

COUNTY OF EL DORADO

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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Date: January 19, 2018

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Nancy J. Williams, Public Health Officer

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nancy Williams", is written over the printed name in the "From:" field.

Subject: Report on Contracted Public Health Laboratory Services

This memorandum serves to update the Board on the outcome of its approval for the cessation of county public health laboratory services in Placerville, which began May 2017 upon the retirement of our Laboratory Director. As you may recall, the lab had been performing both mandated and nonmandated testing. The approved plan was to discontinue Public Health's involvement with nonmandated services entirely because they can be performed by other entities in the county with little or no inconvenience to customers, and to contract with the Sacramento County Public Health Laboratory to perform all mandated testing. Nonmandated tests included water testing (for which customers have been referred to a certified water-testing lab near Placerville), blood-lead testing (which can be performed by commercial medical laboratories or by staff at medical clinics if they purchase the equipment themselves), and influenza testing (which was being performed as a courtesy to the State Public Health Lab) rabies tests of animals from other counties (which can be performed by another nearby public health laboratory).

HHSA's Public Health Division continues to be responsible for ensuring high-quality and timely performance of mandated public-health laboratory testing on specimens either identified by or suspected by community medical providers of being positive for any of the legally reportable diseases if the State needs further confirmation or more specific characterization of them. Biologic specimens suspected or known to be contaminated with, for example, E. coli, Salmonella, meningitis-causing bacteria, and other disease-causing organisms are now either sent directly from the hospitals or by Public Health Communicable Disease Nursing staff to the Sacramento County Public Health Laboratory. Animal specimens requiring rabies testing are also sent directly by HHSA-Animal Services to Sacramento.

I am pleased to report that the service we are receiving from the Sacramento County Public Health Laboratory fully meets our needs and that, although we are providing fewer services to the public and to our healthcare partners, we are fulfilling all mandatory public health laboratory mandates at less cost than when the lab was open. I recommend that we follow this plan for the coming fiscal year and beyond.

Vision Statement:

Transforming Lives and Improving Futures

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