

# Policies – Bronson Laboratory Services (BLS)

## Test Orders

Governmental regulations (CLIA) require that laboratory tests be performed only at the written or electronic request of an authorized health care provider. Only tests that are medically necessary may be billed to governmental entities. Michigan law prohibits offering professional courtesy testing; therefore, BLS does not perform such services.

Outpatient orders may be ordered on the Bronson Outpatient Bronson Laboratory Request Form. This form is available with pre-printed physician names and codes. It is important that all patient demographic and insurance information is complete.

All outpatient request forms must have complete patient, physician, and insurance information to ensure timely and accurate testing, reporting, and billing.

- 1) Clearly printed patient name
- 2) Patient date of birth
- 3) Lab test(s) being ordered
- 4) Diagnosis(s) related to the test(s) being ordered
- 5) Ordering provider signature Note: • In absence of the ordering provider's signature, an authenticated (signed) medical record supporting the provider's intent to order and medical necessity for the test(s) must be submitted.

## Custom Panels

BLS currently utilizes the standard American Medical Association (AMA) defined test panels along with the custom laboratory test panels. Medicare regulations require that physicians be notified about custom tests panels and the appropriate use of these panels. A custom panel is a specific group of commonly ordered tests that have not been defined by the AMA or Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

The Office of Inspector General warns that a physician who orders medically unnecessary tests for which Medicare reimbursement is claimed may be subject to civil penalties. Only those tests that are medically necessary in treating a patient's condition should be ordered. When all of the components of a custom panel are not medically necessary, order only those individual tests that are medically necessary for treating a patient. Please note that each component of a laboratory panel can be ordered individually.

The list of available Custom Panels can be found in our Annual Provider Notification letter, which is found on the Bronson Laboratory Services Catalog home page under General Information.

<https://bronsonlab.testcatalog.org/>

## Adding Tests

Bronson Laboratory Services retains blood specimens for a minimum of 3 days and some may be retained up to 7 days. If adequate specimen is available, BLS can add additional, follow-up testing to existing specimens. Additional testing will be performed if there is sufficient specimen volume and the correct specimen type is available for the tests requested. Regulatory agencies require written authorization be obtained for all test requests, therefore, all verbal requests must be followed by a faxed or mailed test request form within 30 days. To request additional testing, fax a copy of the "Request to Add Testing to Specimen Already Collected" form which is available on page 17 in this test catalog or call 269-341-6440.

## Repeat Testing

When test results do not correlate to the patient's condition or when an error is suspected, BLS will repeat the tests at the request of the ordering physician at no charge. The laboratory's current test methods and performance specifications are also available to clients upon request.

## Alcohol and Drug Screen Requests

BLS performs alcohol and urine testing for medical purposes only. Requests for employment/pre-employment alcohol and/or drug testing should be directed to Bronson ProHealth at 269-341-8938. After ProHealth office hours, patients with such requests are directed to the Bronson Trauma & Emergency Center. Specimens for employment urine drug screening are collected by ProHealth or Bronson Trauma & Emergency Center staff and sent directly to an outside reference laboratory.

## Laboratory Priorities

Please check the Alphabetical Test Listing in this BLS test catalog for turnaround times of specific tests. Most tests are performed around the clock and are generally reported within 8 hours of receipt. Some laboratory tests are performed in a batched mode once per day. Tests sent to the reference laboratory will be dependent on courier pickup times and the reference laboratory specified turnaround time.

- **Routine**: Depending on the tests ordered, results are reported within an 8- to 24-hour period.
- **Timed**: Specimens are collected at the specified time. Priority of testing may be designated as STAT, ASAP, or routine.
- **ASAP**: Results within 3 hours from receipt in the laboratory.
- **STAT**: STAT requests are given top priority, with most results within 1 hour of receipt in the laboratory. STAT testing should be used for diagnostic and emergent care only.

## Laboratory Result Reporting

The following are forms of notification for reporting results to the clinician:

- Printed Reports: Printed reports are provided upon result completion to the requesting clinician, as well as consulting clinicians, when complete name and address information is indicated on the order. BLS recommends the autoprint/fax method to receive results for both security and timeliness of reports. The laboratory consults with the office clinical staff to establish a schedule for automatically printing/faxing directly to the clinician's office.
- STAT Requests: STAT requests receive priority handling and the results are communicated to the referring physician immediately after test completion by a phone call or a fax. In cases where critical (life threatening) values are reported, a phoned report will automatically occur to the referring clinician, with request to read back the results to ensure accurate communication and patient safety.
- Epic CareLink: CareLink is a web-based tool you can use to access and view laboratory results and other patient information online. You can log in or request access using this link: <https://epiccarelink.bronsonhg.org> Please call Bronson IT Support at (269) 341-6330 with any questions or problems regarding CareLink.