



CITY OF HOUSTON

Houston Health Department

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Dear Laboratory Network Partner,

Thank you for your participation in the Houston Health Department carbapenem resistant lab isolate submission program. This program involves collection, confirmation and characterization of these isolates which is instrumental for the City of Houston to better understand and track trends in these highly resistant organisms. As follow-up to the original correspondence, please note the following:

- 1) The list of isolates being collected, confirmed, and characterized includes the below:
 - **Carbapenem-Resistant *Enterobacteriaceae* (CRE):** *Escherichia coli*, *Klebsiella oxytoca*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *Enterobacter* spp., *Serratia marcescens*, and *Proteus mirabilis* resistant to imipenem, meropenem, doripenem, or ertapenem by standard Antibiotic Susceptibility Testing (AST) methods.
 - Carbapenem-Resistant *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (CRPA): All *P. aeruginosa* isolates that are resistant to imipenem, meropenem, or doripenem by standard AST methods **AND** Nonsusceptible (intermediate or resistant MIC \geq 16ug/ml) to cefepime or ceftazidime.
NOTE: *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (CRPA) isolates that are resistant to all antibiotics tested should also be submitted.
 - **Carbapenem Resistant *Acinetobacter baumannii* (CRAB):** Resistant to imipenem, meropenem, or doripenem by standard AST methods.
- 2) Houston Health Department Lab utilizes MALDI TOF for specimen identification, mCIM for phenotypic detection of carbapenemase production, Streck AMD RT PCR for primary molecular detection testing, and ThermoFisher Sensititre for sensitivities. At the beginning of each month labs may send **10% of their CRE (designated species only), CRPA, and CRAB** isolates from the previous month (i.e. on August 1 – send in 10% of the CRE/CRPA/ CRAB isolates identified in July), if they wish to participate in this program.

UPDATE: *Candida Auris* is now a Notifiable Condition in Texas (NEW)

As of January 5, 2021 *Candida auris*, (*C. auris*) has been added to the Texas Notifiable Conditions list. Per the Administrative Code, *C. auris* isolates are required to be submitted to the Houston Health Department to aid in surveillance of this deadly organism. All *C. auris* isolates and any *Candida* spp. isolate that your laboratory cannot identify should be sent to the **Houston Health Department**.

Shipping Instructions for Isolate Submission:

Specific shipping instructions for *Candida auris* isolates can be found on the following DSHS webpage: <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/lab/ARLN/ShippingCANDIDAISOLATES.shtm>. **Please make sure to use the HHD Medical Microbiology test request form.**

Thank you for participating in HHD's Antibiotic Resistant Laboratory Network (ARLN). If your laboratory would like to submit isolates for testing, please follow these instructions. The HHD laboratory has a FedEx account that may be used for specimen shipment if your facility requires assistance. Please notify your needs in the email listed below.

- 1) Email HoustonARLN@houstontx.gov to notify the laboratory need of assistance or that you will be submitting specimens. Please provide your name, facility name, address, phone number, the number of packages, and approximate weight of packages. A FedEx label will be created and emailed to you for use if needed.
- 2) Package isolates with a HHD Medical Microbiology test request form with test 0217, 0218, 221 or 245 selected along with your facility antibiotic susceptibility report. Please fill out the test request form with all required information.
- 3) Email HoustonARLN@houstontx.gov when package is mailed. Results will be faxed and mailed to your facility.

Specific shipping instructions for *Candida auris* isolates:

Isolates should be selected from a single colony and submitted on a Sabouraud Dextrose agar, blood agar or other appropriate media. If you have CHROMagar Candida plates available, these are best for isolating different colony types. Please ship individual colony types separately.

Thank you for joining in this partnership with us in the prevention and control of antimicrobial resistance.



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