

## Blanchard Valley Health System Laboratory Services

Blanchard Valley Hospital 1900 South Main Street Findlay, OH 45840  
Bluffton Community Hospital 139 Garau Street, Bluffton, OH 45817  
Armes Family Cancer Care Center 15990 Medical Drive S, Findlay, OH 45840

### Specimen Retention Policy (LTR55468)

Last Approved By: Dotts, Danielle (LIS Analyst - Admin) (03/27/2026)

Revision: 13.10

Last Approved Time: 03/27/2026

**Attention: Printed copies MAY NOT be the most current information. Please consult the Lab QMS for the current version.**

## Specimen Retention Policy

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### Principle:

Specimen retention defines the length of time various specimens are to be retained.

### Policy:

The following attached schedule contains Blanchard Valley Health System Laboratory Services chosen specimen retention times, as well as showing the specimen retention guidelines of other organizations. Blanchard Valley Health System Laboratory Services meets or exceeds all standards. The chosen specimen retention times are the minimum specimen retention time. If it so happens that the laboratory ceases to operate, the responsibility for specimen retention shall fall upon the entity mandating the close.

Care is taken with specimen storage so as not to cause cross contamination with reagents and materials used for testing.

### Requesting Additional Examinations:

Additional testing on retained specimens is often necessary and is beneficial to both the patient and the doctor since it results in a reduction of turnaround times and patient inconveniences involved with recollection.

**IMPORTANT:** Specimen viability varies widely depending on the sample type and testing requested. Caution must be taken when adding examinations in order to ensure specimen integrity. Additional testing and/or repeat testing are possible when the sample requirements for the desired test have not been compromised.

### References:

The following accreditation agencies guidelines were reviewed for specimen retention.

1. CLIA - Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act
2. CAP - College of American Pathologists
3. JC - Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations
4. AABB - American Association of Blood Banks

Department	Types of Samples	Chosen Retention Period (Minimum)	CLIA	CAP	JC	Other Organizations
<b>Hematology Specimens</b>	Serum, CSF, Body Fluids, EDTA, Na Citrate Samples	48 Hours	Not Specified	24 Hours	Not Specified	
	Body Films, Body Fluid Slides (Normal)	7 days minimum/ or as space allows	Not Specified	7 Days	Not Specified	
	Body Films, Body Fluid Slides (Abnormal)	7 days minimum/ or as space allows	Not Specified	Not Specified	Not Specified	
<b>Cytology</b>	Cytology Negative Slides (unsatisfactory)	GYN- 5 Years ----- NON-GYN- 15 Years	5 Years from Exam. Date	5 Years	5 Years from Exam. Date	
	Cytology Positive/ Suspicious Slides	GYN- 5 Years ----- NON-GYN- 15 Years	10 Years	5 Years	5 Years from Exam. Date	
	Fine Needle Aspirates	15 Years	10 Years	10 Years	Not Specified	
	Non-Gynecological Specimens	48 hours minimum or until cases are signed out by a Pathologist.	Not Specified	Not Specified	Not Specified	
	ThinPrep Pap Specimens	30 day minimum Room Temp	Not Specified	Not Specified	Not Specified	
<b>Blood Bank</b>	EDTA, Serum, Crossmatch Unit Segments	10 Days		7 Days		AABB 7 Days
<b>Histology</b>	Bone Marrow Smears	15 Years	10 Years	10 Years		
	Bone Marrow Biopsy	15 Years	10 Years			

	Histology Slides	15 Years	10 Years		10 Years	
	Wet and Formalin- Fixed Tissue	2 Weeks After Final Report	Until Final Report Issued	2 Weeks After Final Report	7 Days After Final Report	
	Paraffin Blocks	10 Years	2 Years from Exam. Date	5 Years	2 Years from Exam. Date	
<b>Urinalysis</b>	Urine	2 Days		2 Days		
<b>Chemistry</b>	Serum, Plasma, Body Fluids, Urine, Whole Blood, CSF, Swabs	3 Days	Not Specified	24 Hours		
	Occupational Exposure Specimens (with no testing ordered)	90 days frozen				

**\*\*Send out specimens** have no specified retention guidelines from CAP, JC or CLIA.\*\*  
Send out specimen aliquots with transport temperature requirements of refrigerate or frozen are stored frozen for 2 months (this also applies to extra CSF). Send out specimen aliquots with a transport temperature requirement of room temperature are stored at room temperature for at least 72 hours.

<b>Microbiology</b>	Blood Films/ Body Fluid Slides	2 weeks				
	Culture Swabs	room temperature overnight				
	Urines for Possible Culture	overnight, refrigerated				
	Tissue	2 weeks, refrigerated				
	Stools	2 days, refrigerated				
	Urine	Overnight				
	Sputum	overnight, refrigerated				
	Rejected Sputum	1 week refrigerated, or until new specimen collected				
	Blood Cultures	5 days, on the instrument				

	Mycoplasma serum	6 months, frozen				
	Molecular Testing Swabs, Urine, and Thin Prep aliquot tubes	30 days minimum, room temperature				