



NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**

## Newborn Screening Continues During COVID-19 Outbreak

March 27, 2020

### Action Steps:

**Local and tribal health department:** Please share with clinics, hospitals, birth centers, and audiologists in your jurisdiction.

**Hospitals, clinics and other facilities:** Please share with primary care clinicians, pediatricians, nursery staff, NICU physicians, laboratory staff, audiologists, and all other health care providers who might see newborns and infants.

**Health care providers:**

- Continue all newborn screening; bloodspot, hearing, and Critical Congenital Heart Disease (CCHD) screening during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Continue follow-up testing as usual.
- Follow [CDC guidance](#) to limit spread of infections to babies and mothers during screening.

### Newborn Screening and COVID-19

The life-saving work of newborn screening continues during the COVID-19 outbreak. All obligations, laws, and DHHS policies regarding collection of screening samples and completing hearing & CCHD screenings remain in place.

- Bloodspot collection and shipping to the North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health (SLPH) should continue as per protocol.
- Hearing and heart screening and reporting to the Division of Public Health (DPH) should continue as per protocol.
- All screenings should be done before discharge. If baby is discharged prior to 24 hours an additional bloodspot screen needs to be collected in clinic during the first week of life.
- Notification of abnormal lab or hearing results to primary physician/clinic by DPH staff will continue. When consultation with a specialist is advised, the primary physician should discuss with the specialist the best way to evaluate the baby given the community prevalence of COVID-19. Recommendations by DPH for seeking consultation and follow-up remain in place.
- DPH will continue to request:
  - Recollection of unsatisfactory specimens
  - Repeat screening after borderline bloodspot results
  - Outpatient rescreening/diagnosis for hearing refer/did not pass result
  - Follow-up testing for failed pulse oximetry results

## NEWBORN SCREENING CONTINUES DURING COVID-19 OUTBREAK

This guidance may change as the response to COVID-19 is constantly evolving.

- For consideration:
  - When possible, complete audiological testing prior to hospital discharge.
  - Be prepared to complete full audiological assessment at 1<sup>st</sup> outpatient appointment to avoid the need for multiple appointments.

### For More Information

- [CDC Coronavirus website](#)
- [CDC Information on COVID-19 and Pregnant Women and Children](#)
- [NC DHHS COVID-19 Response](#)

The content of this message is intended for public health and health care personnel and response partners who have a need to know the information to perform their duties.