



COVID-19 Paramedic Postmortem Swab Collection

Adopted – 4/8/2020

Revised – 4/9/2020

Procedure: Paramedic Collection of Post-Mortem COVID Swab by EMS

Background: The King County Medical Examiner Office is working to provide COVID-19 surveillance. The information is essential to understand patterns of spread and attributable burden of disease. The ME Office does not have sufficient personnel to acquire routine field testing of decedents. (Testing for hospital deaths is well-managed.) Knowledge of COVID-19 status can also be useful for the EMS team and others involved in close contact. In light of the need and benefit to this testing, we are requesting King County Paramedic Agencies undertake COVID-19 testing on persons who are pronounced by EMS as dead in the field.

Process: The MSO or their designate will attempt to acquire a nasopharyngeal COVID sample on persons who die in the field from cardiac arrest.

Following death pronouncement, the MSO or paramedic designate is authorized to acquire a nasopharyngeal swab from the decedent patient.

Please complete the paperwork to label and register the sample with 2 matching identifiers (name and DOB).

The provider should acquire the sample while in full MEGG PPE.

The provider will use the test kit and follow the illustrated directions to swab and store the sample as shown below. Use one swab for both nostrils. Once acquired, place the sample and the order form into a protected plastic bag and refrigerate or put on ice. Record in ESO that “NP sample was acquired for COVID testing”. Arrange to have the sample transported to the State DOH in Shoreline, Washington.

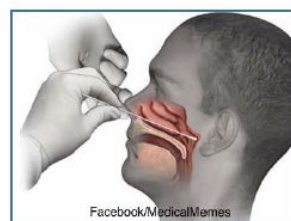
Postmortem COVID-19 specimen collection



1. Fill out Specimen Submission Form (2 patient identifiers: name and DOB).



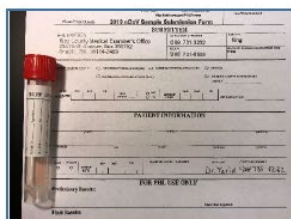
2. Label collection tubes (2 patient identifiers: name and DOB, plus date collected and specimen type “NP”).



3. Don PPE. Perform NP swab (use 1 swab in both nostrils).



4. Place swab inside tube and break shaft to fit, ensure cap is screwed on tight.



5. Double check labels match.



6. Place specimen on ice for transport...



7. ...or in fridge for up to 72 hrs.



8. Transport or ship to WAPHL:
1610 NE 150th St
Shoreline, WA 98155