

**St. Louis County Department of Public Health
2019 Novel Coronavirus (“COVID-19”)
Amended Rapid Result Notification Order**

I. Background

The St. Louis County Department of Public Health (“DPH”) has been closely monitoring an outbreak of respiratory illness caused by COVID-19. Infections with COVID-19 have been reported around the world. The first confirmed instance of person-to-person spread of the virus in the United States was reported on January 30, 2020. The first confirmed instance of COVID-19 in St. Louis County was reported on March 7, 2020. A state of emergency was declared in St. Louis County on March 13, 2020, and several executive orders have been issued since authorizing the director of DPH to issue orders, policies, and other rules to implement those executive orders.

COVID-19 is considered an infectious, contagious, communicable, and dangerous disease for purposes of §§ 192.020-1, 192.139, & 193.300, RSMo., 19 CSR 20-20.020, and other state and local laws. The DPH’s director is the “local health authority” under 19 CSR 20-20.050(1) pursuant to 19 CSR 20-20.010(24), Section 4.130 of the Charter, and Section 600.010 SLCRO, and has been delegated the authority to act on St. Louis County’s behalf for the public health purposes described in § 193.300, RSMo.

19 CSR 20-20.020(2) requires that certain communicable diseases be reported “to the local health authority or to the Department of Health and Services within (1) calendar day” of confirmation of a positive test result. The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services recently waived the requirement that such reports be sent to the local health authority but retained the one day confirmation of a positive test result. Section 701.047 of RSMo allows St. Louis County to adopt more restrictive standards than the standards adopted by the state pursuant to Section 701.033 under which DHSS promulgated the Rules adopted in 19 CSR 20-20.020(2).

Given the highly contagious nature of COVID-19 and DPH’s responsibility to protect the public health by quarantining and isolating individuals affected by COVID-19, DPH requires the receipt of positive test results and that those results are received as rapidly as possible.

Violating a public health order designed to “prevent the entrance of infectious, contagious, communicable or dangerous diseases” into St. Louis County is punishable as a misdemeanor pursuant to § 192.300, RSMo. Further, “[a]ny person . . . who shall leave any . . . quarantined house or place without the consent of the health officer having jurisdiction, or who evades or breaks quarantine or knowingly conceals a case of contagious, infectious, or communicable disease, or who removes, destroys, obstructs from view, or tears down any quarantine card, cloth or notice by the attending physician or by the health officer, or by direction of the proper health officer, shall be deemed guilty of a class A misdemeanor” pursuant to § 192.320, RSMo.

II. Purpose

The intent of this order is to improve DPH's ability to isolate and quarantine individuals affected by COVID-19 infection by requiring rapid notification of test results to DPH to limit the spread of COVID-19 in St. Louis County.

III. Policy

1. Any laboratory company or healthcare provider who receives a positive test result for COVID-19 shall report that finding to DPH immediately, but not later than four (4) hours after notification of result.
2. This requirement for rapid result notification to DPH does not preclude, replace, modify, change, or in any way effect the reporting requirements of 19 CSR 20-20.020(2).

IV. Effective Date

This amended order replaces the prior Rapid Results Notification Order dated March 22, 2020. This amended order shall become effective at 5:00 p.m. on March 24, 2020 and will continue to be in effect until it is extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing.

V. Authorization

This Order is authorized pursuant to sections 192.006, 192.200 and 192.300 of the Revised Statutes of Missouri, 19 CSR 20-20.050 of the Rules of the Department of Health and Senior Services and by certain Executive Orders, as may be further amended.

So Ordered this 24th day of March 2020.

By:



Dr. Emily Doucette
Acting Director
Chief Medical Officer
St. Louis County Department of Public Health