

AHL LabNote Number 43

updated May 2026

Reporting of lab test results *AHL Client Services*

Normally, the AHL deals directly with Vet-clients. If you are an Owner-client and have questions about interpretation of your AHL report, or require treatment or health management information, please contact your veterinarian. If in need of help, your veterinarian is welcome to call us. Please note: **Owners that are paying for the post-mortem will receive a copy of the report ONLY after the case has been finalized.**

The AHL emphasizes involvement of referring veterinarians with respect to test results because of the type of services AHL provides. The AHL does NOT have a veterinarian-client-patient relationship (VCPR) with its clients and does not give treatment recommendations. Rather, AHL provides specialized testing services which can assist referring veterinarians in their diagnosis. Specimens may be submitted by Owner-clients **ONLY** if the name of a licensed veterinarian is provided. By submitting the name of a licensed veterinarian, Owner-clients consent to the disclosure of the test results to the licensed veterinarian.

The **usual flow of events** in testing and reporting to a Vet-client on a submission to the AHL is as follows:

1. If a postmortem examination is requested, it is conducted as soon as possible; date and time of the postmortem are recorded. If urgent, findings of the postmortem examination will be phoned to the referring veterinarian.
2. **Results are faxed/emailed to veterinary clinics as soon as they are verified.** The working days (not including weekends/holidays) required for test results depend upon test methodology and are typically:
 - a. Gross pathology, 1-3 days
 - b. Parasitology, 1-3 days
 - c. Bacteriology, 3-7 days
 - d. Histopathology, 3-10 days
 - e. Molecular Biology, 2-5 days
 - f. Mycoplasmaology, 2-21 days
 - g. Toxicology, 5-30 days
 - h. Virology, 2-21 days
 - i. Clinical Pathology, 1-2 days

Extra time will be required for special testing, and for tests done by external labs.

3. Although we cannot always reach a definitive diagnosis, we should be able to rule out several specific causes of disease. When all tests are complete, a **final report** is sent to the referring veterinarian.
4. Clients are responsible for the costs of services. Our general practice is to bill Vet-clients only. For Owner-clients, we require a partial payment for companion animal postmortem service (cash, debit or credit card). The current partial payment for companion animals (dogs, cats) is **\$730 (\$795 if private cremation is requested)**. The current partial payment for horses is **\$970** (including disposal). Pet bird or pocket pet partial payment is **\$425 (\$490 if private cremation is requested)**. **Additional charges may be added to your invoice.** *Note: A fee of \$65 applies for handling, storage and return of remains approximately 1 week after closure of the case.*
5. By submitting specimens to the AHL for testing, the submitter acknowledges that s/he is the owner or is a duly authorized agent of the owner. The submitter acknowledges and agrees that the AHL may share test results and contact information as it deems necessary for the purposes of relevant legislation regarding reportable or notifiable diseases and for the purpose of surveillance of animal or public health in Ontario.
6. Private cremation may be requested at the time of submission. We do not perform cosmetic postmortems and due to Biosafety requirements, animal remains cannot be returned. **If private cremation is requested, please make arrangements through a private cremation company and advise us immediately.** *Note: A fee of \$65 applies for handling, storage and return of remains approximately 1 week after closure of the case.*
7. Specimens submitted to the University of Guelph, and any information or Intellectual Property identified by or arising from such specimens, belong to the University unless other arrangements are made in writing at the time of submission.