

*Sending on behalf of the County of San Diego,
Long-Term Care and Residential Care Facilities Sector, COVID-19 Response*



December 2, 2021

Greetings Long-Term Care and Residential Care Facilities of San Diego County,

Many of you have heard about the newest COVID-19 variant, Omicron. Both the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have designated it a variant of concern. The California Department of Public Health explains that we can protect ourselves by getting vaccinated, masking, testing, and staying home if you are sick. You can read more on Omicron by checking out the [CDPH Fact Sheet on the Omicron Variant](#).

The County is strongly recommending that long-term care facility staff and residents have access to and are protected by the COVID-19 **booster dose by December 15, 2021**. Read the County of San Diego Public Health Officer's [letter](#) sent this week to Skilled Nursing and Long-Term Care Facilities regarding COVID-19 booster doses. If you have immobile residents and/or residents who are unable to leave the facility (such as those with dementia or behavioral health challenges), please email COVID-Healthcarestatus@sdcounty.ca.gov and our team will coordinate on-site

COVID-19 booster vaccines for your residents. Also, the County vaccination sites continue to offer COVID-19 booster doses. Due to possible holiday closures, please check the [vaccine schedule](#) to ensure the site is open before arriving.

In case you haven't already received your flu shot, check out the County website for a list of [Flu Vaccine Locations](#).

Please find information below regarding the latest guidance and resources from county, state, and federal organizations, including new updates:

- [CAHAN San Diego: Health Advisory Update #44: SARS-CoV-2 virus variant of concern B.1.1.529 \(Omicron\)](#)
- [CDC Health Advisory Notice 458: Increasing Seasonal Influenza A \(H3N2\) Activity, Especially Among Young Adults and in College and University Settings, During SARS-CoV-2 Circulation](#)
- [CDPH - COVID-19 Fact Sheet on the Omicron Variant](#)

For other questions, email COVID-LTC@sdcounty.ca.gov or for more information for long-term care facilities, visit www.coronavirus-sd.com/LTC. Thank you for your continued efforts and partnership with the County of San Diego!

TELEBRIEFINGS



Upcoming Long-Term Care and Residential Care Facilities Sector

Our next telebriefing will be **Thursday, December 9,
2021, 2:00-3:00 PM**

[Zoom Meeting Link](#)

[Submit Telebriefing Questions](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS



Health Advisory Update #44: SARS-CoV-2 virus variant of concern B.1.1.529 (Omicron)

- **NEW!** On Dec 1, 2021, the San Francisco Department of Health, and the California Department of Public Health confirmed the first U.S. case with Omicron has been identified in San Francisco, CA.
- The Omicron variant was first identified in South Africa and Botswana, but has already been identified in multiple additional counties in returning travelers.
- On Dec 1, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) classified Omicron a variant of concern (VOC) for the U.S.
- Whole genome sequencing (WGS) of SARS-CoV-2 is critical to better understand the emergence and clinical significance of this new variant. Indications for specimen referral for WGS are provided in this advisory.

[Health Advisory Update #44](#)

California Department of Public Health

NEW! Increasing Seasonal Influenza A (H3N2) Activity, Especially Among Young Adults and in College and University Settings, During SARS-CoV-2 Circulation

Recent increases in influenza activity in many places in the United States could mark the beginning of the 2021-2022 influenza season in the United States. While influenza activity is still low overall nationally, an increase of influenza A(H3N2) viruses has been detected in recent weeks, with most of these

infections occurring in young adults. CDC also is aware of influenza outbreaks in colleges and universities in several states. Influenza vaccination coverage is still low and there is still time this season to benefit from getting an annual influenza vaccine.

https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2021/pdf/CDC_HAN_458.pdf

NEW! COVID-19 Fact Sheet on the Omicron Variant

CDPH is closely monitoring the new Omicron Variant which has not yet been detected in California or the US. Vaccines continue to be our best way through the pandemic by safely protecting us against severe illness from COVID-19 and its variants. CDPH is doubling down on our vaccination and booster efforts to ensure that all Californians have access to safe, effective, and free vaccines that can prevent serious illness and death. CDPH is in communication with federal officials at the CDC to gather information and expertise to help the public, local public health departments and health care providers.

Travelers who have been in South Africa, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia or Zimbabwe within the last 14 days must follow CDC recommendations to get tested 3-5 days after arrival, quarantine for 7 days even if testing negative, and isolate for 10 days if COVID-19 symptoms develop.

For clinicians with COVID-19 cases that may have traveled to Southern Africa within the last 14 days or other potential exposure to the Omicron variant, please work with your local health department to discuss and consider expedited whole genome sequencing. More guidance for clinicians regarding testing and reporting will be forthcoming in the coming days.

[Fact Sheet on the Omicron Variant](#)

California Department of Public Health

CDPH publishes news and All Facilities Letters (AFLs) regularly. To receive email notifications of AFLs, email your request to LNCPolicy@cdph.ca.gov

[AFL 21-44](#) to Skilled Nursing Facilities, November 19, 2021

Provides recommendations for the prevention and control of Influenza in California Skilled Nursing Facilities for the 2021-2022 season during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[AFL 21-45](#) to Long-Term Care Facilities, November 19, 2021

Notifies long-term care facilities of the chaptering of Assembly Bill 323 that changes the burden of proof CDPH must meet when issue Class "AA" citations. This bill also creates a new category of citation and increases civil penalty amounts in Skilled Nursing Facilities and intermediate care facilities.

[AFL 21-46](#) to Skilled Nursing Facilities, November 19, 2021

Notifies Skilled Nursing Facilities of the chaptering of Assembly Bill 749 establishing new medical director certification requirements.

[AFL 21-47](#) to Skilled Nursing Facilities and Intermediate Care Facilities, November 19, 2021

Notifies facilities of the of the chaptering of Assembly Bill 849 changing a court's method of computing damages in a civil action against a Skilled Nursing Facility or Intermediate Care Facility for violation of a resident's rights under federal or state law.

[AFL 21-48](#) to Hospices, November 19, 2021

Notifies hospices of the chaptering of Assembly Bill 1280 prohibiting hospices from paying referral sources, specifying staff that can assist in the election of hospice and requiring a specified notice of rights.

[AFL 20-87](#) to Skilled Nursing Facilities, General Acute Hospitals - November 15, 2021

Provides guidance for admission and readmission of skilled nursing facility (SNF) residents during seasonal hospital surges and the COVID-19 pandemic. This AFL provides guidance on working with local public health departments (LHD) and hospital discharge planners to ensure appropriate placement of resident following hospital discharge. This AFL revision includes updated guidance based on residents' vaccination status

[AFL 21-36](#) to Skilled Nursing Facilities - November 12, 2021

AFL notifies skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) of a temporary waiver of specified regulatory requirements due to the state of emergency related to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak. This AFL temporarily waives specified space conversion requirements until December 31, 2021.

[AFL 21-42](#) to Skilled Nursing Facilities - November 12, 2021

AFL ensures SNF are aware of [U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\) authorization](#) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) recommendations](#) for COVID-19 vaccine additional and booster doses, explains eligibility considerations for residents and healthcare personnel (HCP), and provides information and resources for facilities to provide or coordinate access to additional and booster doses for their residents.

[See a full list of recent AFLs](#)



California Department of Social Services

The Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) of the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) publishes [Provider Information Notices \(PINs\)](#) to

communicate important license related information to CCLD-licensed providers. The local San Diego Adult and Senior Care Regional Office can be reached at (619) 767-2300 or CCLASCPSanDiegoRO@dss.ca.gov.

[PIN 21-23-CCLD](#) to All Residential Community Care Providers, November 19, 2021

Releases the updated estimated Social Security Income and State Supplementary Payment payment standards effective January 1, 2022, for Non-Medical Out-of-Home - Licensed Facility or Without In-Kind Room and Board.

[PIN 21-49-ASC](#) to All Adult and Senior Care Program Licensees, November 17, 2021

Supersedes in part PIN 21-17.2-ASC, dated May 14, 2021, and provides specific updates to communal dining and entertainment. PIN 21-49-ASC also provides new guidance related to transportation of residents and maintains guidance on non-essential services and group activities.

[PIN 21-48-ASC](#) to All Adult and Senior Care Program Licensees, November 17, 2021

Provides guidance regarding the authority of conservators and agents under powers of attorney related to specified residents' rights.

[PIN 21-47-ASC](#) to All Adult and Senior Care Program Licensees, November 17, 2021

Powerpoint Slides from Informational call "[Infection Prevention: Boosters and Latest Celebration Guidance](#)"

[PIN 21-22-CCLD](#) to All Community Care Program Licensees and Providers, November 15, 2021

provides updated guidance to individual background check applicants and agencies regarding background check information and updates for Customer Service options.

[PIN 21-46-ASC](#) to All Adult and Senior Care Program Licensees, November 5, 2021

Provides information for the prevention, mitigation, and containment of the flu, COVID-19, and pneumonia in Adult and Senior Care facilities based on the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and California Department of Public Health (CDPH) guidance.

[See the full list of recent PINs](#)



CareStart COVID-19 Antigen Tests

We have officially transitioned from the BinaxNOW Ag. Cards to the CareStart COVID-19 Antigen POC. Those who have updated/amended their CLIA (CMS116) to include these CareStart AND notified the LFS website are immediately eligible to start requesting and receiving these tests. If you have not done so to avoid delays or gaps in future allocations of testing product please,

- Add/Amend to include the CareStart tests to your CLIA documentation (CMS 116), and
- Notify the [CDPH LFS website](#)

You will need to attest to these two steps before receiving any of the new CareStart Antigen Tests. We have retired the usual links used to order tests in the past.

To request (POC) Antigen tests (BinaxNOW and the newCareStart Antigen Tests), please:

- Complete the [NEW: Point-of Care \(POC\) Antigen Test Interest Notification & Attestation](#)
- Complete the [NEW: Point-of-Care Antigen Test Program follow-up questionnaire](#) for those who have previously received testing products from us.

If you have any questions, email logs.testing.hhsa@sdcountry.ca.gov



Monoclonal Antibody Treatments

The FDA issued an [Emergency Use Authorization \(EUA\)](#) for a monoclonal antibody therapy combination called REGEN-COV, comprised of the casirivimab and imdevimab monoclonal antibodies from Regeneron. This life-saving combination therapy is authorized for the treatment of mild to moderate COVID-19 in symptomatic patients with positive who are at high risk for progressing to severe COVID-19 disease or hospitalization. [High risk persons](#) include those ≥ 65 years of age, or with a BMI ≥ 25 , or with diabetes, or pregnancy, or who have certain chronic medical conditions.

Rapid Response Teams can conduct on-site administration of the treatment and provide training for Skilled Nursing Facility staff in order for the Skilled Nursing Facility staff to administer the treatment in the future. Skilled Nursing Facility staff can contact MCSDNursingM_MAT.HHSA@sdcountry.ca.gov to request Rapid Response Teams or ask questions.

- [Early treatment](#) for COVID-19 is available at the [Monoclonal Antibody Regional Centers \(MARC\)s](#) for persons 12 years of age or older with mild to moderate COVID-19 symptoms.
- [Post-exposure prophylaxis](#) with monoclonal antibodies for persons in close contact with a COVID-19-infected person is available at the MARC at the Clairemont Friendship Center for those who medically qualify.

Visit the [Monoclonal Antibody Regional Center webpage](#) for a list of sites and more information.

**Federal Retail Pharmacy Program
(FRPP) Update on COVID-19 Vaccines**

Through the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program (FRPP), the CDC is allocating COVID-19 vaccines directly to enrolled retail and **LTC pharmacies**. Three LTC-specific groups (MHA, Innovatix-PharMerica, and GeriMed) receive federal doses and allocate them to member pharmacies who can then provide vaccines to LTC facilities. Please note, not every LTC pharmacy in California is enrolled in the FRPP. Those not enrolled in the FRPP may enroll as vaccine providers at [myCAvax](#) or LTC pharmacies may enroll under one of the current Group Purchasing Organizations (MHA, Innovatix-PharMerica, and GeriMed) to receive federal vaccine doses. **To request vaccines from your contracted LTC pharmacy:**

1. Enroll in the San Diego Immunization Registry: <http://www.sdiz.org/clair-sdir/enrollment.html>
2. Contact your pharmacy to determine if they are enrolled in the FRPP.
 - If the LTC pharmacy is enrolled in the FRPP, the pharmacy can subcontract with facilities to also administer the vaccine, and the facility does NOT need to enroll as a vaccine provider.
 - **If the LTC pharmacy is not enrolled in the FRPP, facilities can register to be a vaccinators through** <https://mycavax.cdph.ca.gov/s/>.
3. If your contracted pharmacy cannot assist, you may request assistance from other San Diego LTC pharmacies enrolled in the FRPP:
 - Guardian Pharmacy Services (MHA): cvs@guardianpharmacy.net
 - Omnicare of San Diego: Chadd.Eno@omnicare.com
 - Pharmerica (Innovatix): ImmunizeLTC@pharmerica.com
 - SNP Pharmacy LLC (MHA): vaccines@snp-rx.com

FACILITY RESOURCES AND GUIDANCE

County of San Diego, Public Health Order

CAHAN San Diego

Cal/OSHA and Statewide Industry Guidance on COVID-19

California Department of Social Services, Provider Information Notices

California Department of Public Health, All Facilities Letters

CDC Guidance and Resources for Infection Control in Facilities

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Visitation Guidance



Our mailing address is:

COVID-LTC@sdcounty.ca.gov

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