



March 16, 2020

Subject: Food and Public Health Testing Laboratories Addressing COVID-19

To Local Health Officials in the US:

We thank you for the leadership and expertise you are providing in the fight against the spread of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) in the United States. As necessary containment measures are implemented by governments at all levels, we want to highlight the critically important roles that both public and private sector testing laboratories will have in ensuring a safe food supply and enabling important diagnostics to determine public health priorities.

Such contributions of organizations involved in food safety and public health diagnostics and protection are especially critical during times of potential public health risks. Testing laboratories' continued operations are essential to the continuity of US food production, food safety assurance and public health. Therefore, trained personnel from testing labs will likely need access to some areas that have been closed to the general public. These essential businesses and public health institutions will undoubtedly be a major factor in solving this public health crisis.

AOAC INTERNATIONAL is a 501(c)(3), independent, third party, not-for-profit association and voluntary consensus standards developing organization. As a leader of analytical excellence, AOAC INTERNATIONAL advances food safety, food integrity, and public health by bringing together members, organizations, and experts dedicated to developing and validating standards, methods and technologies of global relevance that ensure the safety and integrity of foods and other products that impact public health around the world.

Sincerely,

David B. Schmidt
Executive Director