
Health Officer Order

Supplemental Information

Vaccination and Masking of Correctional Facility Staff Accompanying Patients in Custody to Kern County Health Care Facilities

December 14, 2018

Dear Kern County Health Care Provider and Correctional Facilities:

A [Health Officer Order](#) was issued on August 6, 2018, regarding seasonal influenza vaccination of health care workers and use of masks of health care workers who decline vaccination in Kern County. The [Health Officer Order](#) was updated on September 24, 2018 to help standardize the definition of the influenza season across California and included frequently asked questions. Further clarification is being provided in this document at the request of our community.

Kern County health care facilities may receive patients who are incarcerated, detained, or otherwise in custody from correctional facilities both within and outside of Kern County. Other counties may or may not have a Health Officer Order regarding seasonal influenza vaccination or masking of health care workers. It is the expectation that all correctional facilities sending patients in custody to Kern County health care facilities abide by the Health Officer Order in effect in Kern County.

As explained in the Health Officer Order, all Kern County health care facilities must implement a program requiring health care workers receive an annual influenza vaccination for the current season; health care workers who decline vaccination must wear a respiratory mask for the duration of the influenza season (November 1st - April 30th) while working within the health care facility.

Health care workers, as defined in the Health Officer Order, include all persons, paid or unpaid, working in a health care facility. This includes, but is not limited to, clinical staff, clerical staff, support staff, contractors, students, and volunteers. Correctional officers and other correctional facility staff who accompany patients in custody to health care facilities become health care workers when they enter the health care facility, even if typical duties of the correctional facility staff at the correctional facility do not include medical care. Therefore, correctional facility staff are expected to comply with any health care facility policies to be vaccinated for seasonal influenza or wear a respiratory mask while on duty in the health care facility.

We encourage health care facilities to ask correctional facility staff who accompany patients in custody to the health care facility about their influenza vaccination status for this season. Health care facilities may request verification of influenza vaccination from the correctional facility staff or correctional facility. We encourage health care facilities to determine if vaccination of correctional facility staff is a contracted service and to offer vaccination to correctional facility staff who have not been vaccinated this influenza season whenever possible. Health care facilities may request correctional facility staff who decline vaccination to sign a declination form. We encourage health care facilities to provide respiratory masks for correctional facility staff who decline to be vaccinated and ensure appropriate use of mask.



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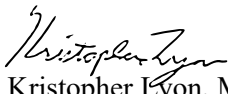
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We encourage correctional facilities to offer annual influenza vaccination to all staff members. We also encourage correctional facilities to make vaccination available to staff members throughout the influenza season should staff miss or decline the initial administration of vaccine. Correctional facilities, like other congregate living facilities, may be at increased risk for transmission of respiratory illnesses like influenza; outbreaks in correctional facilities affect both staff and persons in custody.

California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 5199 (Aerosol Transmissible Diseases), requires employers to make seasonal influenza vaccine available to all employees with occupational exposure. Accompanying a patient in custody to a health care facility likely qualifies as an occupational exposure. We encourage correctional facilities to send vaccinated correctional facility staff to accompany patients in custody to health care facilities during the influenza season whenever possible. We also encourage correctional facilities to establish or review existing internal policies regarding influenza vaccination of staff to ensure they are in compliance with local, state, and/or federal regulations.

If you have any questions, please contact the Kern County Public Health Services Department by phone at (661) 321-3000, via email at publichealth@kerncounty.com or visit our [website](#).

Thank you for your commitment to the health of our community.


Kristopher Lyon, MD
Interim Health Officer