Yersinia pestis (Plague) by Real-time (TaqMan®) PCR Assay
(Non FDA approved)

**Method:** Real Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (q-PCR)
Amplification of *Yersinia pestis* DNA.

**Testing Scope:** Rapid presumptive identification by q-PCR of suspect *Yersinia pestis* from isolates or directly from clinical specimens and/or environmental specimens. Followed by confirmatory culture methods.

**Preferred Specimen:** Gram negative bacteria grown in liquid medium/blood culture or isolate on agar plates or slates. Collect other specimens if/as clinically indicated (lymph node aspirates, lesion exudates, bronchial/tracheal washings or nasopharyngeal swabs from inhalational exposure.
Non-clinical environmental/evidentiary samples (paper, powder, soil, food, grass, water or air samples) accepted from law enforcement agencies ONLY.

**Specimen Container:** Isolates submitted in screw top slants.
Swabs submitted in screw top polypropylene centrifuge tubes. Do Not use calcium alginate or cotton tip swabs.

**Specimen Identification:** Label specimen with patient’s first name, last name, DOB, collection date/time and specimen source.

**Special Instructions:** Alert NSHL staff (Microbiology or Emergency Response) when sending specimen for testing.

**Shipping Requirements:**
- **Clinical** – Room temperature for culture isolates.
- **Environmental** – Ship samples 2-8°C.
- *In either case ship according to current IATA regulations.*

**Note:** Post antibiotic specimens may be compromised for the confirmatory culture methods.

**Sample Rejection Criteria:** Swabs with calcium alginate or cotton tips and wooden shafts.
Unlabeled or Mislabeled specimens

**Turn-around-time:** Presumptive PCR result within 12-24 hours, M-F;
Culture confirmatory and speciation 7-10 days