Determining Type (Extent) of Laboratory Service-All participants, regardless of the extent of their laboratory practice, evaluate the same specimens. In order to be graded appropriately, you must report the extent of laboratory practice (Extent 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) for each specimen. Determine your extent as follows:

1. Subject each specimen to your protocol for each source as described at each specimen number on your reporting form.
2. Based on what you would report in the context of your specific laboratory practice, determine your extent for each specimen independently of each other, according to the definitions on the reporting form and clarified in the following table:

Results Reported	Extent of Laboratory Service					
	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Gram Strain	must not rpt	must report	may report	may report	may report	may report
Antigen Screen	must not rpt	may report	must report	may report	may report	may report
Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (ASTs)*	may report	may report	may report	may report	may report	may report
Identification to Genus Only	must not rpt	may report	may report	must report	must not rpt	must not rpt
Specification of Aerobes	must not rpt	may report	may report	may report	must report	must report
Identification of Anaerobes	must not rpt	may report	may report	may report	may report	must report

**Reporting ASTs applies only to Specimen 1 and assumes the use of pure isolates. Participants performing ASTs without identifications, even presumptive ones, must use Extent 0 to avoid being given a score of zero for missing culture results.*

1. Participants that report "would refer" on all five culture samples, will receive a "DC" (discontinued testing) on their graded report for that testing event.
2. Regardless of the extent indicated, we are required to grade the most definitive identification reported. This means, for example, that a species result takes precedence in grading over a genus, antigen or Gram stain result.
3. If unable to decide between extents for a given specimen, report the lowest extent which applies, except Extent 0. In order to preserve the opportunity to get a zero on one specimen and still receive 80 percent overall, it is advisable to avoid using Extent 0 when Gram stain (Extent 1) or antigen screening (Extent 2) results are available for reporting. It is acceptable to challenge your Gram stain or antigen screening procedure(s) with our bacteriology specimens (without regard to

specimen source information) in order to receive five specimen scores upon which to generate an overall procedure score for bacterial identifications.

4. Even though, Extent 4 laboratories are not required to identify anaerobes, they must detect their presence in appropriate cultures (i.e. wound, stool, blood). If the laboratory does not test for the presence of anaerobes in these samples, do not select any extent higher than Extent 3.

Failure to enter an extent will result in your laboratory being evaluated as Extent 5. This cannot be corrected once grading has occurred.

Coding for Presumptive Culture Identification-Participants reporting presumptive identifications by culture must not use result codes 140 to 616. If performing isolations only with selective media, these participants might need to report code 697 (No pathogen found), but should not report either code 698 (No aerobic growth) or 699 (No aerobic or anaerobic growth). CMS requires that we challenge many common pathogens found in a specific sample type. When reporting a negative result, select an answer which reflects the organisms you would normally detect (I.e. select code 667 if you only screen for Strep A and do not test for N. gonorrhea with throat cultures.)

Coding Extent 3, 4 and 5 Results-For Specimens 1, 2, 3 and 4, participants using Extent 3, 4 or 5 must report only the organism(s) which they consider to be the significant pathogen(s) that is/are clearly responsible for the illness described, excluding immunocompromised patients. Opportunistic pathogens occurring in immunocompromised patients, when included, will always appear in Specimen 5. All organisms, nonpathogens as well as pathogens, must be identified in Specimen 5. Code your answers using the Result Code list on the reporting forms.

Antimicrobial susceptibility tests (ASTs) are to be performed on the most significant pathogen in Specimen 1 only, using the AST codes listed on the reverse side of reporting forms. Caution: if you code extent 0 or 1 (culture ID referred) for Specimen 1 and want to be exempt from reporting ASTs on this specimen, you must also code your AST method as 0 ("susceptibilities not routinely performed on this organism") and leave the AST results blank. Due to new CMS requirements, participants will be flagged for inappropriate selection of AST's, as listed in the CLSI (formerly NCCLS) guidelines M2-A8 and M7-A6. Selection of an inappropriate AST will be counted as an incorrect response.

Refer to your reporting form for specimen sources and other reporting requirements.