



**California Department of Public Health  
Center for Health Care Quality  
AFC Skilled Nursing Facilities Infection Prevention Call  
December 20, 2023**

**Weekly Call-in Information:**

- 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays every month, 3:00pm SNF Infection Prevention Webinars:
  - Register at: <https://www.hsag.com/cdph-ip-webinars>
  - Recordings, call notes and slides can be accessed at <https://www.hsag.com/en/covid-19/long-term-care-facilities/cdph-ip-webinars-past/>
- 3rd Tuesdays every month, 11:30am HSAG NHSN & HAI Office Hours
  - Register: <https://bit.ly/NHSNHAIofficehoursJantoJuly2024>

**Important Links to State and Federal Guidance**

Important Links to CDPH State Guidance	<a href="https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Guidance.aspx">https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Guidance.aspx</a>
CDC's Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for HCP During COVID-19 (5/8/2023)	<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html</a>
CDPH AFLs	<a href="https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/pages/lncfl.aspx">https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/pages/lncfl.aspx</a>
CDPH COVID-19 AFLs	<a href="https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/COVID-19-AFLs.aspx">https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/COVID-19-AFLs.aspx</a>

**Vaccine Questions & Answers**

**CDC Health Advisory Notice (12/14/23):** Urgent Need to Increase Immunization Coverage for Influenza, COVID-19, and RSV and Use of Authorized/Approved Therapeutics in the Setting of Increased Respiratory Disease Activity During the 2023 – 2024 Winter Season  
<https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2023/han00503.asp>

**Q-1: Need help organizing a COVID-19 vaccine clinic for residents and staff?**

**A:** Complete the [vaccine access assistance form](#) and an HSAG vaccine coordinator will reach out to you to assist in:

- Scheduling vaccine clinics
- Providing on site and virtual vaccine education to residents, family members and staff

**Q-2: Can COVID vaccines be administered to staff and residents during an outbreak?**

**A:** Yes. During outbreaks, continue to offer vaccines that protect against respiratory diseases to residents and HCP per CDC recommendations.

- There is no recommendation in outbreaks to delay vaccination until the outbreak has ended.
- There is no contraindication to receiving a vaccine if exposed. Refer to [CDC guidance](#). People with a known or potential SARS-CoV-2 exposure may receive vaccine if they do not have symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

**Q-3: How can I get help with NHSN?**

**A:** HSAG is available to assist you with NHSN at no-cost. Please refer to the below resources.

- [HSAG Survival Guide for NHSN Reporting](#); HSAG NHSN Website [www.hsag.com/nhsn-help](http://www.hsag.com/nhsn-help)
- Attend HSAG NHSN & HAI Nursing Home Office Hours [Register](#)
  - 3rd Tuesday of every month from 11:30 a.m.–12 noon PT

**Q-4: Are nursing homes still required to report COVID-19 vaccine status to NHSN?**

**A:** Yes. Nursing homes are required to report COVID-19 staff and resident vaccination rates to the CDC's NHSN until December 31, 2024, per [CMS QSO-23-13-ALL](#), "Requirements for Reporting related to COVID-19."

**Q-5: If an individual is positive with COVID-19, when can they get the COVID-19 vaccination?**

**A:** If an individual has active COVID-19 infection, they should be referred for COVID-19 antiviral treatment as early as possible. People with known current SARS-CoV-2 infection should defer any COVID-19 vaccination at least until recovery from the acute illness (if symptoms were present) and [criteria](#) to discontinue isolation have been met. COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for everyone ages 6 months and older, regardless of a history of symptomatic or asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infection, including people with prolonged post-COVID-19 symptoms. People who recently had SARS-CoV-2 infection may consider delaying a COVID-19 vaccine dose by 3 months from symptom onset or positive test (if infection was asymptomatic). Individual factors such as risk of COVID-19 [severe disease](#) or characteristics of the predominant SARS-CoV-2 strain should be taken into account when determining whether to delay getting a COVID-19 vaccination after infection. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/clinical-considerations/interim-considerations-us.html#infection>

**Q-6: Is nursing home flu vaccination data public for this current flu season?**

**A:** No. The only flu vaccination data that's available publicly is on Care Compare under Quality Measures and those are for last year's flu season. The short stay average in California was 92.1% and the long stay measure average was 98.2%. You can see how your nursing home compares at: <https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare/?providerType=NursingHome>

Isolation Questions & Answers

**Q-7: Do COVID-19 positive residents still need to isolate for 10 days?**

**A:** Yes, per CDC guidance updated on May 8, 2023, residents still need to isolate for 10 days <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>.

- Residents who test positive and are [asymptomatic](#) throughout their infection should be isolated until at least 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive test.
- Residents who test positive and are [symptomatic](#) with mild to moderate illness and are NOT moderately to severely immunocompromised should be isolated until these conditions are met:
  - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared; and
  - At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications; and
  - Other symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved.
- Residents who are with severe to critical illness and who are NOT moderately or severely immunocompromised, may require isolation for up to 20 days after the onset of symptoms.
- Vaccination and treatment status does not influence duration of isolation.

**Q-8: Have there been any updates to AFL 21-08.9 Guidance on Quarantine and Isolation for HCP Exposed to SARS-CoV-2 and Return to Work for HCP with COVID-19?**

**A:** No. There has not been an update to AFL 21-08.9, which was last updated December 2, 2022. <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/AFL-21-08.aspx>

**Q-9: What is the standard isolation time frame for an RSV positive resident?**

**A:** Per CDC Isolation Guidelines, immunocompromised adults are kept in Contact and Standard Isolation for the duration of their illness. CDC RSV Guidance for Healthcare Providers ([www.cdc.gov/rsv/clinical/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/rsv/clinical/index.html)) refers to the CDC 2007 Guideline for Isolation Precautions

([www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/index.html)), which recommends Transmission-Based Precautions for RSV be continued for the “duration of illness.”

Additionally, per Table 1, page 8 in the December 5, 2023, [AFL 23-26](#), “Recommendations for Prevention and Control of COVID-19, Influenza, and Other Respiratory Viral Infections in California Skilled Nursing Facilities – 2023-24”, for RSV and other common respiratory viruses (excluding influenza and SARS-CoV-2), a reasonable approach is to isolate for at least 7 days after illness onset or until 24 hours after the resolution of fever and improvement in respiratory symptoms, whichever is longer.

**Q-10: Where can we access COVID-19 isolation signs to place on the doors of isolation rooms?**

**A:** Residents on isolation for COVID-19 should be on Contact Isolation with respiratory precautions (N-95 respirator and door closed when possible). Although there is no CDC sign for these precautions, you can use the Contact and Airborne Isolation signs which can be downloaded on the CDC Transmission-Based Precautions webpage (both signs are posted together for COVID-19 isolation). ([https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/basics/transmission-based-precautions.html#anchor\\_1564058318](https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/basics/transmission-based-precautions.html#anchor_1564058318)). The signs are located at the bottom of the page, in both English and Spanish. Note that the sign advises to close the door and wear an N95 mask for isolation.

Testing Questions & Answers

**For testing questions (including ordering OTC tests), email [OTCtesting@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:OTCtesting@cdph.ca.gov)**

**Q-11: How can nursing homes order more COVID-19 tests?**

**A:** CDPH is providing a 2-month supply of at-home (OTC) COVID-19 tests to nursing homes outside of Los Angeles County. The deadline to order the tests has been extended to February 29, 2024 (while supplies last). The tests can be ordered at: <https://labsupport.powerappsportals.us/ordercovidotc/>.

Ordering Timeframe	Order Request	Test Expiration Dates
Current- 12/20/23	2-month supply of tests	January 31, 2024
12/29/23 - 1/18/24	2-month supply of tests	February 29, 2024
1/19/24-2/29/24	6-week supply of tests	March 31, 2024

**Q-12: Does our nursing home have to have a lab license to order antigen tests?**

**A:** Yes, to be eligible to request CLIA-waived antigen tests, your facility needs to meet federal and state requirements, including a valid state facility license. The CLIA and the state license need to be under the name of the facility requesting tests. Connect with CDPH's Laboratory Field Services for more information: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/OSPHLD/LFS/pages/home.aspx>.

**Q-13: Can nursing homes get Binax RSV test kits for free?**

**A:** No. At this time, CDPH does not have any antigen tests available for RSV.

**Q-14: Can nursing homes order COVID/Flu A&B Multiplex Tests?**

**A:** Yes. Skilled Nursing Facilities, Long-Term Care Facilities, Federally Qualified Health Centers, and Community Clinics with their own CLIA and state licensing can request COVID/Flu A&B Multiplex Tests. Printed expiration dates on these tests are January 31, 2024, but the expiration date has been extended to October 31, 2024. If you are an eligible facility with your own CLIA and you are interested in ordering COVID/Flu A&B Multiplex tests, please email [OTCTesting@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:OTCTesting@cdph.ca.gov).

**Q-15: Are expired antigen tests still allowed to be used?**

**A:** Some antigen tests have had their expiration dates extended based on additional data that was not available when the test was first authorized. Go to this FDA website ([www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-covid-19-and-medical-devices/home-otc-covid-19-diagnostic-tests#list](http://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-covid-19-and-medical-devices/home-otc-covid-19-diagnostic-tests#list)) to determine if a home test that you have has an extended expiration date. Replace tests that are older than the extended expiration dates. If newer tests are not easily available, you may use an expired test as long as the internal control line remains valid.

**Q-16: What are highlights of AFL 23-26: “Recommendations for Prevention and Control of COVID-19, Influenza, and Other Respiratory Viral Infections in California SNFs”?**

**A:** [AFL 23-26](#) was released December 5, 2023, to notify facilities of an updated version of the guidance document [“Recommendations for Prevention and Control of COVID-19, Influenza, and Other Respiratory Viral Infections in California Skilled Nursing Facilities – 2023-24”](#). This document provides streamlined guidance that can be broadly applied for the prevention and control of influenza, COVID-19, RSV, and other common respiratory viruses (e.g., adenovirus, parainfluenza virus, etc.) in California SNFs. Key messages include:

- Encourage residents and HCP to be **up-to-date on recommended vaccinations**
- Develop policies for **source control masking**
- Initiate prompt **testing and treatment** of COVID-19 and influenza