears the name, address, and telephone number of shippers, name of person responsible with 24/7 telephone number, and the complete name, shipping address, and telephone number of the recipient, plus all the required markings. Include an itemized list of contents in a sealed plastic bag, placed between the 3rd and 2nd containers.

For questions or concerns, please contact the Laboratories Administration during normal business hours at 443-681-3791, 443-681-3792 or 443-681-3800 (Main number). For all call after hours please contact the Laboratories Administration at 410-925-3121.

cc: Frances Phillips
    Dr. David Blythe
    Dr. Monique Duwell
    Dr. Cliff Mitchell
    Dr. Richard Brooks
    Ruth Thompson