The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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TO: Blood Lead Providers

FROM: Sandra Smole, Ph.D., HCLD(ABB)

CLIA Director, Massachusetts State Public Health Laboratory Lijuan Su, PhD

Director, Division of Analytical Chemistry

DATE: October 14, 2022

RE: Notice to Providers: Changes to Blood Lead Testing

Although blood collection supplies are deemed in short supply, DPH would like to remind submitters of the importance of using lead-free test tubes for blood lead tests. Until recently, the MA SPHL has accepted EDTA (purple top) or heparin (green top) tubes with the caveat that they are pre-screened for lead contamination by the submitter. To avoid confusion and remove the necessity to verify tubes as lead-free, our submission guidance has been updated to require the use of K2EDTA (tan-top) tube or K2EDTA or Na2EDTA (royal blue-top) tubes for venous whole blood samples submitted to the MA SPHL for lead testing.

To allow submitters to adjust to this change in submission requirements, the MA SPHL will accept purple top tubes for the next **three weeks** ending on November 6th, 2022. During this interim period, MA SPHL will contact the submitter first regarding positive results from purple top tubes to confirm that the submitter has documentation to verify the tubes are lead-free. If this documentation is not available, the samples will need to be re-collected and submitted in an appropriate tube (K2EDTA (tan-top) tube or K2EDTA or Na2EDTA (royal blue-top) tubes).

On **November 7th, 2022**, the MA SPHL will reject all purple top tubes as “unsatisfactory for testing” unless the submitting laboratory is able to verify with documentation that lead pre- screening has been performed on the lot numbers in use by their institution.

If you have questions regarding this update, please email us at MASPHL.Laboratory@mass.gov.

Thank you for working with us to screen, diagnose, and treat childhood lead poisoning.