Guidelines for transporting biological specimens (i.e. human/animal blood, body fluids, tissues):

- Specimen containers should be watertight and leak-proof.
- If the specimen container is a tube, ensure it is tightly capped and placed in a rack to maintain an upright position. The caps on tubes can be wrapped with parafilm to ensure that there is no leakage.
- Single tubes can be placed in a Ziploc bag with the biohazard label on the bag. Absorbent (paper towels, kimwipes, diaper pads, etc.) should be placed inside the bag or in the transport box.
- When transporting multiple primary containers, package them in a manner that will prevent damage to the containers. For example, if you are preparing to transport a number of vacutainers, place these in a rack or tube holder that will prevent contact between the tubes. If possible, place rack inside a large Ziploc bag.
- Place specimen containers and racks in robust, leak-proof plastic or metal transport boxes with secure, tight fitting covers. Triple packaging should be employed. For additional containment, the transport box, which may be a cooler, can be placed inside a Rubbermaid type box with lid. Place absorbent inside the Rubbermaid container.
- Label each transport box appropriately, consistent with its contents, a biohazard symbol (or biohazard symbol on Ziploc bag inside the transport box), the name and telephone number of an emergency contact person, and the receiver’s name address and telephone number.
- Specimen data forms and identification data should accompany each transport box.
- Keep spill kits containing absorbent material, a chloride disinfectant, a leak-proof waste container and PPE (gloves) in the transport vehicle.
- Secure the transport boxes in the transport vehicle.
- Travel directly from the pick up location to the drop off point.
- During transport, vehicle should only be used for that purpose.

Receiving packages or specimens:

- Before opening a package, shipment should be examined for the following:
  - Proper paperwork and labeling
  - Package integrity (report any leaking packages to the sending dept. and the PI)
- Package Delivery: deliver package directly to the designated person
- Opening the package: Open package in lab with appropriate safety equipment (PPE and Biological Safety Cabinet)

If you have any questions on the transporting of biological specimens, please contact the office of Environmental Health Safety and Risk Management at 210-829-6035 or 210-805-3068