
NEW MEXICO HEALTH ALERT NETWORK (HAN)

ADVISORY

Updated testing criteria for COVID-19

March 31, 2020

New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) has updated its guidance for COVID-19 testing criteria to allow testing for **patients without symptoms of respiratory infection if:**

- **The patient lives in the household of a confirmed COVID-19 case OR**
- **The patient is a nursing home resident**

For patients who are asymptomatic and do not fit the criteria described above, NMDOH does not recommend testing.

NMDOH also recommends prioritizing testing for symptomatic (fever, cough and/or shortness of breath) patients who in the 14 days prior to illness onset:

- The patient visited any international or U.S. domestic location OR
- The patient had contact with another confirmed COVID-19 case OR
- The patient is 65 years or older and/or has a chronic condition (e.g., heart disease, diabetes, lung disease)

Additional Reminders:

- **COVID-19 testing does not require approval by NMDOH.** COVID-19 testing is available at TriCore, LabCorp, Quest Diagnostics, and the NMDOH Scientific Laboratory Division (SLD).
- Providers will be called with SLD COVID-19 test results when they are completed. **Please do not call NMDOH for results and communicate with patients that they should not call NMDOH for results.** We will prioritize calling positive results first.
- It is good general practice for all healthcare workers to monitor yourself for symptoms of respiratory infection if you have direct patient contact. If you are a healthcare worker with symptoms of fever, cough and/or shortness of breath, please isolate yourself, notify your employer, and contact your own healthcare provider regarding testing and follow up care.
- We recommend that you regularly check the CDC websites on [COVID-19](#) for the latest information.
- We ask that you forward this alert to your colleagues and advise them to subscribe to the New Mexico Health Alert Network to receive public health alerts on COVID-19 detection and infection prevention.

EPIDEMIOLOGY AND RESPONSE

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For more information, consult the [CDC guidance for Healthcare Professionals](#).

Resources

- [New Mexico Department of Health COVID-19 Webpage](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 Webpage](#)
- [CDC Interim Guidance for Discontinuation of Home Isolation for Persons with COVID-19](#)
- **New Mexico Health Alert Network:** To register for the New Mexico Health Alert Network, go to <https://member.everbridge.net/index/453003085613008#/login> and click “Sign Up” at the bottom of the page. Provide all information on each screen, click on “Save and Continue,” and click on “Finish” at the end to begin receiving important health alerts and advisories.