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FLORIDA APPLAUDS OUR HARD WORKING LAB PROFESSIONALS



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Tallahassee, Fla.—The Florida Department of Health encourages all of Florida’s residents and visitors to recognize the important work our licensed medical laboratory professionals do each day during Medical Laboratory Professionals Week (MLPW), April 24-30, 2016. This is currently the 41st year of MLPW, which is coordinated by representatives from 15 national clinical laboratory organizations to reflect on the important work and history of this profession. There are approximately 300,000 clinical laboratory professionals in the United States.

“We are proud to have a great team of 220 professionals working in our public health labs and many others throughout the state of Florida,” said Interim State Surgeon General Dr. Celeste Philip. “Lab clinicians are working hard to protect the health of everyone in our state through the testing and research they conduct year round. They are on the front lines of the department’s efforts to protect the public from emerging health threats such as Zika.”

The Bureau of Public Health Laboratories (BPHL), headquartered in Tallahassee, has three laboratories located in Jacksonville, Miami and Tampa to service the 67 county health departments and other partners across the state. The BPHL provides diagnostic and reference laboratory services as provided by the program office, which includes clinical services for sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis, rabies and pathology of current and emerging diseases.

In Florida, two of our three public health laboratories have the capability to test for the Zika virus. The reagents for the test for active virus is commercially available while the antibody test for Zika virus (to see if a person ever had it) is only available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. To date, our Florida labs have tested 948 people for Zika virus. Florida currently has the capacity to test 6,615 people for active Zika virus infections and 1,434 for Zika antibodies.

You can learn more about the Bureau of Public Health Laboratories in Florida [here](#) or view information on licensing for clinical laboratory personnel, click [here](#).

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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