

**ORDER OF THE LONG BEACH HEALTH OFFICER**

Order Requiring

**ANNUAL INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION OR MASKING REQUIREMENT FOR HEALTHCARE  
PERSONNEL DURING THE 2025-2026 RESPIRATORY VIRUS SEASON**

Date Order Issued: September 25, 2025

This Order is in effect until rescinded in writing by the Health Officer.

**SUMMARY OF THE ORDER:**

This Order requires that each year, Healthcare Personnel (HCP) in all licensed healthcare facilities, except skilled nursing facilities (SNF), must either a) be immunized with an annual influenza vaccine authorized for use in the United States for the current Respiratory Virus Season or b) wear a respiratory mask while in contact with patients or working in patient care areas for the duration of the Respiratory Virus Season (November 1 through March 31).

Due to the nature of care provided to highly vulnerable populations, the high risk of rapid respiratory virus transmission in SNFs, and low influenza vaccination rates among SNF HCP, all HCP working in SNFs must wear a respiratory mask while in contact with patients or working in patient-care areas throughout the Respiratory Virus Season.

**BACKGROUND:**

Many respiratory viruses, like influenza, COVID-19, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), circulate year-round in the United States and California, but infection rates and severity of symptoms increase significantly in the fall and winter months and pose risks to medically vulnerable individuals and those exposed through necessity due to their circumstances. When seeking care, patients, clients and residents in healthcare settings may be concerned about their potential exposure to COVID-19 and influenza. Some of these individuals, such as young children, pregnant women, elderly individuals, and persons with chronic health conditions or immunocompromised, may also be at increased risk of serious complications, including hospitalization, intubation or ventilation, and even death if infected these infections.

Vaccine formulations that target the SARS-CoV-2 and influenza viruses continue to provide good protection against severe disease. Although vaccinations do not prevent all infections or transmission, unvaccinated individuals have a higher risk of infection and serious complications if infected.

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Influenza immunizations, updated COVID-19 immunizations, and masking are important actions that healthcare personnel (HCP) can take to protect themselves, other HCP, patients, and others from these viruses. Unvaccinated HCP are not only at higher risk for contracting influenza and COVID-19 but can also spread these viruses to their coworkers or patients. When HCP are vaccinated, the risk of illness is reduced for those who interact with them, especially when also wearing a well-fitted mask.

Each year by the start of the Respiratory Virus Season, it is recommended for HCP to be immunized with both the annual influenza vaccine and the most recently updated COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the United States. Acute care hospitals in California must offer free influenza vaccinations on-site to their employees and require all employees to be vaccinated annually. Any employee who chooses not to be vaccinated must provide the hospital with a written declaration that they decline the vaccination [See, Cal. Health & Safety Code §1288.7(a)].

In addition, occupational safety regulations require other healthcare facilities, including skilled nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) provider agencies make the seasonal influenza vaccine reasonably available to all employees with occupational exposure and ensure that each employee who refuses the vaccine signs a statement declining vaccination [See, 8 Cal. Code Regs. §5199 (c)(6)(D) & (h)(10)].

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months of age and older should receive a COVID-19 vaccine with shared clinical decision making with a healthcare provider, such as a physician or pharmacist. All HCP for whom vaccination is recommended are still strongly urged to receive the updated 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccines in addition to the annual influenza vaccine. Given the elevated risk of severe outcomes and rapid transmission of respiratory viruses in SNFs, combined with SNF HCP influenza vaccination rates falling below 50% in Los Angeles County for the 2024–2025 season, this Order requires HCP in Skilled Nursing Facilities to wear a Respiratory Mask while in contact with patients or working in Patient-Care Areas for the duration of the Respiratory Virus Season (November 1 through March 31).

In the City of Long Beach, a Health Officer Order mandating that HCP be either vaccinated against influenza or masked while in contact with patients or when working in patient-care areas has been issued annually since 2013. Since that time, the average rate of HCP influenza immunization across Los Angeles County has increased.

There is a need to continue efforts to increase immunization rates to protect both HCP and the patients they serve. We strongly encourage other unlicensed healthcare and direct care entities to voluntarily adopt the same measures for their employees to protect their personnel and patients during the Respiratory Virus Season.

This Health Officer Order is effective within the City of Long Beach. This order will continue until it is revised, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Health Officer.

**UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE (HSC) SECTION 120175,  
THE CITY OF LONG BEACH HEALTH OFFICER ORDERS:**

- 1) PURPOSE.** Influenza and COVID-19 continue to pose a risk to persons within Long Beach City. Vaccination against influenza and COVID-19 is still the most effective strategy to prevent serious illness and death from these respiratory illnesses. When HCP and workers in health care settings are vaccinated, there is a reduced risk to those who interact with them. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months of age and older should receive a COVID-19 vaccine with shared clinical decision making with a healthcare provider, such as a physician or pharmacist. All HCP for whom vaccination is recommended are still strongly urged to receive the updated 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccines in addition to the annual influenza vaccine.

This Order continues the annual requirement that licensed healthcare facilities within the City of Long Beach implement a program under which HCP a) receives the annual influenza vaccine authorized for use in the U.S. for the current Respiratory Virus Season or b) if HCP (as defined below in 4b) wears a respiratory mask (i.e., surgical, procedure, or N-95) while in contact with patients or when working in patient-care areas for the duration of the season.

- 2) INTENT.** The primary intent of this Order is to lower the risk of influenza and other respiratory virus transmission to patients and staff by requiring all licensed healthcare facilities, with the exception of Skilled Nursing Facilities, to require HCP (as defined in Section 4ii) who decline an annual influenza vaccine to wear a respiratory mask while in contact with patients or working in patient-care areas for the duration of the Respiratory Virus Season (November 1-March 31).

In addition, due to a higher number of respiratory virus outbreaks with rapid transmission observed in SNFs, this Order requires that all HCP in SNFs to wear a respiratory mask while in contact with patients or working in patient-care areas, regardless of vaccination status, for the duration of the Respiratory Virus Season, to lower the risk of respiratory virus transmission to particularly vulnerable residents.

- 3) LICENSED HEALTHCARE FACILITIES SUBJECT TO THIS ORDER.** This Order applies to the following licensed health care facilities:
- i. General Acute Care Hospitals
  - ii. Skilled Nursing Facilities (including Subacute Facilities)
  - iii. Intermediate Care Facilities
  - iv. Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Provider Agencies
  - v. Congregate Living Health Facilities
  - vi. Chemical Dependency Recovery Hospitals
  - vii. Acute Psychiatric Hospitals

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- viii. Dialysis Centers
- ix. Home Health Agencies
- x. Primary Care Clinics
- xi. Ambulatory Surgery Centers
- xii. Hospice Facilities

**4) DEFINITIONS.** For the purposes of this Order, the following terms are defined as follows:

- i. **Respiratory Virus Season.** Refers to November 1 of one year through March 31 of the following year. If surveillance data in a particular year demonstrate that the Respiratory Virus Season is different than November 1 to March 31, this period may be amended in an updated Order.
- ii. **Healthcare Personnel (HCP).** Refers to all paid and unpaid employees, contractors, students, volunteers, and EMS HCP who have direct patient contact or work in patient-care areas in licensed healthcare facilities subject to this Order and the prehospital care setting (e.g., any setting in which medical care is provided prior to the patient's arrival at the hospital). This includes, but not limited to, physicians, nurses, aids, physical therapists, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), paramedics, contract workers, students, volunteers, registration/reception staff, housekeeping, and maintenance personnel.
- iii. **Respiratory Mask.** Refers to a surgical, procedure, or N-95 mask, also designated by some manufacturers as isolation, dental, or medical procedure facemask.
- iv. **Patient-Care Areas.** Refers to areas in facilities that include, but are not limited to, patient or resident rooms and areas where patients receive diagnostic or treatment services, can be taken for procedures or tests, and are allowed to be present (e.g., elevators, hallways, and nurses' stations). These areas also include any prehospital setting in which EMS personnel are in contact with patients and other areas facility administrators deem could result in exposure to patients and possible disease transmission.

**5) INFLUENZA VACCINATION REQUIREMENT.** All employees of a licensed healthcare facility, with the exception of Skilled Nursing Facilities (as defined in Section 3) who meet the definition of healthcare personnel (as defined in Section 4ii) must receive an annual influenza vaccine authorized in the United States for the current Respiratory Virus Season prior to or during the Respiratory Virus Season, annually defined as November 1 to March 31, or wear a respiratory mask while in contact with patients or working in patient-care areas.

By November 1 of each Respiratory Virus Season, HCP who decline an influenza immunization, as described above, must provide their employer, on a form provided by their employer, a written declaration for each vaccine they have declined. HCP who declines or have not yet obtained both an annual influenza vaccine or the most recently updated COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the United States for the current Respiratory Virus Season must wear a respiratory mask while in contact with patients or working in patient-care areas for the duration of the Respiratory Virus Season.

- 4) MASKING REQUIREMENT FOR SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES.** All persons who meet the definition of Healthcare Personnel within Skilled Nursing Facilities must wear a respiratory mask, regardless of vaccination status, while in contact with patients or working in patient-care areas during the Respiratory Virus Season, annually defined as November 1-March 31.
- 5) MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS.** Consistent with applicable privacy laws and regulations, the operator of the licensed healthcare facility must maintain records of all HCP vaccination or declination status.
- i. The facility must provide such records to the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services or their designee promptly upon request, and in any event, no later than three business days after receiving the request.
  - ii. Operators of the facilities subject to the requirement must maintain records with the following information:
    - a. Full name and date of birth of HCP
    - b. Vaccine manufacturer
    - c. Date of vaccine administration
  - iii. For unvaccinated workers: a declination form signed by the unvaccinated HCP.
- 6) REPORTING.** Upon request by the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services, facilities and EMS provider agencies must report their HCP influenza and COVID-19 immunization rates within the requested timeframe either through the CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network, a tool provided by the EMS agency, or a tool provided by the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services.
- 7) MASKING AND OTHER INFECTION CONTROL POLICIES AND PRACTICES.** Nothing in the Order limits otherwise applicable requirements related to personal protective equipment (PPE), personnel training, and infection control policies and practices.
- 8) ACCESS TO VACCINATIONS.** All licensed healthcare facilities covered by the Order are encouraged to provide onsite vaccinations for HCP and all employees, easy access to nearby vaccinations, and education and outreach on vaccinations. Of note, facilities must also comply with vaccination related and other requirements set forth by California law and/or occupational safety regulations that apply to their site.
- 9) COPIES.** The City of Long Beach shall promptly provide copies of this Order by:
- i. Posting it on the Long Beach Department Health and Human Services' website: [www.longbeach.gov/fluforproviders](http://www.longbeach.gov/fluforproviders).
  - ii. Providing it to any member of the public requesting a copy.
- 10) SEVERABILITY.** 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

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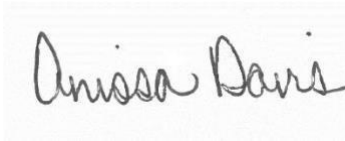
or unconstitutional by a decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, then such decision will not affect the validity of the remaining portion or applications of this Order.

**11) AMENDMENTS TO ORDER.** This Order may be revised in the future to reflect evolving local or overarching public health conditions.

**12) STATUTORY AUTHORITY.** This Order is issued pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code (HSC) section 120175.

**13) ISSUE DATE.** This Order is issued on Thursday, September 25, 2025, and will continue until it is revised, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the City Health Officer.

IT IS SO ORDERED:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anissa Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style and is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Anissa Davis, MD, MPH  
Health Officer  
City of Long Beach  
October 3, 2024

#### **HEALTH OFFICER ORDER RESOURCES**

For additional information regarding this Health Officer Order, the following documents will be available on the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services website at: [www.longbeach.gov/fluforproviders](http://www.longbeach.gov/fluforproviders).

If you have any questions, contact the Long Beach Health and Human Services, Communicable Disease Surveillance and Control Division at 562.570.4302 Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm or [lbepi@longbeach.gov](mailto:lbepi@longbeach.gov).