

Specimen Minimum Labelling Requirements

This policy does not apply to specimens processed by New Zealand Blood Service (NZBS). Please refer to the NZBS policy.

At least **two** unique identifiers must be present on the specimen:

- Surname and given name (mandatory), and one of the following
- Date of Birth
- NHI number
- Referral laboratory number - **applies only to aliquots**

Approved locations only: Unique patient identifier code and DOB *or* NHI number

The following unique identifiers must be present on the request form:

- Family name and given name, plus NHI or DOB **OR** a unique code used by approved locations (e.g. STD clinic samples, donor number, etc.), and DOB;
- name or unique identifier of physician or person legally authorised to request examinations or use medical information;
- location for the report;
- tests required;

Desired

- signature of the approved requestor;
- where relevant. the full address and name of the health care provider to whom a copy of the report is to be sent. A comment in this regard will be registered and reported to requestor if this information is not provided;
- beep or contact number of requestor;

Note: Samples will not be returned to the referrer for relabeling. These requirements apply to all samples, including Emergency/Urgent situations.

Labelling errors

Specimens that are **unlabelled** or **mislabelled** will be **rejected** prior to any testing unless those specimens meet the exceptions criteria.

Minor mislabelled samples will be processed and reported with a disclaimer.

Labelling error definitions

Unlabelled: Specimen received with no identifiers or the minimum requirements have not been met – will not be processed.

Mislabeled: Specimen received where identifiers do not match the accompanying request form - will not be processed.

Minor mislabeled: Identifiers do not match the request form, but the error is minor and there is only one minor error – will be processed but the clinical referrer will need to take responsibility for the results. The only acceptable minor errors are indicated below:

- Short form of given name i.e. Beth/Liz/Elizabeth
- Current year as year of birth
- Transcription error of digit/letter
- Common alias, e.g. Richard/Dick,
- Surname and initial only if DoB and NHI are correct

Exceptions

Specimens that meet the exceptions criteria as listed below will be processed only with completion of a Laboratory Specimen Labelling Error Correction and Patient Discussion Declaration. Samples will not be tested until declaration form is fully complete.

Exceptions List:

Amniotic fluids
Aspirated body fluids
Biopsies
Bone marrow /bone marrow donor specimens
Bronchial wash
Chorionic villi
Corneal scrape
CSF
Foetal bloods/ fibronectin /tissue
Fluids (ascitic, CAPD, cyst, ocular, pleural)
Harvest specimens
Miscarriage products
Stones
Tissues
Vitreous humour

Note: Paediatric samples and clinical trial specimens will be determined on a case by case basis, and will need to be signed off by the testing laboratories Medical Director or delegate.