



New Jersey Public Health and Environmental Laboratories – Addendum to Technical Bulletin and Supplement-FAQs

March 9, 2016

Addendum to NJ Public Health and Environmental Laboratories (NJDOH-PHEL) Zika Virus Testing Technical Bulletin and Supplement, dated March 4, 2016.

Three New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) guidance documents were released on Friday March 4th and became effective on Monday, March 7th 2016. They are listed below and may be found on the PHEL webpage at <http://nj.gov/health/pHEL/index.shtml>

- *NJ Public Health and Environmental Laboratories Technical Bulletin: Zika Virus Testing for New Jersey Patients*
- *NJ Public Health and Environmental Laboratories Technical Bulletin Supplement: Zika Testing: Specimen Collection, Processing, Packaging and Shipping*
- *NJ Department of Health Updated Guidance for Local Health Departments and Healthcare Providers*

The PHEL Zika team has been receiving inquiries on the information provided. Thank you for your feedback and patience. The most frequently asked questions are addressed below:

Q: What if we do not have access to a -70°C freezer?

A: You were directed to store the specimens for Zika virus frozen at -70°C to -80°C: this is the ideal temperature to maintain the integrity of the specimens, especially during shipment, should there be any unexpected delays in the delivery. Moreover, storage at this ultra-low temperature affords the opportunity to hold specimens collected on Friday until Monday for shipment to NJDOH-PHEL. If you do not have access to a -70°C freezer, then you must do the following:

- Store the serum at 4°C and ship the specimen on cold pack overnight for next day delivery. Follow the Category B infectious substance packaging and shipping regulations. (IATA Packaging Instruction 650) All specimens must be received at NJDOH-PHEL within 24 hours of collection.
- DO NOT collect specimens on Friday, UNLESS you are able to have your courier deliver to the NJDOH PHEL before 5 PM on Friday or you can ship overnight for Saturday AM delivery at NJDOH-PHEL. If you ship overnight for Saturday delivery, you will need to alert the PHEL Zika team (zika.pHEL@doh.nj.gov). No specimen receipt is available at NJDOH-PHEL on Sunday.

Q. What if serum only is collected?

A: The specimen will be processed; however, you should know that there is ample evidence that a higher quantity of the Zika agent is detected in the urine compared to the serum. There is value therefore in having both urine and serum available for testing as necessary. Urine and blood are collected on the same day: duplicate urine and serum specimens (3ml each) are required. Label each tube with the appropriate specimen type.

Q: Are all the different tests identified in the technical bulletin performed on each specimen (urine and serum)?

A: NO: The tests performed is based on the patient's clinical and travel history as well as the findings from the initial screen test.

Q: Can specimens be stored for a short time in the freezer section of a regular laboratory refrigerator/freezer unit?

A: NO. Do not store any specimen at -20°C (regular, refrigerator freezer temperature): it can negatively impact the outcome of the Zika test.

Q: Can I still send specimens directly to CDC?

A: NO: Effective Monday, March 7th 2016, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will no longer accept specimens from NJ providers for Zika testing unless sent through the PHEL. ALL specimens for Zika testing must be sent to the NJDOH-PHEL as indicated in the Technical *Bulletin referenced above*.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Note: specimen not approved by Communicable Disease Services will be rejected for testing

- Please distribute the technical bulletin and supplement to all personnel involved in collection, handling, processing and packaging and shipping of specimens.
- Please direct couriers transporting specimens to PHEL to come to the **MAIN ENTRANCE**, NJ State Police campus (Exit 1 on I-95) and indicate to the State Police guard that they are delivering Zika specimens to the public health laboratory.

NJSP Division Headquarters - West Trenton

HEALTH & AGRICULTURAL LAB EMPLOYEES: USE COZY ROAD ENTRANCE

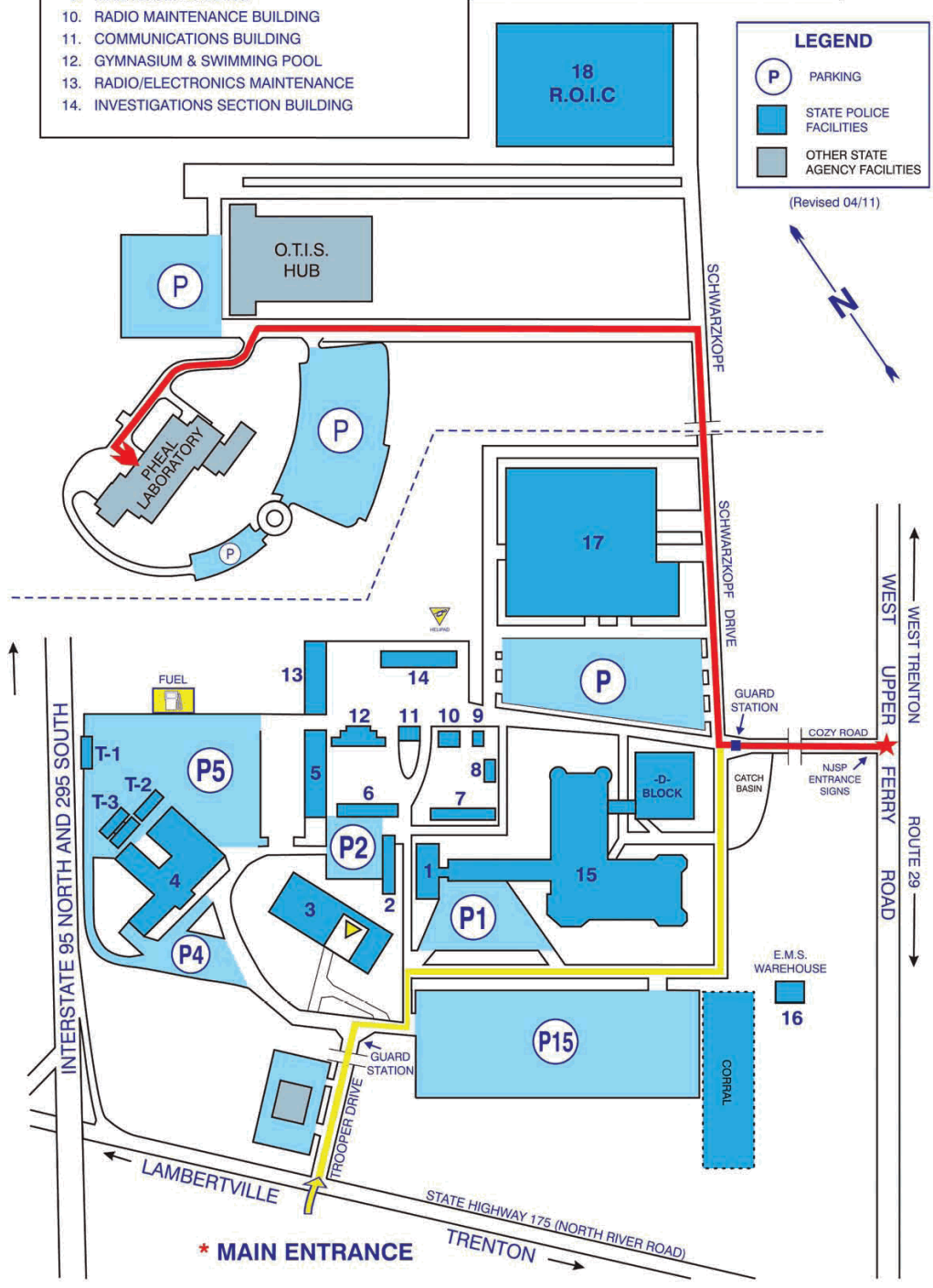
MAP LEGEND

1. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING	15. RECORDS & IDENTIFICATION BUILDING
2. FISCAL & GRANT BUREAUS BUILDING	16. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT / WAREHOUSE
3. NJSP MUSEUM & LEARNING CENTER	17. WAREHOUSE / PURCHASING / ADMINISTRATION COMPLEX
4. INTELLIGENCE / TRANSPORTATION SAFETY / MEDICAL SERVICES BUILDING	18. REGIONAL OPERATIONS INTELLIGENCE CTR.
5. AUTOMOTIVE MAINTENANCE CENTER	T-1. RECRUITING UNIT BUILDING
6. ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE BUILDING	T-2. NETWORK SERVICES BUILDING
7. SPECIAL OPERATIONS BUILDING	T-3. MARINE SERVICES & AVIATION BUILDING
8. FIREARMS	
9. MAIL ROOM BUILDING	
10. RADIO MAINTENANCE BUILDING	
11. COMMUNICATIONS BUILDING	
12. GYMNASIUM & SWIMMING POOL	
13. RADIO/ELECTRONICS MAINTENANCE	
14. INVESTIGATIONS SECTION BUILDING	

LEGEND

	PARKING
	STATE POLICE FACILITIES
	OTHER STATE AGENCY FACILITIES

(Revised 04/11)



* MAIN ENTRANCE