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State Public Health Officer & Director

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
California Department of Public Health



GAVIN NEWSOM  
Governor

July 30, 2020

Yvonne Walker, President  
Service Employees International Union  
1808 14<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sacramento, CA 95811

Dear Ms. Walker:

This letter is to provide notice that the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has established a new policy on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) testing. This policy will affect all employees who conduct CDPH business in healthcare facilities. As stated in the policy, there is risk of exposure for CDPH employees and a risk that asymptotically infected CDPH employees could introduce and spread COVID-19 among healthcare facilities visited. To mitigate these risks, all CDPH employees who conduct CDPH business in healthcare facilities are required to have a baseline test and ongoing surveillance testing for COVID-19.

The proposed implementation of this policy is July 30, 2020. A copy of the new policy is attached to this notice. If you have any questions or wish to meet, please contact Christina Montserrat at (916) 440-7348.

Sincerely,

Kristanna Rivera, Deputy Director  
Human Resources Division

cc: California Department of Human Resources  
1515 S Street, North Building, Suite 400  
Sacramento, CA 95811-1758

Attachment

**COVID-19 TESTING POLICY****8-6200**

It is the policy of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to protect employees, patients and residents in healthcare facilities through public health prevention measures. There is risk of exposure for CDPH employees and a risk that asymptotically infected CDPH employees could introduce and spread Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) among healthcare facilities visited. The rapid increase of COVID-19 infection rates, combined with the inherent risks of congregate living in a healthcare setting, requires aggressive efforts to limit COVID-19 exposure and to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within healthcare facilities. To mitigate the risk of this spread, all CDPH employees who are conducting CDPH business in healthcare facilities are required to have a baseline test and ongoing surveillance testing for COVID-19.

All CDPH employees who conduct CDPH business in healthcare facilities must be tested. Employees who are working from home, on leave, or do not conduct CDPH business at healthcare facilities, do not need to be tested.

**Authority****8-6210**

[Title 8 California Code of Regulations Section 5199](#)– The Cal/OSHA Aerosol Transmissible Diseases (ATD) Standard applies to public health services rendered in healthcare facilities or in connection with the provision of health care.

To comply with the regulation, the employer must establish, implement, and maintain an effective, written ATD Exposure Control Plan that is specific to the work place or operations.

**Process****8-6220**

To mitigate the risk of CDPH employees contracting or spreading COVID-19, employees conducting CDPH business in a healthcare facility must receive initial viral testing along with monthly viral testing thereafter, for as long as the conduct of CDPH business in a healthcare facility continues. The testing frequency may be adjusted from the recommended monthly viral testing of CDPH employees based on the prevalence of the virus in their community; for example, performing weekly testing in areas with moderate-to-substantial community transmission and monthly testing in areas with minimal-to-no community transmission.

CDPH employees can receive COVID-19 testing with no out of pocket costs at a Verily or Optum clinic. To obtain testing through Verily or Optum, CDPH employees must locate a clinic and follow the location specific directions for setting up an appointment. If CDPH employees test with their personal health care provider, as a condition of employment, CDPH will reimburse any cost incurred by the employee through the department's [CalATERS](#) process. Testing will be completed during work time.

Testing is a fundamental part of the [United States SARS-CoV-2 Surveillance Plan](#) which uses multiple surveillance systems and epidemiology networks to monitor the progression and impact of COVID-19 spread in the United States.

At this time, CDPH employees who have had a reactive serologic test for antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 are still required to be tested to meet this requirement. Employees who had a positive viral test (i.e., polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test) in the prior three months and are now asymptomatic do not need to be retested as part of surveillance testing; testing may resume for surveillance or in response to an exposure only if it is three months after the date of onset of the prior infection. However, this requirement may be reconsidered at a later time for previously COVID-19 positive individuals as more is learned about immunity following COVID-19.

**Responsibility****8-6230**

Test results are only provided to the employee and local public health office of the employee's home residence. To maintain CDPH employee confidentiality, employees must provide test results directly to the CDPH Disability Management Unit (DMU), at [DMU@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:DMU@cdph.ca.gov) within 24 hours of receipt.

CDPH will use test results to determine if CDPH employees can conduct CDPH business in a healthcare facility and to assist healthcare facilities and individuals that may have had COVID-19 exposure from CDPH employees.

Any CDPH employees that refuse testing must work with DMU to determine if there is a reasonable accommodation available.