DC HEALTH
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

# Notice for District of Columbia Pharmacy Staff

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pharmacist Testing: Guidance for Emergency Regulations

August 19, 2020

**Background**

On March 11, 2020, in response to the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), Mayor Bowser declared a Public Health Emergency, which was extended by Mayor's Order 2020-050, on March 20, 2020.

On June 5, 2020, the Department of Health (DC Health) issued emergency regulations 17 DCMR 6516, COVID-19 Testing by Pharmacists. The emergency rulemaking was necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the District's residents by reducing the spread of COVID-19 by establishing minimum standards for the safe and effective operation of pharmacies where pharmacists, and pharmacy interns under the direct supervision of a pharmacist, administer COVID-19 tests and observe and facilitate collection of a self-administered COVID-19 test.

The Board of Pharmacy and DC Health's Pharmaceutical Control Division would like to provide the following information and guidance regarding compliance with 17 DCMR 6516, COVID-19 Testing by Pharmacists.

**Pharmacist COVID-19 Testing Authority**

DC Health does not differentiate between COVID-19 tests that are FDA "approved" or "authorized." If a COVID-19 test is authorized under the FDA Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) as well as with the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act (CLIA), then it would be an acceptable test under the current emergency regulations**.**

Pharmacies that want to perform CLIA waived tests should submit the CMS 116 Form and required documents by email to Ms. Veronica Longstreth (Veronica.Longstreth@dc.gov), Associate Director, Office of Health Facilities.

**Support Staff**

Pharmacy Technicians can provide limited support to Pharmacists and Pharmacy Interns at testing sites such as patient intake, paperwork processing, traffic direction, and transport of COVID-19 testing supplies, specimens, and materials. Pharmacy Technicians are not authorized to perform COVID-19 diagnostic tests, observe patient self-administered or self-collection COVID-19 tests, or perform antibody or serology COVID-19 tests.

**PPE**

Pharmacy staff who are collecting specimens or who are within 6 feet of patients during this process are to use the following personal protective equipment (PPE): face mask, eye protection (face shield or goggles), gown, and gloves. Pharmacy staff involved in the process who will remain greater than 6 feet from patients at all times and who will not have direct patient contact are to wear a face mask and gloves.

For more information, see the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens for COVID-19[1].

**DC Health Guidelines and Requirements**

Please visit the DC Health - Health Notices website for the most recent guidance on PPE use, testing priorities, and reporting for healthcare providers in the District of Columbia.

Requirements for COVID-19 reporting can be found on the DC Health COVID-19 Reporting website. This includes both reporting test results on a test performed, and reporting on pharmacy personnel diagnosed with COVID-19. Inpatient pharmacies should follow hospital protocols for reporting.

For resources and additional information on the District of Columbia Government's response to coronavirus (COVID-19), please visit coronavirus.dc.gov.

[1] cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/lab/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html