



May 24, 2021

Dear Laboratory Director:

Tuberculosis (TB) continues to be a major public health problem in Texas. Reporting possible and confirmed cases of TB is essential to eliminating this disease as a public health threat. The Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 25, Part 1, Chapter 97, Subchapter A, Rule §97.3, requires suspected and confirmed cases of TB be reported to Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) or the local health department within one working day.

In addition to the reporting requirements, the TAC, Title 25, Part 1, Chapter 97, Subchapter A, Rule §97.3, (a), (4) requires laboratories submit a pure culture of *Mycobacterium (M.) tuberculosis* complex, including ***M. bovis*** and ***M. bovis BCG***, from patients suspected of having TB disease to the DSHS Laboratory in Austin. It is only necessary to send one culture per patient. It is also recommended to send a portion of primary culture growth, e.g., MGIT broth, as soon as possible or no later than one month after identification. A completed DSHS laboratory requisition form must accompany each submitted isolate. Details on shipping specimens are on the attached form.

While it is the responsibility of the laboratory that performs the confirmatory identification of the *M. TB* complex isolate to physically ship the isolate (one per Texas patient) to DSHS laboratory, the originating laboratory should ensure their reference laboratory complies and ships the isolate to DSHS.

Your cooperation with this important public health activity will assist us in our mission to improve the health and well-being of Texans. If you need further information, please contact Denise Dunbar, DSHS Mycobacteriology Laboratory Manager at 512-776-7342 or at [denise.dunbar@dshs.texas.gov](mailto:denise.dunbar@dshs.texas.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Imelda Garcia".

Imelda Garcia, MPH  
Associate Commissioner  
Laboratory and Infectious Disease Services

Attachment: Procedures: Shipping *M. Tuberculosis* Isolates to DSHS Laboratory, Austin