

**APHL
Lab Director Transitions Guide
Online Toolkit**

[Headline]
State Health Laboratory Press Release Template
Example from Rhode Island State Health Laboratory

Modify this template using your lab and story information and create your own press release for distribution. Your lab's communication department may handle press releases, but if not, they might still help out with the writing, editing and proofreading. This model is for demonstration purposes only.

[YOUR LETTERHEAD]

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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Contact: Name, Phone, Fax, Email]
[Address]
[Name of Laboratory] Rhode Island State Health Laboratory

**[HEADLINE] The Rhode Island State Health Laboratory Implements Next
Generation HIV Testing**
[SUBHEAD IF APPLICABLE]

[DESCRIPTION OF LAB-RELATED NEWS STORY—*Describe event that you want the general public to have a greater understanding of, with particular emphasis on the role of the laboratory in responding to the event. You may also include stories highlighting accomplishments of the lab and stories that support the lab's ability to respond to events of public health significance.*]

[BEGIN your news release with a dateline, showing where and when. Make clear right away what the news is and why it matters.]

Providence, RI, December 15, 2011—The Rhode Island State Health Laboratory announced today that it has completed implementation of a new state-of-the-art test for the AIDS virus. The new test, manufactured by Abbott Diagnostics, is a fourth generation test, which detects antibodies to both forms of the HIV virus, HIV1 and HIV2, as well as detecting a protein on the surface of the virus itself. The ability to identify the virus directly is the hallmark of this latest version of the Abbott test. The ability to identify the virus allows for earlier detection of HIV infection, which translates to earlier treatment. In addition, earlier identification of infected individuals provides an opportunity to prevent transmission of HIV to additional people.

[QUOTE(S) FROM LAB DIRECTOR OR LEADER ON NEWS TOPIC]

“We are very excited about being able to offer a more sensitive and more comprehensive test to physicians working to manage AIDS patients” said Dr. Robert Ireland, chief clinical laboratory scientist for the State Health Laboratory. “It is an exciting new public health tool, which will allow physicians to identify infected patients earlier in the infection cycle, providing more rapid access to treatment and providing public health officials with another means to slow the transmission of AIDS.”

[IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC HEALTH LAB TO PUBLIC HEALTH MISSION—*Include boilerplate material describing role of all state health labs in responding to events of public health significance. Mention other state, regional, or national partners with whom the lab routinely collaborates to protect the public from exposure to diseases and other hazards, both natural and manmade.*]

The mission of the Rhode Island State Health Laboratory is to identify and mitigate hazards that pose a threat to the health and well-being of the people of Rhode Island. This goal is achieved by the provision of quality analytical and technical laboratory services in support of state and national disease prevention and control, environmental health programs, and the criminal justice system. The State Health Laboratory performs chemical, physical and microbiological analyses of environmental samples, clinical specimens and forensic evidence. The results of these scientific examinations are used to monitor the spread of infectious diseases caused by pathogenic bacteria, viruses or parasites, to assure the safety of drinking water and food supply, and to aid law enforcement in crime investigations and adjudication.

[GENERAL STATE HEALTH LABORATORY DESCRIPTION—*Include general overview of the lab’s normal operation and capacity for dealing with outbreaks of public health significance. You can write this section in advance and use it for every news release, tailored with information for the specific type of event described above.*]

The Rhode Island State Health Laboratory is a division of the Department of Health. The laboratory supports the wider goal of promoting public health through collaboration with a variety of local, state and federal partners including the Department of Health Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Office of Food Protection, the Department of Environmental Management, and municipal and state law enforcement agencies. In addition, the State Health Laboratory works closely with federal partners such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the EPA, the FDA and FBI. Together with our partners, the Rhode Island State Health Laboratory is working to ensure the health and safety of all Rhode Islanders.

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