



# Newborn Screening News

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## **New U.S. Postal Service regulations for mailing newborn screening specimens, effective June 12, 2003**

***This article provides information on the new mailing requirements for NBS specimens and what the Texas Department of Health is doing to reach compliance.*** A description of the new mailing requirements for dried blood spot specimens follows:

1. Two barriers are required between the blood sample and the outside of the envelope. This "double containment" may be accomplished by one of two ways: enclosing the specimen in an envelope before placing it into the outside mailing envelope, or by using a collection kit manufactured with a fold-over flap that covers the blood spots.
2. A universal orange or red biohazard label must be attached to the inner container whether using an inner envelope or a fold-over flap.
3. The outside mailing envelope must not contain a statement of content or a biohazard label.<sup>1</sup>

***What TDH is doing to comply:*** The collection kits for 2004 will be manufactured with a fold-over flap that includes a pre-printed biohazard symbol. These will be available in late 2003 or early 2004. New envelopes should be available in October or November 2003.

***What you need to do for now:*** We recommend that you follow these instructions until new supplies are available from TDH.

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<sup>1</sup> The Postal Service has approved an exception that allows the remaining inventory of TDH NBS mailing envelopes to be used through the end of the calendar year 2003.

1. Enclose NBS specimens in an inner envelope that is labeled with an orange or red biohazard label. You may need to fold the patient information section for the kit to fit into a standard legal size envelope. Avoid folding the blood spots or filter paper tab since this could damage the blood circles or cause the filter paper portion to detach from the form. If mailing multiple specimens, the specimen cards should be criss-crossed (turned in alternate directions) to prevent the blood samples from touching blood spots on other cards.

2. Place the inner envelope in the regular TDH NBS mailing envelope. You may continue using your existing supply of envelopes through the end of this calendar year. We recommend that you order new envelopes in early December and begin using them no later than January 1, 2004.

**We regret the added inconvenience and costs for our submitters and appreciate your cooperation and support during this transition time.** *For further information, please feel free to contact the TDH Laboratory at 1-800-422-2956, extension 3233.*

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## **Frequently Asked Questions about NBS Collection Kits: Processes for Ordering and Billing**

**How do I order newborn screening collection kits?** You will need to submit a Newborn Screening Supplies Order Form to TDH by mail or fax. The mailing envelopes and submitter identification labels for newborn screening kits are also ordered using this form. When completing the order form, be sure to fill in your facility's name and address in the upper left corner of the form (hint: the easiest way to do this is to place one of your submitter labels

in this space). The order form includes spaces for different delivery and billing addresses to help us process your order more efficiently. A new order form will be included in your supply shipment. For assistance with placing an order, or to request an order form, telephone (512) 458-7661. TDH does not accept telephone orders for newborn screening supplies. A written order placed on the Newborn Screening Supplies Order Form MUST be submitted before an order will be processed.

**How do I determine how many collection kits to order?** We recommend ordering enough for a 3-4 month supply. You will need to estimate the quantity of Paid and Medicaid collection kits based on your patterns of use. When ordering Medicaid kits, please be sure to include a signature in the box located in the lower left corner of the order form. Remember to also check your supply of envelopes and submitter ID labels so that you can order everything you need at the same time.

**How long does it take to get the collection kits?**

It normally takes about a week for your supplies to arrive. If you have not received your supplies within two weeks, call (512) 458-7661. If you need to get the collection kits faster, fax your order to TDH and refer to the instructions on the order form for overnight shipping. Please write "need overnight" and provide your courier account number on the order form if you need immediate delivery. Overnight shipping charges are billed directly to you from the courier, not from TDH. Do NOT include your courier account number unless you want overnight shipment. When your supplies arrive, be sure to rotate your remaining stock so that the older collection kits will be used first.


**Who can order the collection kits?** Orders are filled anytime a medical provider submits an order on a TDH order form. A contact person's name and phone number is requested on the order form in case we need to contact someone about the order. It is the provider's decision whether to limit who is authorized to order collection kits for their facility.

**How does the billing process work?** A billing statement is sent each month that lists any outstanding charges. You have 120 days from the date of shipment to pay for the Paid collection kits. If your payment is not received by the 160<sup>th</sup> day, your billing account will show a delinquent status. If you are having difficulty paying off a delinquent bill, contact the Accounts Receivable Section at (512) 458-7317 to work out a payment plan.

**What if we ordered too many collection kits?** We allow one return of the Paid collection kits per submitter every two years. Before returning any kits, call first to make arrangements (contact Lori Risenhoover at 512- 458-7318 ext 2658, or Patricia White at 512-458-7661). A \$50 return fee will be billed to your account to defray the processing costs for returned kits. Kits that are returned will be counted and checked for consecutive serial numbers. No credits will be issued for missing serial numbers. After the returned kits are verified, a credit will be applied towards your account. Credits will not be processed until the kits have been returned and verified. We will only issue a refund if you are no longer going to perform newborn screening. There is no need to return Medicaid collection kits since these are supplied to submitters free of charge.

**What should we do about expired collection kits?**

Continue using expired kits until you receive a new supply, then discard any expired kits. You may wish to contact Lori Risenhoover or Patricia White to see if there is a possibility of returning Paid forms for credit (no cash refunds for expired forms). The best ways to avoid having expired forms are to rotate your stock and to order only a 3-4 month supply of collection kits.

	To order free literature from the Newborn Screening Program for patients and specimen collection information for submitters, please call 1-800-422-2956, ext. 2129 or order online: <a href="http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/newborn/pubs.htm">http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/newborn/pubs.htm</a>
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