

PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

URGENT HEALTH BULLETIN

Kern County Cases, Additional Guidance for Laboratory Testing, Medical Health Resources Requests, and Print Resources for Healthcare Providers

This document contains hyperlinks and can be accessed on our [Health Bulletin webpage \(https://kernpublichealth.com/health-bulletin/\)](https://kernpublichealth.com/health-bulletin/) or on the [COVID-19 webpage \(https://kernpublichealth.com/2019-novel-coronavirus/\)](https://kernpublichealth.com/2019-novel-coronavirus/)

March 24, 2020

Dear Kern County Healthcare Provider:

- **Cases Identified in Kern County**

Multiple COVID-19 cases have been identified in Kern County. Kern County Public Health Services Department (KCPHSD) continues to assess and follow up with close contacts. Case counts are updated twice daily on weekdays and once daily on weekends. Please refer to our [COVID-19 Webpage](#) for the latest number of cases. As with many other California counties, it is likely that one more or cases has been infected through community transmission.

- **Additional Guidance for Prioritization of Patients for Laboratory Testing for COVID-19**

In addition to guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for [Evaluating and Testing Persons for COVID-19](#), the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has issued [Guidance for Prioritization of Patients for Laboratory Testing of COVID-19](#) to assist healthcare providers to prioritize testing. Persons who may be considered for testing depending on clinical severity and community health relevance include:

1. Hospitalized patients with symptoms compatible with COVID-19
 2. Residents and staff of long-term care facilities with symptoms compatible with COVID-19
 3. Other persons at higher risk for severe infection with symptoms compatible with COVID-19
 4. Residents and staff of correctional facilities and other congregate settings with symptoms compatible with COVID-19
 5. Healthcare personnel with symptoms compatible with COVID-19.
- Persons with mild respiratory symptoms who do not otherwise need medical care and who are not in one of the above groups should not be routinely tested for COVID-19. These persons should care for themselves at home as they normally would for a mild illness.
 - Ill persons should stay home and away from others until there has been no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement of respiratory symptoms for at least 3 days, AND at least 7 days has passed since symptoms first appeared.
 - Asymptomatic persons should not be tested for COVID-19. Current testing for COVID-19 cannot detect prior infection. Testing a person without symptoms does not rule out the possibility that person may become ill in the future.

Healthcare providers are reminded to consider additional causes of respiratory illness when clinically indicated.

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- **Medical Health Resource Requests**

KCPHSD continues to receive and respond to requests for medical health resources. To submit a request, complete the [online resource request form](#). These requests will be sorted and prioritized for consideration of distribution. It may be filled in full, in part, or not filled at this time based on multiple factors.

- **Visual and Print Resources for Healthcare Providers**

CDC has a number of [print resources](#) for healthcare providers available for download. These include [Outdoor Sign to stop patients with respiratory symptoms](#), [Indoor Sign to refer patients with respiratory symptoms to the front desk](#), and [Managing Respiratory Symptoms at Home handout for patients](#). Many materials are available in multiple languages.

CDPH also has an [infographic](#) for patients wondering if they should be tested for COVID-19.

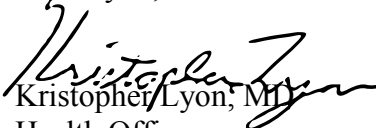
Previous bulletins from KCPHSD regarding COVID-19

- [2019 Novel Coronavirus Guidance for Healthcare Providers](#)
- [Additional Guidance for Healthcare Providers and FAQs](#)
- [COVID-19 Update for Healthcare Providers](#)
- [Risk Assessment and Management of Healthcare Personnel with Potential Exposure to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Clarification and Additional Testing Options Now Available](#)
- [Additional Healthcare Provider Updates for COVID-19](#).

The situation regarding COVID-19 continues to evolve in California, the U.S., and around the world. Interim guidance and recommendations are subject to change as more and more information becomes available. For the most up to date information, please refer to the [CDC website](#) and the [CDPH website](#).

If you have any questions, please contact KCPHSD by phone at 661-321-3000, via email at publichealth@kerncounty.com, or visit our [KCPHSD website](#).

Thank you,


Kristopher Lyon, MD
Health Officer