

# Public Health Order Questions & Answers: Health Care Worker Vaccine Requirement

8/7/2021

**Related Materials:** Health Care Worker Vaccine Requirement State Public Health Officer Order

## When does the Order take effect?

The Order will go into effect August 5, 2021.

## Does a worker need to be fully vaccinated by September 30, 2021?

No. They must have either their first dose of a one-dose regimen or their second dose of a two-dose regime by September 30, 2021.

## Will the July 26 Public Health Order continue to apply?

Yes.

## What facilities are impacted by the order?

The following health care facilities will be impacted by the Order:

- General Acute Care Hospitals
- Skilled Nursing Facilities (including Subacute Facilities)
- Intermediate Care Facilities
- Acute Psychiatric Hospitals
- Adult Day Health Care Centers
- Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) and PACE Centers
- Ambulatory Surgery Centers
- Chemical Dependency Recovery Hospitals
- Clinics & Doctor Offices (including behavioral health, surgical)
- Congregate Living Health Facilities
- Dialysis Centers
- Hospice Facilities
- Pediatric Day Health and Respite Care Facilities

- Residential Substance Use Treatment and Mental Health Treatment Facilities

### **How will you verify workers are vaccinated or tested?**

Each facility will be required to verify and keep record of vaccination status or test results. Pursuant the CDPH Guidance for Vaccine Records Guidelines & Standards, facilities have multiple options to verify vaccine status.

### **Will this take staff away from already busy hospitals?**

Keeping both workers and patients safe is our top priority and the purpose of this Order. We do not believe it will take staff away from already busy hospitals.

### **Can a worker opt to regularly test instead of getting vaccinated?**

No. Testing will be an alternate means for satisfying this Order only for those who are granted an exemption pursuant to the Order.

### **Are there any exemptions to the vaccination mandate?**

The Order allows for two exemptions: (1) the worker is declining vaccination based on Religious Beliefs or (2) the worker is excused from receiving any COVID-19 vaccine due to Qualifying Medical Reasons.

### **Is California the first to do this?**

We are not aware of another state with such comprehensive requirements.

### **Is it everyone in these settings or just workers who interact with patients?**

It applies to all individuals who are either paid or unpaid and are in indoor settings where (1) care is provided to patients, or (2) patients have access for any purpose.

### **Who will be responsible for enforcement of the requirements under this Order?**

Each covered facility will be required to enforce the vaccine mandate and testing requirements of their respective staff (including any staff that may come from a contracted staffing agency).

To the extent that the covered facilities are subject to state regulation, the state's regulating entities will ensure each facility is meeting the requirements for vaccine verification/exemptions. For example, the California Department of Public Health will enforce this requirement at hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities, and the other health care facilities it licenses; and the Department of Health Care Services will enforce this requirement at residential substance use treatment and mental health treatment facilities. Local health jurisdictions may also enforce the orders.

### **Are High Risk Congregate Settings covered under this Order?**

No. Those settings—Adult and Senior Care Facilities, Homeless Shelters, and State and Local Correctional Facilities — remain covered by the July 26 Order. To the extent that the provision of health care is incorporated within congregate settings, these settings will be addressed in forthcoming guidance from CDPH that considers the unique circumstances of health care integrated into a congregate setting.

### **Are dental offices included in this Order?**

No. Dental offices are not included in this Order.

