A CLIENT’S GUIDE
TO SUBMITTING
TO CAHFS

American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians
and ISO 17025 accredited

July 2022
The California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory System (CAHFS) is the backbone of California’s warning system that helps to protect the health of California’s livestock and poultry. CAHFS serves the people of California by safeguarding the public health with rapid and reliable diagnoses for animal diseases including those affecting humans. It also serves the equine industry by providing high-quality drug testing and pharmacology programs. CAHFS offers a multi-disciplinary team approach using a comprehensive menu of tests and innovative services to protect animal health and commerce, public health and the food supply. CAHFS operates in partnership with the California Department of Food & Agriculture, University of California Davis, veterinarians, and livestock and poultry producers. CAHFS is fully accredited by The American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) and is a member of the following coordinated National Health Surveillance Networks: National Animal Health Laboratory Network, Federal Emergency Response Network, Veterinary Laboratory Investigation & Response Network and the Centers for Disease Control Laboratory Response Network.

Diagnostic Services
Pathology, Bacteriology, Serology/Immunology, Toxicology, Molecular Diagnostics, Virology, Electron Microscopy, Aquaculture and Food Pathogen.

CAHFS Mission
CAHFS provides quality services that protect animal health and performance, public health and the food supply.

CAHFS Website - https://cahfs.vetmed.ucdavis.edu

### Hours of Operation
Monday through Friday from 8:00 am-5:00 pm except holidays. After-hours and weekend submissions are accepted at the discretion of the on-call diagnostician; extra fees will apply. Contact any CAHFS laboratory for more information.

### Lab Test & Fee Guidelines
Visit CAHFS’ [Lab Tests & Fees](#) page for individual test methods, specimen information, specific sample information and price of tests.

### Payment Guidelines
First time submitters must pay upon submission. Standard submission fees can be paid upon receipt. A monthly billing statement will be delivered via US Mail for any unpaid balances. Payment can be made in multiple ways; Visa/Mastercard (in-person or by phone 530-752-8700), cash (in-person) or check (in-person or by mail). Checks payable to: UC Regents.

### Reporting Results
CAHFS reporting is confidential. Results are provided as instructed on the submission form.

It is highly recommended a veterinarian be involved in any submission as CAHFS does not provide treatment or disease prevention recommendations.
CAHFS aims to provide clients with timely and accurate diagnostic testing services. The first step in testing is receiving an official CAHFS submission form, signed and completed in its entirety along with the specimen(s). The specimen submission form is a standard laboratory form required to be used by all individual or agencies submitting samples to any CAHFS laboratories. We understand that our form is comprehensive. It has been designed to acquire essential disease surveillance information plus information that will aid in deciding the laboratory approach or in interpreting laboratory observations. Download our fillable submission form at [https://cahfs.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/submitting/submission-forms](https://cahfs.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/submitting/submission-forms)

Thank you for providing us with complete and accurate information.

### Submission Form Guidelines & Requirements

#### MINIMUM REQUIRED INFORMATION ON ALL SUBMISSION TYPES

- **Veterinarian**: Veterinary oversight is strongly suggested upon sample submission
- **Owner**: Full owner information required if sample submitter
- **Bill To**: Provide complete billing information
- **Report To & Method**: Ensures report will go to all requested individuals.
- **Species Type**: Required to ensure correct test assignment
- **Current Location of Animal(s)**: To determine county & state in which animal(s) are located
- **Animal/Specimen IDs**: Necessary for sample identification
- **Sample collection date**: Date sample taken from the animal
- **History (clinical signs, ration, housing, vaccinations, treatments, production level)**, etc. (Use next page if more space is needed)
- **Duration of Illness**: Date of onset

#### NON-PATHOLOGY SUBMISSION TYPES:

- **Sample collection date**: Date sample taken from the animal
- **Sample ship date**: Date sample shipped/transported to the CAHFS laboratory

#### PATHOLOGY (NECROPSY) SUBMISSION TYPES:

- **Number of animal(s) in herd/group & Number of animal(s) sick/died**: Aids in extent of illness
- **History**: Detailed clinical history is used to guide & interpret necropsy findings
- **Disease/Conditions suspected**: Supports clinical history & ensures appropriate test assignment
- **Treatments/Medications given**: Assists in interpretation of test results

#### IMPORT/EXPORT SUBMISSION TYPES:

- **Sample collection date**: Date sample taken from the animal
- **Animal Movement Info**: Necessary for test method and turn-around time

#### IMPRINTED FORM:

- **Backyard & Regulatory**: Specify # of animals on premises
Sample Packaging & Shipping Guidelines

Packaging Guidelines:
- Protect the submission form from moisture by enclosing it in a Ziploc/waterproof bag.
- Do not use water filled baggies that have been frozen as ice packs; use gel packs.
- Place (small) carcass in a plastic trash bag, tightly seal bag to prevent leakage. Double-bag carcass in a second plastic trash bag with added frozen cold packs.
- Double-bag any fresh tissues. Organs placed in a single Ziploc or whirl-pak bag may leak.
- Package formalin-fixed samples in a sealed, waterproof container. Use parafilm to seal the lid and double bag with absorbent.
- Samples shipped in cardboard boxes should be placed in a waterproof bag or container and sealed tightly to prevent leakage.
- Do not put multiple loose glass tubes in a container/bag. Styrofoam mailers or foil-pack method is preferred.
- If using vacutainer box, secure tubes by placing strips of packing tape across the tube tops and adhere the tape to the box or by wrapping entire box in foil.

Supplies Needed for Packaging
- Submission form (plus a completed copy to place in envelope outside of box)
- Ziploc/waterproof bag for paperwork
- Two (2) plastic bags (trash bags suitable)
- Cold packs, frozen. NO ICE/DRY ICE
- Absorbent packing material (newspaper, paper towels)
- Cardboard box (insulated preferred)
- Packaging tape

Shipping Details
Ship via FedEx, UPS or other overnight delivery service. DO NOT send perishable items by U.S. Mail. Packages must be shipped to arrive at the lab on a weekday. CAHFS offers a discounted shipping cost thru FedEx. Please phone any laboratory for the FedEx client account number. FedEx shipping charges will apply upon receipt of submission.
Sample Recommendations

Recommendations to Make Sample Submission Easy

- Refrigerate samples if transport is delayed.
- Animal carcasses may be kept refrigerated for no more than 3 days prior to shipment. Freezing interferes with necropsy examination, but if carcass cannot be submitted within 3 days then freeze.
- Be sure to clearly label each sample being submitted for evaluation and include the corresponding animal/specimen ID information on the submission form.
- If more than 10 blood tubes are submitted, package them in the order listed on the submission form.
- Paired serum samples are frequently required for the detection of infection. Remove serum from clot & freeze the first sample until the second sample is drawn, then submit them together. Clearly label and distinguish acute samples from convalescent samples.
- Ensure snap-caps are properly sealed.
- For histopathology fix tissues in 10 times tissue volume of formalin.
- Place complete submission form in a Ziploc type bag separate from the sample(s)/carcass. Put the Ziploc bag with the submission form in the box at the top opening of the container separate from the sample(s)/carcass. If able, please tape an additional copy of the submission form outside of the box in an envelope in order for CAHFS personnel to easily identify what is in the box prior to opening.

Specimen Delivery Services for Submitting Specimens to CAHFS Laboratories

**FedEx:**  (800) 463-3339

CAHFS has contracted commercial service with FedEx for packages under 40 lbs. **Currently clients receive a significant discount by using the University of California, Davis FedEx account number.** CAHFS will subsequently bill clients for these courier fees. Rates are subject to change without notification. For shipping information and the University's FedEx account number, call any CAHFS laboratory during normal business hours. Please note that this account can only be used for shipments to CAHFS laboratories.

**Important items on FedEx form when using the University Account:**

- Request STANDARD OVERNIGHT (arrival is the next afternoon) or PRIORITY OVERNIGHT (next morning). **Do Not use "First Overnight"**
- On Bill-To section, RECIPIENT box needs to be checked (NOT Third Party) and the University Account number entered on the FedEx Acct No line provided.
- If requesting Saturday delivery to the Davis laboratory, please note:
  - PRIORITY SATURDAY DELIVERY must be requested and
  - NO SIGNATURE REQUIRED selected for driver to deliver packages on a Saturday.

**UPS:**  (800) 742-5877

**Golden State Overnight Delivery Services (GSO):**  (800) 322-5555

**OnTrac:**  (800) 334-5000

**Peninsula Messenger Service:**  Fresno (559) 294-7197, Bakersfield (661) 325-0246, Visalia (559) 734-6328

**U.S. Postal Service (USPS):**  (800) 275-8777

Due to delivery delays, the Davis and Turlock laboratories discourage sending samples U.S. Priority Mail Service. Call the destination laboratory for shipping information.
Stay Connected with CAHFS Connection...Get on our email list!
For timely articles and disease updates, subscribe to CAHFS monthly electronic newsletter, CAHFS Connection. To sign up, simply contact any of the four CAHFS laboratories through the Contact Us page with your email information. CAHFS Connection is also available on our website under the News & Disease Info section.