

## APPENDIX F

New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services

Division of HIV/AIDS Services, Epidemiologic Services

Instructions for Submission of Positive HIV Diagnostic Specimens

### A. Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to describe the procedures for the care, handling and submission of serum specimens from positive HIV diagnostic specimens. These serum specimens shall be tested using the Serologic Testing Algorithm for Recent HIV Seroconversion (STARHS). Results from *[these tests]* **\*this assay\*** will allow the *[New Jersey Public Health and Environmental Laboratory (PHEL)]* **\*testing laboratory\*** to distinguish whether an HIV infection is recent or has been ongoing, thus allowing for the determination of incidence i.e., the number of new or recent infections in a given population.

Surplus serum from the positive HIV diagnostic specimens shall be collected *[and]* **\*\***, frozen *[using vials and mailing labels supplied by the Division of HIV/AIDS Services (DHAS)]* **\*\***, **and labeled with the laboratory assigned accession number\***. Ideally, a minimum of 0.5 mls should be collected for each aliquot. The frozen serum specimen shall be sent to the *[PHEL]* **\*New Jersey Public Health and Environmental Laboratory (PHEL)\*** for processing *[and testing with the STARHS]* **\***.

### B. Materials

The materials used for submission of specimens include:

1. Cryogenic vials - supplied by the DHAS **\*or standard aliquot tubes and labels used by the testing laboratory\***.
2. *[Specimen labels - supplied by the DHAS. The label shall be used to identify the sample (barcode, number etc).]* **\*Storage boxes for vials.\***
3. Cardboard storage boxes for cryogenic vials shall be supplied by the DHAS if requested.
4. Freezer - samples can be refrigerated at 2 to 8 degrees centigrade, but for long term storage and shipping samples should be frozen at minus 20 degrees centigrade.
5. A supply of dry ice in pellet form.
6. Insulated shipping containers certified to ship frozen diagnostic specimens (HIV positive serum and dry ice) should be used.
7. A temperature log sheet should be kept to ensure that the freezer is operating properly.

### C. Specimen Collection, Storage and Processing

1. Aliquot the serum (0.5 mls per cryogenic vial **\*or standard aliquot tubes\***). Use a label to identify the specimen.

2. Store the aliquot specimen in the refrigerator if being shipped within 1 week of aliquoting or place in the freezer if being shipped later than 1 week.

#### D. Specimen Shipping

1. All specimens shall be sent to the PHEL at the following address:

New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services  
369 South Warren Street  
Health & Agriculture Building  
John Fitch Plaza  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0363

2. Specimens shall be accepted Monday through Friday during the hours of 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

#### E. Contact Information

Questions about these guidelines may be directed to the Division of HIV/AIDS Services, Epidemiologic Services, PO Box 363, Trenton, NJ 08625-0363

Phone: (609) 984-5940