

TRANSIT TIME OF NEWBORN SCREENING SPECIMENS

NOTICE FROM THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES NEWBORN SCREENING LABORATORY

Ship dried Newborn Screening specimens via overnight courier, ideally to arrive at the DSHS laboratory **within 24 hours of collection**. Newborn screening disorders may cause life-threatening symptoms within the first week of life.

Model Birthing Facility Workflow to Minimize Transit Time of Newborn Screening Specimens

1. Collect all Newborn Screening specimens at least 4-5 hours before scheduled courier pick up. Ensure collection schedule allows enough time for all specimens to dry prior to shipment.
2. Dry specimens for 3-4 hours.
3. Assign a Newborn Screening Coordinator (and backup) to:
 - a. Gather specimens from all areas 1 hour before scheduled courier pickup.
 - b. Check specimen quality and accuracy / legibility of demographic information.
 - c. Follow up with the nursery or other areas regarding any specimens that have pending orders for which they have no newborn screening specimen in hand.
 - d. Account for all newborn screening orders.
4. Log all specimens to document shipment.
5. Use the specimen log to verify receipt of results for each specimen.

Reminders

- **DO NOT** batch or hold dried specimens for shipping.
- Ship dried specimens directly from the collection facility to the Newborn Screening Laboratory (Avoid shipping to a “main” facility for reshipment to DSHS).
- Identify process improvements at your facility to ensure prompt shipment.

How is your Facility Doing?

- Review your facility’s transit times on the monthly Newborn Screening Report Card.
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/lab/nbsHCRes.shtm#rptCards>
- Compare you recent performance with nationally published performance in 2012:
<http://www.jsonline.com/watchdog/deadly-delays-newborn-screening-programs-state-by-state-228834411.html#!/texas/>

We’re here to help! Contact the Newborn Screening Laboratory for more information.

- Call toll free: 1-888-963-7111 ext. 7585 or for local calls 512-776-7585
- Email: NewbornScreeningLab@dshs.state.tx.us