



Date: September 15, 2020

To: Health-Care Facilities Administrators and Staff

From: Maggie Park, M.D., San Joaquin County Public Health Officer *mp.*

Subject: Health Officer Order for **Influenza Vaccination** of All Health-Care Workers (HCW) during the flu season.

It has always been very important that all health care workers receive an annual influenza vaccine to protect themselves and co-workers, families, friends, and patients. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, getting a flu vaccine is more important than ever. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) believes that it is likely that both the flu virus and COVID-19 virus will be spreading this fall and winter and recommends that all people 6 months and older get a yearly flu vaccine.

With a respiratory virus season that includes both influenza and COVID-19, the impacts to our healthcare system can be substantial. Influenza alone causes a significant number of hospitalizations and deaths every year in our country. With the possibility of influenza presenting similarly to COVID-19 in its initial phases, and the possibility of co-infections causing increased severity of illness, this season will be challenging, and it is imperative that we do our part to minimize the harm inflicted by influenza. Flu vaccination of all HCW will lead to improved patient outcomes and reduced flu infection among staff.

Thus, in accordance with our shared common goals of providing high-quality and safe patient care, I now mandate that all health-care facilities in San Joaquin County require their HCW who work in health care settings get the flu vaccine.

Order:

Pursuant to Health Officer authority under California Health & Safety Code §120175, I hereby order all health care facilities (hospitals, clinics, urgent care centers, skilled nursing and other long term-care facilities, physician's offices, home healthcare and other similar health-care settings) in the County to adopt and implement policies and programs to require all HCW to receive the annual flu vaccine. In the rare circumstance that a HCW is exempt from vaccination, a face mask must be worn at all times while working.



Persons Covered:

“Health Care Workers” (HCW) are all persons, including paid and unpaid employees, contractors, students, and volunteers, who work in settings where patient care or other service is provided within six feet of a patient.

Duration of Order:

Unless and until rescinded, this Order applies during each influenza season, defined 1 November of one year to 30 April of the following year. If surveillance data in a particular year demonstrate that the flu season is different from these dates, then this time-period may be changed by a further order.

We trust that all facilities subject to their Order will comply fully with it and will notify their HCW of its provisions.

We value the role that you and other HCW play in preventing flu-related illness and death. By getting vaccinated for the flu, HCW will undoubtedly be playing a significant part in mitigating the severity of the upcoming influenza and COVID-19 “twindemic” in our communities.

For more information, you may access <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/>

For state flu information:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/pages/immunization/influenza.aspx>

Thank you.