



Lincoln County
All-Hazard Laboratory Sample Transport Plan

March 2026

This document contains the plans and protocols regarding the investigation, identification, and containment of illnesses caused by pathogens, radiological hazards, and toxins. This is a hazard-specific annex to the Lincoln County All-Hazards Emergency Operations Plan. Should an actual event occur, the response may vary depending on the type of emergency situation. This plan will be reviewed and updated annually or as necessary by the Health Director, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, or designee. This version supersedes all previous versions of this document.

APPROVAL AND IMPLEMENTATION

All-Hazard Laboratory Specimen Transport Plan

This document is hereby approved for implementation and supersedes all previous editions.

Brad Black, MD

4-30-26

Signature

Date

Dr. Brad Black, MD, Health Officer

Amy Fantozzi

4-20-26

Signature

Date

Amy Fantozzi, Board of Health Chair

Kathi Hooper

4-20-26

Signature

Date

Kathi Hooper, Health Department Director

Record of Changes

Date	Revisions Made	Approved by:	Distribution Date
2016	Total Rewrite		
2/2024	Update Standard/Cat B and Rapid Tox Screen		
04/2026	Re-format, simplify.		

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Introduction

The Lincoln County Health Department (LCHD) has the ability to coordinate with local and state laboratories on a 24/7 basis. LCHD has a means of coordinating the transportation of routine laboratory and environmental specimens to the MT State laboratory and a safe means of coordinating the transportation of suspected hazardous laboratory and environmental specimens to the MT State Laboratory when a public health emergency is likely.

Purpose

I. PURPOSE

Lincoln County Public Health maintains a comprehensive All Hazards Laboratory Specimen Transport Plan to address foreseeable biological, chemical, radiological, and environmental hazards that may require specimen or sample collection and submission to the Montana Laboratory Services Bureau for testing.

This plan establishes standardized procedures for:

- Identification and notification
- Specimen collection coordination
- Packaging and labeling
- Chain of custody when required
- Secure transport
- Documentation and reporting
- Regulatory compliance
- Interagency coordination

This plan is aligned with the elements outlined in the All Hazard Laboratory Specimen Transport Plan Checklist FY 2025 to 2026.

II. SCOPE

This plan applies to:

- Routine public health specimens
- Category B infectious substances
- Category A infectious substances
- Chemical and biological threat samples
- Drinking water emergency sampling
- Rapid toxic screening clinical specimens
- Environmental samples associated with credible public health threats

III. AUTHORITY

Lincoln County Public Health coordinates specimen transport in accordance with:

- US DOT 49 CFR Parts 171 to 180
- 49 CFR 173.199 for Category B materials
- 49 CFR 172 and 173 for Category A materials
- 49 CFR 172.704 training requirements

- IATA Dangerous Goods Regulations Packaging Instruction 650
- Montana DPHHS guidance
- Montana Laboratory Services Bureau requirements

Failure to comply with federal transport regulations may result in civil penalties.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

Lincoln County Public Health

- Coordinate with Montana Laboratory Services Bureau 24 hours per day
- Notify appropriate state and local partners
- Ensure regulatory compliance
- Maintain updated contact lists
- Maintain inventory of CBAT and DWES kits
- Maintain documentation of trained personnel
- Ensure plan review annually

Healthcare Facilities

- Maintain trained Category A shippers
- Ensure proper packaging materials are available
- Notify LCHD of suspect or confirmed threats

Law Enforcement and Emergency Management

- Maintain scene security
- Preserve evidence
- Ensure chain of custody when required
- Coordinate secure transport

V. Contact Information:

MT State Laboratory:	800-821-7284	24-Hour
MT DPHHS (Epi Section)	406-444-0273	
MT DPHHS PHEP	406-444-0919	
MT DPHHS PHEP Duty Officer	406-444-3075	
Lincoln County Public Health	406-283-2465	406-334-4595 24-Hour
Lincoln County Sheriff’s Office	406-293-4112	ext 5
City of Libby Police	406-293-3343	
City of Troy Police	406-295-4111	
City of Eureka Police	406-297-2121	
LC Emergency Management Agency	406-293-6295	
Cabinet Peaks Medical Center Lab	406-283-7090	

Standard Lab Specimen Procedures:

SECTION VI. STANDARD CATEGORY B SPECIMENS

Category B specimens include routine patient specimens such as:

- Respiratory viral swabs
- Salmonella cultures
- Tuberculosis specimens
- Other public health concern samples not meeting Category A criteria

Procedures

1. Contact State Epidemiology or MTL SB prior to shipment for guidance regarding:
 - Collection requirements
 - Packaging instructions
 - Lab requisition completion
 - Expected arrival timeline
2. Package and label in compliance with:
 - 49 CFR 173.199
 - IATA Packaging Instruction 650
3. Ship via USPS, UPS, FedEx, or courier as directed by MTL SB.
4. Chain of custody is not required unless directed.
5. Documentation retained per public health record retention policy.

SECTION VII. CATEGORY A INFECTIOUS SUBSTANCES

6. Category A substances are capable of causing permanent disability, life threatening disease, or fatal outcomes upon exposure.
7. Examples include:
 - Suspected Ebola specimens
 - Select agents such as Bacillus anthracis
 - Francisella tularensis
8. **Requirements**
9.
 - Must be packaged and shipped by trained and certified personnel
 - Facility must maintain documentation of current training
 - Must comply with 49 CFR 172 and 173
10. The nearest facility with trained personnel and packaging materials is:
11. Cabinet Peaks Medical Center
209 Health Park Drive
Libby MT 59923
406 283 7090
12. LCHD will coordinate with the facility and MTL SB prior to shipment.



SECTION VIII. CHEMICAL BIOLOGICAL AGENT TRANSPORT CBAT

CBAT kits provide standardized collection for suspicious substances.

Location

Lincoln County Health Department
418 Mineral Avenue
Libby MT 59923

Activation

Upon identification of a suspicious substance:

1. Notify:
 - Law Enforcement
 - Emergency Management
 - LCHD
 - DPHHS Duty Officer
2. Notify MTLSB prior to collection when possible.
3. Samples must be prescreened for explosive, radiological, and chemical hazards by HAZMAT or Civil Support Team.
4. Trained personnel collect using CBAT kit procedures.
5. Chain of custody initiated immediately.
6. Secure transport arranged through:
 - Sheriff
 - Highway Patrol
 - MTLSB courier
7. MTLSB notified of estimated time of arrival.

All testing must involve a credible public health or law enforcement referral.

Drinking Water Emergency Sampling (DWES) Kit

SECTION IX. DRINKING WATER EMERGENCY SAMPLING DWES

DWES kits are used for suspected water tampering or contamination events. **Locations**

Lincoln County Health Department
City of Libby Water Treatment Plant

Procedures

- Collection by Registered Sanitarian
- Chain of custody required



- Notify MTL SB and DEQ prior to shipment
- Secure transport via Sheriff, Highway Patrol, or MTL SB courier

DWES kits are inventoried annually.

DWES Kit is located at:

Lincoln County Health Department
 418 Mineral Avenue
 Libby, MT 59923

City of Libby Water Treatment Plan
 199 Ravenwood Lane
 Libby, MT 59923

North Lincoln County Annex
 66121 MT Hwy 37
 Eureka, MT 59917



SECTION X. RAPID TOXIC SCREENING

For suspected chemical terrorism or large scale exposure events:

- Clinical specimens collected by hospital
- CDC authorization required
- Specimens routed through MTL SB
- Use Saf T Pak STP 300 or STP 310 containers
- Maintain full chain of custody

SECTION XI. CHAIN OF CUSTODY

Chain of custody is required for:

- CBAT submissions
- DWES submissions
- Rapid Toxic Screens
- Any specimen associated with law enforcement investigation

Documentation includes:

- Date and time collected
- Collector name
- Transfer signatures
- Condition upon receipt

Records retained per legal requirements.



SECTION XII. TRANSPORT OPTIONS

Transport may include:

- MTL SB courier
- Lincoln County Sheriff
- Montana Highway Patrol
- Approved commercial carrier

Transport method must align with hazard classification and regulatory requirements.

SECTION XIII. TRAINING

- Personnel involved in packaging Category A or B substances must complete required DOT training.
- Training documentation maintained by employer.
- Plan reviewed annually.
- Exercises conducted as feasible in coordination with regional partners.

SECTION XIV. COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING

- LCHD notified of all credible threats.
- State Epidemiology notified within two hours for high risk events.
- MTL SB provides results to submitter and local jurisdiction.
- LCHD activates internal disease surveillance procedures when indicated.

SECTION XV. PLAN MAINTENANCE

This plan:

- Is reviewed annually
- Updated as regulations change
- Contact lists verified annually
- Kit inventories documented annually

The following is an overview of each agency’s current collection and transport policy for specimens of immediate concern:

Agency	Human Specimens	Environmental Samples
Cabinet Peaks Medical Center Laboratory	Staff trained on collection, Courier on-call for delivery	Staff trained on collection, Courier on-call for delivery
Lincoln County Sheriff’s Office	Calls State crime lab for collection guidance on scene	Call Emergency Management Agency
Local Law Enforcement	Call Emergency Management Agency Calls State crime lab for collection guidance on scene	Call Emergency Management Agency
Montana Highway Patrol	Calls State crime lab for collection guidance on scene.	Call Lincoln County Emergency Management Agency
Local Fire Departments	Calls Law Enforcement	Calls Law Enforcement
Lincoln County Emergency Management Agency	If deemed credible threat to Public Health, notify LCHD/MT DPHHS. Maintain chain of custody.	If deemed credible threat to Public Health, notify HAZMAT and LCHD/MT DPHHS. Maintain chain of custody.

Each of the agencies listed above have protocols in place regarding collection and transport of specimens of *non-immediate concern*.

The hospitals have internal policies regarding transportation of specimens of *immediate concern*.

The primary responsibility of specimen collection, packaging and delivery of hospital *specimens of immediate concern* lies with the individual agency as spelled out in their policies. Their policies include notification of LCHD of any suspect or actual threats to the public’s health.