

Primary Contact

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Cruise Ship Passengers Returning and CDC Healthcare Setting Guidance Changes

Benton-Franklin Health District (BFHD) has been notified of cruise passengers returning to the community that are considered to be Moderate Risk for exposure to COVID-19. They have been advised by the Department of Health to self-quarantine for 14 days as all passengers are reported to be currently asymptomatic and deemed safe to travel. The passengers have been advised by DOH to notify their medical providers if symptoms arise. These passengers will be eligible for testing at the Department of Health Lab due to their Moderate Risk Classification but testing must be pre-approved by BFHD. Commercial testing is also available through University of Washington and LabCorp which does not require BFHD preauthorization.

Additionally, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have released new [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Patient with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 in Healthcare Settings](#). Of note, recommendations related to Collection of Diagnostic Respiratory Specimens are as follows:

When collecting diagnostic respiratory specimens (e.g., nasopharyngeal swab) from a possible COVID-19 patient, the following should occur:

- HCP in the room should wear an N-95 or higher-level respirator (or facemask if a respirator is not available), eye protection, gloves, and a gown.
- The number of HCP present during the procedure should be limited to only those essential for patient care and procedure support. Visitors should not be present for specimen collection.
- Specimen collection should be performed in a normal examination room with the door closed.
- Clean and disinfect procedure room surfaces promptly as described in the section on environmental infection control below.

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