

Saint Francis & St. Mary's Health Advisory: Priorities for COVID-19 Testing

Date Issued: Wednesday, July 29, 2020

COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS DISEASE) UPDATE (FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY)

- COVID-19 in California (as of July 22, 9:00 am P.T.)
 - 400,769 confirmed new cases **(+34,261 new** in the last week)
 - 7,755 confirmed deaths **(+668 new** in the last week)
- COVID-19 in San Francisco (as of July 22, 9:00 am P.T.)
 - 5,459 confirmed cases **(+763 new** in the last week)

Situational Update

- San Francisco is experiencing an alarming increase in COVID-19 transmission. Saint Francis Memorial Hospital (SFMH) and St. Mary's Medical Center (SMMC) must align their testing and mitigation measures to support our populations at highest risk of COVID-19 morbidity and mortality.
- On July 14, CDPH issued [updated COVID-19 testing guidance](#) to support public health officials, health care providers, and laboratories in determining who should be tested given the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic in California.
- On July 17, SFDPH adopted CDPH's 4-tier testing prioritization, which is incorporated into a July 21 Health Officer order; see www.sfdph.org/healthorders.

New DPH Order

Pursuant to the new Order of the Health Officer No. C19-15, SFMH and SMMC are conducting diagnostic testing for SARS-CoV-2 for certain tiered groups (see below). This order requires healthcare providers in San Francisco to provide COVID-19 testing for the following groups, either the same day as healthcare is provided or the next calendar day:

- Has symptoms associated with SARS-CoV-2 infection;
- Is a close contact for someone who is a confirmed or likely carrier of the virus; or
- Is identified by the San Francisco Department of Public Health as needing priority testing.

This Order goes into effect at 11:59 p.m. on July 29, 2020. The Order will remain in effect, without a specific expiration date, for so long as the threat of the pandemic continues, or until this Order is otherwise extended, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the Health Officer.

The new order requires healthcare providers in San Francisco to test:

- Everyone in Tier 1
- All other individuals with COVID-19 symptoms (The first bullet of Tier 2).
 - **NOTE:** There is no mandate to provide surveillance testing for asymptomatic patients.

See p. 2 for prioritization guidelines issued by the City's Department of Public Health regarding diagnostic testing for SARS-CoV-2.

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Appendix A. Health Advisory: Priorities for COVID-19 Diagnostic Testing (July 21, 2020).

Pursuant to the new Order of the Health Officer No. C19-15, SFMH and SMMC are conducting diagnostic testing for SARS-CoV-2 for certain key groups:

- Everyone in Tier 1
- **Symptomatic inpatients and outpatients in Tier 2.**

Note: Any symptomatic individual in Tier 2 Priority is provided with COVID-19 testing. But asymptomatic patients are surveillance tested on a case-by-case scenario and current availability of testing supplies. As testing expands, we will reevaluate this workflow.

Tier 1 Priority (for inpatient and outpatient use)

- Hospitalized individuals with COVID-19 symptoms.
- Investigation and management of outbreaks, under direction of state and local public health departments (includes contact tracing).
- Prolonged contacts of confirmed cases
 - Spending more than 10 minutes within 6 feet of the confirmed COVID+ person.
 - Direct contact with another person's bodily fluids and/or secretions (e.g., being coughed or sneezed on, sharing utensils, or providing care without a surgical mask).

Tier 2 Priority (for symptomatic inpatients and outpatients)

- *All other individuals age 18 or greater with COVID-19 symptoms*

COVID-19 symptoms include any one or more of the following symptoms which is not explained by another condition or diagnosis:

- *Temperature greater than 100.4F (38.0C) cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, chills, headache, body aches, fatigue, loss of smell or taste, diarrhea, runny nose, nasal congestion, or other symptoms if there is associated clinical concern for COVID-19.*

- *All other individuals younger than 18 years old with COVID-19 symptoms*

COVID-19 symptoms include any one or more of the following symptoms which is not explained by another condition or diagnosis:

- *Temperature greater than 100.4F (38.0C); chills; cough; shortness of breath or trouble breathing; loss of smell or taste; or other symptoms if there is associated clinical concern for COVID-19.*

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Tier 2 Priority (for asymptomatic inpatients and outpatients)

NOTE: SFMH cannot meet testing criteria for the below individuals at this time.

- Asymptomatic individuals who fall into one of the following categories:
 - Live in higher risk congregate care facilities.
 - Work in the health care sector who have frequent interactions with the public or with people who may have COVID-19 or have been exposed to SARS-CoV-2.
 - Work in a congregate care facility.
 - Provide care to an elderly person or a person with a disability in the home.
 - Work in the emergency services sector who have frequent interactions with the public or with people who may have COVID-19 or have been exposed to SARS CoV-2.
 - Work in a correctional facility.
 - Patients requiring pre-operative, pre-hospital admission, or *pre-high-risk procedure (e.g., dental care)* screening.
 - Patients being discharged from hospitals to lower levels of care.

Counseling about Proper Use of Test

- Please note that a negative diagnostic test only means that virus was not detectable at the time of testing (assuming it was a true negative test); and that
- At any time after that point of testing, they could develop or progress to COVID-19 infection that can be transmitted to others; and that
- Continue to adhere to social distancing practices with people outside their household.

Reminder to Address the Spread of COVID-19

- Please emphasize the following important messages to all your patients:
 - Stay home to the extent possible while caring for your mental and physical health.
 - See more at www.sfcdcp.org/safersocial.
- If you leave your home:
 - Avoid gathering with people outside your household.
 - If you must gather with people outside of your household, avoid being indoors. Outdoor interactions are much safer.
 - Keep your social circles small and stable.
 - Cover your face (both mouth and nose) with a bandana, scarf, cloth, or mask.
 - Keep 6 feet between you and people outside your household at all times.

Additional Resources

- Health advisories and alerts are posted at www.sfcdcp.org/health-alerts-emergencies/health-alerts/

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- See www.sfgcdcp.org/covid19hcp for additional COVID-19 information and guidance for San Francisco health care providers.