



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

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

**ANISH P. MAHAJAN, M.D., M.S., M.P.H.**  
Chief Deputy Director

**GARY TSAI, M.D.**  
Bureau Director  
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Bureau  
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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**SAPC INFORMATION NOTICE 23-11**  
*Supersedes IN 23-03*

October 13, 2023

**TO:** Los Angeles County Substance Use Disorder  
SAPC – All Service Providers

**FROM:** Gary Tsai, M.D., Bureau Director *AT*  
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Bureau

**SUBJECT: COVID-19 AND INFLUENZA VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS,  
MASKING GUIDANCE, AND REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES**

On September 11, 2023, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved and authorized updated COVID-19 vaccines (2023-2024 Formula). The updated vaccine targets the currently circulating variants and better protect against serious consequences of COVID-19, including severe illness, hospitalization, and death.

The County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health (Public Health), Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Bureau (SAPC) is issuing Information Notice #23-11 to provide updated requirements regarding vaccinations, masking guidelines and responsibilities for all SAPC service providers and their staff performing duties as part of any SAPC contracts and/or agreements (e.g., Memorandum of Understanding). Public Health requirements may exceed those outlined under the [State of California Department of Health Care Services \(DHCS\) Behavioral Health Information Notice No. 23-014](#), and the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#). Please refer to the most current [County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health Order of the Health Officer](#).

**Influenza Vaccination Requirements**

All staff working under a Public Health contract or agreement in a licensed healthcare facility (including clinics, treatment facilities, congregate living facilities, etc.) who have direct patient contact or work in patient care areas (including paid/unpaid employees, volunteers, students, contractors, etc.) must receive an influenza vaccination.

By **November 1, 2023**, any applicable staff who decline or have not yet obtained an influenza vaccination **must** wear a respiratory mask while in contact with patients or working in patient care areas for the duration of the respiratory virus season (annually defined as November 1 through April 30).

### **COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements**

All staff working under a Public Health contract or agreement in a licensed healthcare facility (including clinics, treatment facilities, congregate living facilities) who have direct patient contact or work in patient care areas (including paid/unpaid employees, volunteers, students, contractors, etc.) must receive an updated COVID-19 vaccine (2023-2024 Formula) prior to or during the respiratory virus season (annually defined as November 1 through April 30).

By **November 1, 2023**, any applicable staff who decline the updated COVID-19 vaccination must provide their employee, on a form provided by their employer, a written declaration that they have declined the updated COVID-19 vaccination.

### **Masking Guidance**

All staff working in healthcare settings who provide direct patient care or work in a patient care area, including SUD treatment sites, are highly encouraged but no longer required to wear a mask unless they are not vaccinated as described above for Influenza or COVID-19 (2023-2024 Formula). Patients and visitors within healthcare settings are strongly encouraged but not required to wear a mask.

### **COVID-19 Testing**

SAPC provider agencies should continue to conduct COVID-19 testing as recommended during outbreaks and in alignment with current State and Local Health Officer Orders. Additionally, SAPC providers must continue to report COVID-19 cases as described in the Reporting Requirements section included in this Information Notice and in accordance with any subsequently updated information notices. SAPC provider agencies may consider various screening testing strategies (point in time testing, serial testing, etc.) and based on local COVID-19 transmission trends. SAPC provider personnel may also consider routine diagnostic screening testing if their clients have underlying immunocompromising conditions (e.g., organ transplantation, cancer treatment), due to the greater risks such individuals face if they contract COVID-19.

During the periods of time when testing is required, SAPC provider agencies must retain all testing documentation for their exempt personnel, which shall be made available to the County upon request.

All SAPC provider personnel must follow the latest guidance from the State and Local Health Officer Orders. In addition, Healthcare Facilities must follow the State All Facilities Letter [Guidance on Quarantine for Health Care Personnel \(HCP\) Exposed to SARS-CoV-2 and Return to Work for HCP with COVID-19](#).

### **Maintenance of Records**

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 and any corresponding testing results. Documentation includes, but is not limited to: 1) full name and date of birth; 2) vaccine manufacturer; 3) date of vaccine administration (for first dose and, if applicable, second dose); and 4) date of vaccine booster administration (if applicable).

Only the following forms of verification will be allowed:

1. Official COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card issued by the California Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or World Health Organization (WHO) 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 the California Department of Public Health vaccination records guidelines and standards.

### **Reporting Requirements**

All providers are required to continue to report positive client or staff COVID-19 tests as follows:

1. **SAPC:** Report every client or staff who tests positive for COVID-19 to SAPC at any contracted site or level of care (i.e., prevention, treatment, recovery bridge housing, DUI, etc.) by submitted an Adverse Event Reporting Form to [SAPCMonitoring@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:SAPCMonitoring@ph.lacounty.gov) within one (1) business day.
2. **DPH:** Report three (3) or more client or staff COVID-19 positive tests at any site or level of care (i.e., prevention, treatment, recovery bridge housing, DUI, etc.) in a 14 calendar days span to the DPH [COVID-19 Outbreak Reporting Form](#) and/or calling (888) 397-3993 or (213) 240-7821.

3. **DHCS:** Report every client or staff who tests positive for COVID-19 at any site or level of care (i.e., prevention, treatment, recovery bridge housing, DUI, etc.) to DHCS within one (1) business day to: [DHCSLCBcom@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:DHCSLCBcom@dhcs.ca.gov)

### **Compliance Requirements**

As a condition of Public Health contracts and/or agreements, providers must submit the [COVID-19 and Influenza Attestation of Compliance Form](#) attached to this Information Notice and attest to compliance by November 1, 2023, with the current vaccination requirements, provided herein regarding annual influenza and COVID-19 boosters (2023-2024 Formula). **Providers who do not submit the required certification will be considered in breach of their contract and/or agreement terms and provisions.**

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

- Vaccine requirements
- Booster requirements
- Unvaccinated staff requirements (if applicable)
- Vaccine and testing resources.
- Record/Documentation requirements

Providers will also be required to sign the attached attestation form confirming adherence to the updated requirements. 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 three (3) business day after receiving the request.

*\*\*Note: [COVID-19 and Influenza Attestation of Compliance Form](#) applies to all contractors and providers performing work under a SAPC contract who provide direct patient care or work in patient care areas.*

### **Additional Resources**

Below are additional resources that providers may find helpful:

- [Los Angeles County Department of Public Health COVID-19 Homepage](#)
- [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\) - State of Public Health Officer Order](#) (June 20, 2023)
- [CDPH Public Health Order COVID-19 Disease Control and Prevention Q&A](#) (June 20, 2023)
- [CDPH Masking Guidance](#)
- [CDPH Guidance for Vaccine Records Guidelines & Standards](#) (May 2, 2022)

- [FDA COVID-19 Vaccines Webpage](#)
- [CDPH: Flu and COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

**Next Steps**

This information notice is effective immediately. The [COVID-19 and Influenza Attestation of Compliance Form](#) must be completed and signed by an authorized signer and submitted to [SAPCMonitoring@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:SAPCMonitoring@ph.lacounty.gov) no later than **November 1, 2023**.

Please contact your assigned Contract Program Auditor for additional information.

GT:mm

Attachment