

PROCEDURE NO.: SC.001

SUBJECT: Specimen Testing Priorities

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Purpose:

The turn-around time from ordering to physician's receipt of test results must be standardized to improve timeliness and efficiency. The testing priority indicates the urgency of the order.

Responsibility:

All laboratory personnel, physicians, unit secretaries, and nurses.

Procedure:

I. Immediate Response Labs

A. Test Orders

The physician will write the order for the test(s) to be done and place a priority for the blood collection.

B. Order Entry – LIS Description

The unit clerk transcribes the order from the patient's chart and to the Hospital Information System (HIS).

Routines (R) may be ordered and collected at any time

Timed (T) are to be ordered with a designated time and collected at designated time

Waiting (W) are to be ordered and collected when a Stat on a test is not stat eligible also may ordered when a patient is waiting for results for treatment.

Stats (S) are to be ordered and collected immediately.

Stat Future (F) may be ordered when collection time is for more than 2 hours in future.
Collect at designated time.

See Table Below

S	Stat	Collect immediately
W	Waiting	Collect immediately
F	Future STAT	Collect STAT at the future time specified
T	Timed Collection	Collect within 15 minutes of time specified
R	Routine	Collect routine on the day specified

II. Registered Outpatients

A. Test Orders:

The physician writes an order and either directly gives it to the patient to bring to the collection laboratory or faxes it to the testing center.

B. Order Entry

The blood collector or data entry personnel enter the patient order into the LIS.

1. **Routines** are to be ordered as current time
2. **Timed** are to be ordered with a designated time.
3. **Waiting** is to be ordered when a patient is waiting for results for treatment.
4. **Stats** are to be ordered when the physician needs the results immediately.

C. Processing:

Processors ready the specimen(s) according to the testing priority. A Courier should be dispatched to the collection facility to be transported to the appropriate facility (IRL or Core Lab).

D. Sorting:

Upon arrival of specimens in the appropriate sections of the laboratory, the technologist sorts the specimens.

When test results will not be available within the time frame stated, the Laboratory testing department will inform the ordering location of the delay and the expectation of when the results will be available.

References:

1. St. Luke Hospital “Timely Specimen Collection, Processing, and Resulting” Procedure. 10/97.
2. The Christ Hospital “Flow Chart for Routine, Timed, STAT, and Waiting Requests” Procedure. Last update: 10/11/95.