



# COVID-19 Genomic Data Specialist

## Join the COVID-19 Pandemic Response

The [Association of Public Health Laboratories \(APHL\)](#) is offering an exciting opportunity for bioinformatics scientists to use and expand their skill set while assisting public health laboratories with the COVID-19 pandemic response. The COVID-19 Genomic Data Specialist position is an opportunity for master's- and doctoral-level students and professionals to gain valuable experience assisting laboratories with SARS-CoV-2 genome assembly and uploading sequence data to public access repositories, while networking with scientists on the front lines of public health.

## Program Specifics

COVID-19 Genomic Data Specialists will be matched with a specific state or local public health laboratory to assist with their genomic data and bioinformatics needs. This is a remote, part-time opportunity through June 30, 2022; funding permitting, there is a possibility for extension beyond that date. Specialists will be paid an hourly rate of \$30/hour for 8-20 hours per week as independent consultants.\* Hours will be flexible but will require adherence to deadlines set by the host laboratory and APHL. Genomic Data Specialists may be asked to:

- Process raw sequencing data to consensus genomes and review.
- Track, review and submit SARS-CoV-2 sequence data to national and international data repositories, such as GISAID and the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) GenBank.
- Perform quality analysis and review SARS-CoV-2 variants identified in the sequences.
- Follow guidance from federal partners to ensure compliance with best practices for quality analysis, documentation, annotation and variant identification.
- Infer SARS-CoV-2 phylogenetic trees and local Nextstrain builds.

In addition to laboratory-specific work, associates participate in distance-based training and learning activities to achieve proficiency in select [public health laboratory core competencies](#).

## Become a COVID-19 Genomic Data Specialist

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and positions will be offered and filled as host laboratory opportunities are available. This position is considered to be an independent contractor.\* To be considered, you must:

- Be available 8-20 hours per week. Hours are flexible but you must be able to respond to some email inquiries during standard business hours.
- Have a computer capable of performing the tasks described above.
- Minimum educational requirement: bachelors degree. Preference will be given to those with some graduate education and/or significant experience demonstrating competency in bioinformatics. Those still in pursuit of their graduate degrees are encouraged to apply.

[Submit an application to join the COVID-19 Genomic Data Specialist Team.](#)

## Why are COVID-19 Genomic Data Specialists needed?

Public health laboratories are utilizing Next Generation Sequencing of SARS-CoV-2-positive respiratory specimens to track virus evolution and genetic variants, and timely submission of these sequences is critical for national and international public health response and knowledge. Analysis, management and curation of these data is essential to this process, but many public health laboratories lack staff with an expertise in this field. Genome Data Specialists will be crucial to ensure the complete and prompt assembly and submission of genomic sequences, supporting both the laboratory and the national efforts for SARS-CoV-2 surveillance and variant detection.

## What are Public Health Laboratories?

[Public health laboratories](#) are highly specialized governmental laboratories that monitor and detect a range of health threats, such as emerging and infectious diseases, genetic disorders in newborns, environmental hazards, biological terrorist agents and much more.

The US public health laboratory system has played an integral role in the national COVID-19 pandemic response, handling a large volume of high-complexity testing.

[Learn more about public health laboratories and their role in the COVID-19 response.](#)

**\*COVID-19 Genomic Data Specialists will be independent contractors, not employees of APHL or their assigned laboratory. APHL is not responsible for withholding federal, state or local tax from your stipend payments, assumes no tax liability.**

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**Submit an application today!**

**[COVID-19 Genomic Data Specialist](#)**