

<b>DATE:</b>	1 October 2025
<b>TO:</b>	All Healthcare Providers
<b>FROM:</b>	Alberta Precision Laboratories (APL) – Provincial Public Health Laboratory (ProvLab)
<b>RE:</b>	<b>Mandatory use of the COVID-19 Influenza and Respiratory Pathogen Panel Requisition</b>

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## PLEASE POST OR DISTRIBUTE AS WIDELY AS APPROPRIATE

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### Key Message

- Effective October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, the **ONLY** paper requisition accepted for COVID-19, influenza, and Respiratory Pathogen Panel (RPP) requests will be the COVID-19, Influenza and Respiratory Pathogen Panel Requisition ([www.albertahealthservices.ca/frm-21701.pdf](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/frm-21701.pdf)).
- Requests using other paper requisitions will be **CANCELLED**.
- You must check off the testing required. Written test requests will **NOT** be accepted.
- Requests without the indication for RPP testing or clinical rationale provided will also be **CANCELLED**.
- Any add-on and reinstatement requests **MUST** use the appropriate forms and include all mandatory information (see Action Required).
- Orders placed in EPIC/Connect Care **DO NOT NEED** the requisition as all mandatory information is already required when placing an electronic order.

### Background

- Since 2020, there has been a significant increase in respiratory virus testing.
- A new paper requisition and EPIC/Connect Care order were introduced in late 2020 to better guide clinicians submitting test requests and help improve test utilization.
- Despite these measures, respiratory virus test volumes have continued to rise with many requests received without clinical indications provided.
- The COVID-19, Influenza and Respiratory Pathogen Panel Requisition completed properly will help to ensure patients receive the appropriate test.

### Action Required

- When using a paper requisition, **ONLY** use the COVID-19, Influenza and Respiratory Pathogen Panel Requisition to order RPP or other respiratory virus testing. This form is available through the following methods:
  - Web search: Use a search engine to find the requisition form by searching for "APL COVID-19, Influenza and Respiratory Pathogen Panel Requisition".
  - Direct link: [www.albertahealthservices.ca/frm-21701.pdf](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/frm-21701.pdf)
  - APL Guide to Services: Visit [Alberta Precision Laboratories | Lab Services](#) and search for "RPP", select "Respiratory Infection (Inc. COV-19) NAT" and select "RPP". The page includes a link to the requisition and other testing information, including criteria for testing.



- Make sure **ALL your requisitions** are reviewed and up to date in your local electronic medical record.
- Complete the mandatory “Specify Test”, “Clinical History” and “RPP Criteria” fields on the requisition along with any other relevant clinical information. If any of these fields is not completed, it may result in the delay and/or cancellation of testing.
  - If “other” is selected, clinical rationale **MUST** be provided
- Community patients with symptoms qualify for routine COVID-19 and influenza testing, while rapid COVID-19, influenza, and RSV testing is available for symptomatic in-hospital patients.
- Influenza is only tested during times that it is circulating at appreciable levels (usually October to May) except when the RPP is performed since influenza is on the panel. Refer to the Alberta Health Respiratory Virus Dashboard for information on what viruses are circulating (<https://www.alberta.ca/stats/dashboard/respiratory-virus-dashboard.htm>).
- Asymptomatic patients will only have COVID-19 testing performed unless they are pre-transplant and RPP is requested.
- When using EPIC/Connect Care, continue to order respiratory virus testing through the Respiratory Infection (inc. COVID-19) NAT order.

**Mandatory test and RPP criteria fields on the new requisition:**

Specify Test (select <b>ONLY</b> one)	Respiratory Pathogen Panel (RPP) Criteria
<input type="checkbox"/> COVID-19 only  <input type="checkbox"/> COVID-19 and Influenza A/B ( <b>MUST</b> be symptomatic and during influenza season, usually October 1 - May 30)  <input type="checkbox"/> Respiratory Pathogen Panel (RPP) ( <b>MUST</b> have an RPP criterion selected)  <small>Note: RPP includes COVID-19, influenza A and B, RSV, parainfluenza viruses 1-4, endemic coronaviruses (NL63, 229E, OC43, and HKU1), human metapneumovirus, enterovirus /rhinovirus, adenovirus, Mycoplasma pneumoniae, and Chlamydia pneumoniae.</small>	<p><b>Select One, only if RPP is requested</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Outbreak investigation ( <i>indicate E# in “Outbreak [E]” field above if available</i> ) <input type="checkbox"/> Critical respiratory failure <input type="checkbox"/> Severely immunocompromised ( <i>e.g. transplant, chemotherapy</i> ) <input type="checkbox"/> Myocarditis/pericarditis <input type="checkbox"/> Acute flaccid paralysis <input type="checkbox"/> Child with fever NYD after initial investigations <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-transplant <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

**Add-on test and reinstatement of test requests**

- Any add-on test requests or reinstatement of test requests for previously submitted samples must be accompanied by the ProvLab Add on Test Fax form (<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/frm-20721.pdf>) along with the COVID-19, Influenza and Respiratory Pathogen Panel Requisition, which **MUST** have the required information provided for testing.
- After filling out the forms, fax them both to the original laboratory that performed the testing using the number for either Calgary or Edmonton ProvLab on the ProvLab Add on Test Fax form.
- Add-on and reinstatement test requests are subject to the same testing rules and so the “Specify Test”, “Clinical History” and “RPP Criteria” fields must be filled out.
- If testing was originally ordered through EPIC/Connect Care, use the add-on test options available in EPIC/Connect Care instead of the above process. If you cannot add on in Epic, use the paper add-on process above.



**Inquiries and feedback may be directed to**

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**Approved by**

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