



Government of the District of Columbia  
Department of Health



Center for Policy, Planning and Evaluation Administration  
Division of Epidemiology–Disease Surveillance and Investigation

October 18, 2016

**Health Notice for District of Columbia Health Care Providers**

**New Procedures and Updates on Zika Virus Testing**

**In this Notice**

- **New online procedures for requesting Zika testing approval from the DC DOH**
- **New procedures for ordering Zika testing from the Public Health Laboratory**
- **Updates on testing indications and sample collection**

**Summary**

As of October 12, 2016, there have been 26 cases of laboratory confirmed Zika virus infection in the District of Columbia (DC), all of which have been travel-related or sexually transmitted. As of October 5, 2016, states had reported a total of 3,712 travel-associated ZVD cases and 105 locally acquired mosquito-borne cases in Florida to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Of these, 30 were sexually transmitted, 13 had Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS), and 1 was laboratory acquired. **To date in DC, ZVD has not been spread by local mosquitoes or via blood transfusion.**

**New website for Providers: Information on Zika Virus Testing in the District of Columbia**

- For the most updated forms and recommendations, please visit our new website for healthcare providers at <http://doh.dc.gov/page/providers-information-zika-virus-testing-district-columbia>.

**New Procedures:**

**1) New online procedures for requesting Zika testing approval from the DC DOH**

- **Zika test requests should now be submitted online** to DOH. The form can be found by clicking here: [Zika Test Request and Case Report](#).
- The link to the online system is also available on the website for providers: <http://doh.dc.gov/page/providers-information-zika-virus-testing-district-columbia>.
- Faxed case report forms and Zika test requests will only be accepted through December 1<sup>st</sup> 2016. Please transition to using this online system by this time.

**2) New procedures for ordering Zika testing from the DC Public Health Laboratory (PHL)**

- Facilities will no longer be asked to submit the CDC 50.34 form.
- Facilities will be required to complete the following **two** forms (available on the website):
  - **PHL Test Requisition Form**
  - **PHL Chain of Custody Form**
- The “PHL Test Requisition Form” must now **indicate the test that is being ordered**.
  - Select “Zika Virus Panel” for samples collected  $\leq$  6 weeks from exposure.
  - Select “Zika Virus Serology” for samples collected  $>$  6 weeks from exposure.
  - All other appropriate testing as part of the testing algorithm will be added as necessary.

- **Samples without these two forms will NOT be accepted by the courier.**

### 3) Updates on testing indications and sample collection

- We are expanding PCR testing to patients identified within 6 weeks of exposure.
  - Exposure is defined as travel to an affected area OR unprotected sexual contact with someone who has traveled.
  - Areas will be considered as having active Zika virus transmission based upon CDC recommendations: <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/>.
- Please submit **serum and urine samples for ALL patients** being tested **within 6 weeks of symptom onset, and ALL pregnant patients.**
- Asymptomatic pregnant women tested within 2 weeks of exposure and a subsequent negative rRT-PCR result should return for IgM testing 2-12 weeks after the last possible exposure.
- Starting on November 1, 2016, final results will be sent to your facility by secure fax **ONLY**. Please ensure your secure fax number is always included on paperwork submitted to DC PHL.
- Please allow 3 weeks for final results. If the sample needs additional testing at CDC, additional time will be required, however the PHL results will be reported to the provider.
- Sample collection instructions can be found at the website for providers: <http://doh.dc.gov/page/providers-information-zika-virus-testing-district-columbia>.

#### Review of ZVD symptoms and recommendations:

- Clinical illness is consistent with ZVD if a patient has one or more of the following symptoms: **acute onset of fever, rash, arthralgia, or conjunctivitis.**
- Testing is recommended for any person with a **positive travel history and who develops one or more** of the symptoms consistent with ZVD **within 2 weeks** of travel or sexual exposure.
- All **asymptomatic pregnant women** who have had possible exposure to Zika virus while pregnant or during the **eight weeks before conception** will be tested.
- Pregnant women should use barriers or abstain from sexual contact with sexual partners who have travelled to areas with ongoing ZVD transmission for the duration of the pregnancy.
- Samples from the following groups **will not be tested**: 1) men, children, and women who are not pregnant who have a positive travel history but are asymptomatic, and 2) men, children, and women who are not pregnant whose travel to areas with active Zika virus transmission was **more than 12 weeks ago (exceptions will be made if appropriate).**
- The CDC now recommends that men that have traveled to an area with active Zika virus transmission wait **6 months** before trying to conceive, **regardless of their symptom status.**

#### Important health messages during mosquito season:

- Be vigilant of ZVD symptoms in persons who have *not* traveled to an area with ongoing Zika transmission. If you are concerned about ZVD in a patient *without* a positive travel history, contact DOH.
- Returning travelers from an area with active Zika virus transmission should wear insect repellent and avoid mosquito bites for **3 weeks** to prevent local transmission, even if they are not sick.

**Please contact the DC DOH Division of Epidemiology–Disease Surveillance and Investigation at:**

**Phone: 202-442-8141 (8:15am-4:45pm) | 1-844-493-2652 (after-hours calls)**

**Fax: 202-442-8060 | Email: [doh.epi@dc.gov](mailto:doh.epi@dc.gov)**