As a first responder or healthcare worker, you are prioritized for COVID-19 testing if you become ill.

1. Call your doctor if you develop symptoms compatible with COVID-19.

2. Wear a surgical mask to your appointment.

3. Your healthcare provider will determine if testing is needed.

We electronically share the results with your provider, usually within 1-2 days from when we receive the specimen. They should also provide you with guidance for Persons Under Investigation (English and Spanish).

Information for your provider:

Only a nasopharyngeal swab needs to be collected. Health departments may have collection materials available. Use a synthetic tipped, sterile swab of appropriate size with a plastic or metal shaft. Do not use a calcium alginate swab or one with a wood shaft. Insert swab into the nostril parallel to the palate until resistance is encountered. Leave in place a few seconds to absorb secretions. Slowly remove swab while rotating and place tip into a vial of sterile viral transport medium. Aseptically cut off the swab shaft and cap.

Label the vial containing the swab completely:

- NP Swab
- Patient Name
- Date of Collection
- Date of Birth

Store properly until shipment:

- Refrigerate at 2-8°C for up to 72 hours
- Freeze at -70°C for longer storage

Completely fill out the COVID-19 form with the submittter EIN (facility tax #) and the submittter (facility) name.

All specimens should be packaged and shipped as a UN3373 Category B, Infectious Substance.

Ship overnight using commercial courier (UPS, FedEx) or private courier (e.g., hospital couriers). The State Courier cannot be used.

Keep cold. Ship refrigerated specimens on frozen cold packs and any -70°C frozen specimens on dry ice (the latter following IATA regulations).

Label the package completely.

Attention: Virology/Serology Unit, COVID-19
North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health
4312 District Drive
Raleigh, NC 27607-5490

Specimen deliveries are received at the State Lab loading dock from:
8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday - Friday
8 a.m. - noon, Saturday and Sunday