# TO: Submitters of Syphilis Specimens to the Missouri State Public Health Laboratory

FROM: Bill Whitmar, Laboratory Director

Missouri State Public Health Laboratory

DATE: March 28, 2019

RE: Syphilis testing

The Missouri State Public Health Laboratory (MSPHL) is automating syphilis testing during the month of April. No interruption in syphilis testing service is anticipated and no change to the report will occur.

MSPHL is implementing this change to provide better consistency in laboratory results. The traditional algorithm will continue to be applied which starts with an RPR screen, followed by RPR titer and TP-PA, if required.

One change that will occur with automation is more serum will be needed to perform the test. As long as the provided 6 mL red top vacutainer tube is full or close to full, there should be enough serum for both a syphilis and HIV test and any follow up testing that is required. Please continue to send the specimen to the MSPHL within three (3) days of collection in order to complete any follow up testing. Specimens will be unsatisfactory for syphilis screening ten (10) days after collection and will not be tested. To assist in transporting samples to the MSPHL, please visit our web site at [www.health.mo.gov/lab/courierservices.php](http://www.health.mo.gov/lab/courierservices.php) to find the closest courier drop off location to your facility.

Any questions regarding the automated syphilis assay should be directed to Nicole Ayres, HIV/Syphilis Supervisor, at [Nicole.Ayres@health.mo.gov](mailto:Nicole.Ayres@health.mo.gov) or Dana Strope, Immunology Manager, at [Dana.Strope@health.mo.gov](mailto:Dana.Strope@health.mo.gov) or by calling the laboratory at 573-751-1465.