

## ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER FOR CONTROL OF COVID-19 Prevention of COVID-19 Transmission in Community Care Facilities Date Order Issued: October 5, 2020

This Order supersedes the April 24, 2020 Prevention of COVID-19 Transmission in Licensed Congregate Health Facilities Order, as it relates to Licensed Community Care Facilities.

This Order is in effect until rescinded by the Health Officer.

**Summary:** During a State of Emergency, California law empowers the County of Los Angeles Health Officer (Health Officer) to take protective measures necessary to protect the public from a public health hazard. The spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a substantial danger to the health of the public and to patients/residents living in community care facilities in Los Angeles County.

Infection control and social (physical) distancing measures are needed to stem or slow the spread of COVID-19 and decrease the risk of transmission to vulnerable patients/residents in high-risk settings. Accordingly, the Health Officer hereby orders all community care facilities (“Facility”), as defined by this Order, operating within the Los Angeles County Public Health Jurisdiction, to comply with all measures required by this Order. The required measures are intended to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in these facilities and to protect vulnerable residents, as well as personnel.

This Order is effective immediately and will remain in effect until rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Health Officer.

This Order continues to be based upon scientific evidence and best practices as currently known to protect patients, personnel, and the public from the avoidable risk of serious illness and death resulting from COVID-19, as well as protect the health care system from a surge of cases. The required actions are consistent with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”), the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (“CMS”), the California Department of Public Health (“CDPH”), and prior guidance from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (“Public Health”).

Compliance with this Order is required because the County Health Officer has determined that:

- There is widespread community transmission of COVID-19 in Los Angeles County, which continues to present a substantial and significant risk of harm to the health of residents. For updated information, please refer to the new [LA County COVID-19 surveillance dashboard](#).
- There is an increased risk of COVID-19 among those working in or living in certain community care facilities and among those providing services in our community.
- The communal nature of community care facilities and the population served (generally older adults often with underlying medical conditions) put those living in these Facilities at increased risk of infection and severe illness from COVID-19 if infected.
- Social (physical) distancing measures alone may not be effective in community care facilities due to the concentration of individuals and the nature of the services provided to them.
- Due to the current rates of community transmission of COVID-19 within Los Angeles County, visitors to community care facilities and staff may be unknowingly infected with COVID-19 (i.e., are asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic) and unknowingly transmit the virus to patients/residents or staff. Limiting non-essential contact and prohibiting access from individuals with fever or respiratory symptoms and individuals who have been in contact with a person with COVID-19 reduces the chance for exposure to COVID-19 for vulnerable patients/residents.



- In addition, influenza viruses circulate beginning in the Fall and through the Spring of the following year. Influenza can cause symptoms similar to COVID-19 and causes hundreds of deaths among Los Angeles County residents annually. Mitigating influenza transmission and morbidity will facilitate improved control of COVID-19 in community care facilities.
- Not adhering to the measures required by this Order will likely impair efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within the County and State.

**UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE SECTIONS 101040, 101085, AND 120175, THE HEALTH OFFICER ORDERS THE FOLLOWING FOR ALL COMMUNITY CARE FACILITIES, AS DEFINED IN THIS ORDER, IN THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH JURISDICTION:**

**1. Require Staff and Encourage Residents to Wear Cloth Face Coverings**

- a. The Facility is required to provide each resident daily with a clean non-medical face covering. Residents with underlying cognitive or medical conditions who cannot wear face coverings outside their room should not be forcibly required to wear face coverings and should not be forcibly kept in their rooms. However, face coverings should be encouraged as much as possible. A face covering should not be placed on anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove it without assistance. Face shields or face shields with a drape may be offered to residents who are not able to wear face coverings. Residents should additionally be encouraged to follow social (physical) distancing and hand hygiene guidance as much as possible. This includes patients/residents who must regularly leave the Facility for care (e.g., hemodialysis patients). Face coverings are required for all staff at all times while working in the Facility when around residents and other staff.

**2. Entry Screening and Signage**

- a. The facility must follow [LAC DPH Congregate Residential Facilities Guidance](#) on entry screening and signage.

**3. Visitation and Group Activities**

- a. Visitation of non-essential individuals should be allowed in accordance with published guidance from Public Health: <http://ph.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/snf.htm#groupactivities>.
- b. Communal dining and activities should be allowed for COVID-19 negative residents, which is equivalent to “green cohort” in skilled nursing facilities, in accordance with published guidance from Public Health: <http://ph.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/snf.htm#groupactivities>.

**4. Report ALL Facility Staff and Residents with Suspected/Confirmed COVID-19 Illnesses and Deaths to Public Health**

- a. The Facility shall report all confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases and deaths within 24 hours to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health by phone at (213) 240-7941 or fax at (213) 482-4856 or during an ongoing outbreak, by calling the number provided by the Public Health outbreak investigator who is managing the Facility’s outbreak.

**5. During an Outbreak, Implement Outbreak Control Measures as Directed by Public Health**

- a. If the Facility is experiencing an outbreak of COVID-19, the Facility must implement required social (physical) distancing and infection control practice that are applicable to the site, as directed by Public Health as described in the following Public Health directives, Protocols, and guidance:



- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Outbreak Notification Letter
- Los Angeles County Protocol for Responding to COVID-19 in the Workplace
- Los Angeles County Health Officer Order for the Control of COVID-19: Managing Outbreaks of COVID-19.

**6. Facilities are Directed to Take the Following Additional Actions to Mitigate Influenza Introduction and Transmission.**

- a. Maintain a record of influenza vaccination status of staff and residents; provide information on influenza vaccination status among staff and residents to Public Health if requested.
- b. Encourage all allowed, non-essential persons to get immunized for the 2020-2021 influenza season at least two weeks prior visiting the facility. This will help decrease the risk of influenza transmission to residents and staff within the facility. For influenza vaccine information, toolkits, and locations, please visit: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/ip/influenza.htm> and <https://vaccinefinder.org/find-vaccine>.

**7. Community Care Facilities Are Also Expected to Take the Necessary Precautions and Follow the Mandatory Requirements of Their Funding and Licensing Agencies, in Addition to Requirements by County Public Health, Whichever Requirement is More Restrictive Will Supersede the Other.**

**8. Definitions**

For purposes of this Order, "Community Care Facilities" includes the following facilities within the County of Los Angeles Health Jurisdiction:

- a. Adult Residential Care Facilities (ARF) all license types
- b. Continuing Care Retirement Communities
- c. Intermediate Care Facilities of all license types
- d. Psychiatric Health Facilities
- e. Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly
- f. Residential Facility Chronically III
- g. Social Rehabilitation Facilities
- h. Long-Term Care Facilities
- i. Congregate Living Health Facility, excluding Skilled Nursing Facilities

**8. Additional Terms**

- a. This Order does not, in any way, restrict: (i) First responder access to the site(s) named in this Order during an emergency or (ii) local, state or federal officers, investigators, or medical or law enforcement personnel from carrying out their lawful duties at the site(s) named in this Order.
- b. If any subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Order or any application of it to any person, structure, gathering, or circumstance is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, then such decision will not affect the validity of the remaining portions or applications of this Order.
- c. This Order is issued in accordance with and incorporates by reference, the March 4, 2020

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER



Proclamation of a State of Emergency issued by Governor Gavin Newsom; the March 4, 2020 declarations of a local and public health emergency issued by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and Los Angeles County Health Officer, respectively; and guidance issued by the California Department of Public Health, as each of them have been and may be supplemented.

- d. The violation of any provision of this Order constitutes an imminent threat and creates an immediate menace to public health, safety, and welfare. To protect the public's health, the County Health Officer may take additional action(s) for failure to comply with this Order.
- e. Violation of this Order is a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment, fine or both under California Health and Section Code Section 120275 et seq and Los Angeles County Code Section 11.02.080.

The County Health Officer will continue to monitor the rate of COVID-19 disease spread, the severity of the resulting illnesses and deaths caused, California Department of Public Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations, and the effect of this Order. If needed, this Order may be extended, expanded, or otherwise modified to protect the public's health.

If you have any questions about this Order, please call the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health at (213) 240-7941. Continue to check the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health website (<http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/Coronavirus>) for updated guidance and reference documents related to preventing COVID transmission in congregate living facilities.

**IT IS SO ORDERED:**

10/5/2020

**Muntu Davis, M.D., M.P.H.**  
Health Officer,  
County of Los Angeles

Date

**RESOURCES**

- **California Department of Social Services Provider Information Notification**  
<https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/community-care-licensing/policy/provider-information-notices>
- **California Department of Public Health All Facilities Letters:**  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/Pages/LNCAFL20.aspx>
- **Los Angeles County Department of Public Health COVID-19 Health Facilities Guidance:**  
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/healthfacilities.htm>
- **Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Guidance for Congregate Residential Facilities**  
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/coronavirus/docs/settings/GuidanceCongregateLiving-English.pdf>
- **Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Targeted Testing Guidance for Congregate Residential Facilities**  
<http://www.lapublichealth.org/media/Coronavirus/docs/settings/GuidanceCongregateLivingTargetTesting.pdf>