

Date: July 15, 2020  
To: Medical Care Providers  
From: Julie Vaishampayan, MD, MPH, Health Officer

Please distribute to all providers and relevant medical staff in your office.

## **Health Advisory**

### **Updated Testing Guidance for COVID-19**

As of July 15, 2020, 5,356 cases of COVID-19, have been reported in Stanislaus County residents. There has been a tremendous increase starting mid-June; on June 15 there were 1,242 cases reported in Stanislaus County, an increase of 4,114 cases in the past 30 days. With this large increase comes a large demand for testing. Current testing capacity is not sufficient for the current demand, requiring prioritization of people for testing once again.

**ACTIONS REQUESTED OF CLINICIANS** - Prioritize patients for testing by the following criteria:

#### **Tier One Priority**

- Hospitalized individuals with COVID-19 symptoms.
- Investigation and management of outbreaks, under direction of state and local public health departments (includes contact tracing).
- Close contacts of confirmed cases.

#### **Tier Two Priority**

- All other individuals with COVID-19 symptoms.
- Individuals who are asymptomatic (having no symptoms of COVID 19), who fall into one of the following categories:
  - Live in higher risk congregate care facilities including skilled nursing facilities, residential care facilities for the elderly, correctional facilities, or homeless shelters.
  - 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. The health care sector includes: hospitals; skilled nursing facilities; long-term care facilities; ambulatory surgery centers; health care providers' offices; health care clinics; pharmacies; blood banks; dialysis centers; hospices; and, home health providers
  - Work in a congregate care facility, including shelters for people experience homelessness and residential care facilities for the elderly.
  - Provide care to an elderly person or a person with a disability in the home, including a person providing care through California's In-Home Supportive Services Program.
  - 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. The emergency services sector includes police and public safety departments, fire departments, and emergency service response operations.
  - Work in a correctional facility.
  - Patients requiring pre-operative/pre-hospital admission screening.
  - Patients being discharged from hospitals to lower levels of care.

### **Tier Three Priority**

- Individuals who work in the retail or manufacturing sectors who have frequent interactions with the public or who works in an environment where it is not practical to maintain at least six feet of space from other workers on a consistent basis.
- Individuals who work in the food services sector who have frequent interactions with the public. The food services sector includes grocery stores, convenience stores, restaurants, and grocery or meal delivery services.
- Individuals who work in the agricultural or food manufacturing sector who have frequent interactions with the public or who works in an environment where it is not practical to maintain at least six feet of space from other workers on a consistent basis. The agricultural or food manufacturing sector includes food production and processing facilities, slaughter facilities, harvesting sites or facilities, and food packing facilities.
- Individuals who work in the public transportation sector who have frequent interactions with the public. The public transportation sector includes public transit, passenger rail service, passenger ferry service, public airports, and commercial airlines.
- Individuals who work in the education sector who have frequent interactions with students or the public. The education sector includes public and private childcare establishments; public and private pre-kindergarten programs; primary and secondary schools; and public and private colleges and universities.

### **Tier Four Priority**

Tier Four would be implemented when the state's testing turnaround time, as monitored by CDPH, is less than 48 hours.

- Other individuals not specified above including those who are asymptomatic but believe they have a risk for being actively infected as well as routine testing by employers.

**Testing Discrimination and Inappropriate Workplace Testing** - proof of a negative test should not be required prior to returning to the workplace after documented COVID infection.

### **Non-PCR Laboratory Tests**

- The FDA recommends that certain COVID-19 serology tests should not be used by clinical laboratories and health care providers. The tests that providers and labs should stop using is on the FDA's "removed" test list (<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/emergency-situations-medical-devices/faqs-testing-sars-cov-2#nolonger-ivd>).
- Considerations for Implementation of SARS-CoV-2 Rapid Antigen Testing guidance (<https://www.aphl.org/programs/preparedness/Crisis-Management/Documents/APHL-SARSCov2-Antigen-Testing-Considerations.pdf>) was published by the Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) on 6.23.20. APHL states that the antigen tests are considerably less sensitive than molecular tests and false negatives are common. In addition, APHL warns of false positive antigen tests, particularly in low prevalence populations.

**Report** COVID-19 positive cases to Stanislaus County Public Health within 24 hours

- Monday - Sunday 8 AM – 5 PM call (209) 558-5678
- If other afterhours assistance needed, call (209) 664-6032

### **Resources**

- CDPH Testing Guidance: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Expanding-Access-to-Testing-Updated-Interim-Guidance-on-Prioritization-for-COVID-19-Laboratory-Testing-0501.aspx>
- Stanislaus County Health Services Agency (HSA): <http://schsa.org/PublicHealth/pages/corona-virus/>