



**BARBARA FERRER, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed.**  
Director

**MUNTU DAVIS, M.D., M.P.H.**  
County Health Officer

**MEGAN McCLAIRE, M.S.P.H.**  
Chief Deputy Director

**DEBORAH ALLEN, Sc.D.**  
Deputy Director, Health Promotion Bureau

**GARY TSAI, M.D.**  
Division Director  
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control  
1000 South Fremont Avenue, Building A-9 East, 3rd Floor, Box 34  
Alhambra, California 91803  
TEL (626) 299-4101 • FAX (626) 458-7637

[www.publichealth.lacounty.gov](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov)

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September 28, 2021

**SAPC BULLETIN 21-07**  
*Superseded by IN 22-02*

TO: Los Angeles County Substance Use Disorder  
Contracted Service Providers

FROM: Gary Tsai, M.D., Division Director   
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control

SUBJECT: **COVID-19 VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health’s (Public Health) Division of Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC) is issuing Bulletin #21-07 describing the requirements and responsibilities for all contracted service providers in accordance with the [State of California Department of Health Care Services \(DHCS\) Behavioral Health Information Notice No. 21-043](#), the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), and the County’s Health Officer Orders.

**Vaccinations**

All workers at all contracted SAPC facilities must be fully vaccinated by either the two-dose Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines, or the single-dose Johnson and Johnson/Janssen vaccine, by **September 30, 2021**. This applies to all staff who provide direct or indirect services and whether they are paid or unpaid who work in an indoor setting(s) where:

- (1) Care is provided to patients; or
- (2) Those staff have direct or indirect exposure to patients for any reason.

**Exemptions**

Staff may request vaccine exemptions under two (2) categories: 1) religious beliefs; and 2) medical exemptions. Any staff requesting an exemption must sign a declination form attesting to their reason(s).

Additionally, any staff requesting a medical exemption must provide a written statement

signed by a medical professional practicing under the license of a physician, nurse practitioner, or other licensed medical professional practicing under the license of a physician stating that the individual(s) qualify for the exemption (without disclosing protected health information) and indicating the probable duration of the worker's inability to receive the vaccine.

Once exemptions have been reviewed and approved, exempted staff who are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated must then test for COVID-19 on a regular basis. Staff must test weekly using an authorized test as described in the State's Information Notice, unless working in an acute health care setting (including hospital-based substance use settings such as ASAM levels 3.7-WM and 4-WM), in which case COVID-19 testing twice a week is required for exempted staff. Additionally, all staff who are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated must wear a surgical mask or higher-level respirator in accordance with the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\) Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings](#).

### **Verification**

In accordance with all applicable privacy laws, regulations, and [CDPH Guidance for Vaccine Records Guidelines & Standards](#), providers must document and retain verification of the employee's vaccination status or exemption(s) and corresponding testing(s). Documentation should include, but is not limited to: 1) full name and date of birth; 2) vaccine manufacturer; and, 3) date of vaccine administration (for first dose and, if applicable, second dose).

If the staff is unvaccinated, the provider must document and retain signed declination forms with written health care provider's statement where applicable. Testing records must also be retained, showing weekly or twice weekly testing.

Only the following forms of verification will be allowed:

1. COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card (issued by the Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or World Health Organization Yellow Card) which includes: 1) the name of person vaccinated; 2) the type of vaccine provided; and, 3) the date the last dose was administered); OR
2. A photo of a Vaccination Record Card as a separate document; OR
3. A photo of the client's Vaccination Record Card stored on a phone or electronic device; OR
4. Documentation of COVID-19 vaccination from a health care provider; OR
5. Digital record that includes a QR code that when scanned by a SMART Health Card reader displays to the reader client name, date of birth, vaccine dates and vaccine type; OR
6. Documentation of vaccination from other contracted employers who follow these vaccination records guidelines and standards.

### **Compliance Requirements**

Providers must establish a policy detailing the organization's process to ensure compliance with this bulletin, DHCS, and CDPH guidance. The policy must include the following key areas:

- Vaccine requirements
- Criteria for exemptions
- Unvaccinated staff requirements
- Vaccine and testing resources
- Record/Documentation requirements

Providers will also be required to sign the attached attestation form confirming adherence and implementation of the vaccine policy. Providers must be prepared to provide all requested documentation confirming vaccinations and/or exemptions to local, County, and/or State representative(s) or their designee(s) upon request within one (1) business day after receiving the request.

### **Resources**

Below are additional resources that providers may find helpful while developing and implementing their vaccine policy.

- [Los Angeles County Department of Public Health](#)
- [California Department of Public Health – State of Public Health Officer Order of August 15, 2021](#)
- [CDPH Masking Guidance](#)
- [CDPH Guidance for Vaccine Records Guidelines & Standards](#)
- [FDA COVID-19 Vaccines Webpage](#)
- [July 28, 2021 CDPH Guidance for the Use of Masks](#)
- [Get the Most out of Masking](#)
- [CDPH Masking Guidance Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [CDPH Testing Website](#)
- [Self-Isolation Instructions for Individuals Who Have or Likely Have COVID-19 \(ca.gov\)](#)
- [California Department of Public Health Self-Isolation Instructions for Individuals with COVID-19](#)
- [Guidance on Returning to Work or School Following COVID-19 Diagnosis](#)
- [Responding to COVID-19 in the Workplace for Employers](#)

Please contact your assigned Contract Program Auditor for additional information.

GT:dd

c: County Counsel