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PIN 21-23-ASC

TO: ALL ADULT AND SENIOR CARE PROGRAM LICENSEES

FROM: *Original signed by Kevin Gaines*  
KEVIN GAINES  
Deputy Director  
Community Care Licensing Division

SUBJECT: **UPDATED QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION GUIDANCE FOR FACILITY STAFF DURING THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19) PANDEMIC**

**Provider Information Notice (PIN) Summary**

PIN 21-23-ASC provides updated quarantine and isolation guidance to Adult and Senior Care (ASC) licensees with facility staff who are fully vaccinated, facility staff who were exposed to a person with COVID-19, and facility staff who test positive for COVID-19. In addition, this PIN provides infection control practices for facility staff to safely commute for work.

***Please post/keep this PIN in the facility where persons in care can easily access it and distribute the PIN Summary for Persons in Care (located at the end of this PIN) to persons in care and, if applicable, their representatives.***

This PIN supersedes guidance from [PIN 20-38-ASC](#) dated October 6, 2020 related to quarantine and isolation for facility staff. In addition, this PIN provides infection control practices for facility staff commuting for work.

On December 14, 2020, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) sent a notice to all ASC licensees that the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) updated quarantine guidance for asymptomatic facility staff who were exposed to

COVID-19, meaning in close contact with a COVID-19 positive person (i.e., within six (6) feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period). This PIN memorializes and provides additional guidance for ASC licensees.

The following guidance is based on [CDPH COVID-19 Quarantine Guidance](#), [CDPH All-Facilities Letter \(AFL\) 21-08.1](#), and [CDPH AFL 20-53.3](#).

### **Exposed Asymptomatic Fully Vaccinated Facility Staff**

**Important!** “[Fully vaccinated](#)” means at least two (2) weeks have passed after a person receives the second dose in a 2-dose series, like the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or two (2) weeks after a single-dose vaccine, like Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen vaccine.

Fully vaccinated facility staff who are asymptomatic do not need to be restricted from work for 14 days following an exposure to COVID-19, per [updated Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) guidance](#). Work restrictions should still be considered for:

- Facility staff who have underlying immunocompromising conditions (e.g., organ transplantation, cancer treatment), which might impact level of protection provided by the COVID-19 vaccine.

**Important!** Fully vaccinated facility staff should follow CDC travel recommendations for safer domestic and international travel during the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidance includes recommendations for testing and quarantine and can be found on the CDC webpages for [Domestic Travel During COVID-19](#) and [International Travel During COVID-19](#).

### **Exposed Facility Staff**

Asymptomatic facility staff who were exposed to COVID-19 but who are not fully vaccinated:

- Quarantine and be **excluded from work for 14 days** when the facility is not experiencing a critical staffing shortage.
- During critical staffing shortages in a [residential care facility](#), asymptomatic direct care staff who were exposed to COVID-19 and are not fully vaccinated may return to work after **Day 7** from the date of last exposure if:
  - They get a PCR test after **Day 5** from the date of last exposure **and**
  - The test result is negative.
- If the exposed staff member develops symptoms, the staff member should isolate until:
  - At least 1 day (24 hours) has passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **AND**

- Resolution in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough and shortness of breath) **AND**
- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

### **COVID-19 Positive Facility Staff**

Asymptomatic facility staff who test positive for COVID-19, regardless of their COVID-19 vaccination status:

- Be **excluded from work for 10 days from the test date.**
- During critical staffing shortages in a residential care facility, facility staff who test **positive and are asymptomatic** can continue to work following [CDC Guidance on Mitigating Staffing Shortages](#), as long as they are **only** caring for persons in care with confirmed COVID-19, preferably in a cohort setting (see [PIN 21-12-ASC](#) for guidance on cohorting). This decision should be made in consultation with the local health department.
  - Asymptomatic positive facility staff must maintain separation from other facility staff as much as possible (for example, use a separate breakroom and restroom) and wear an N95 respirator at all times while in the facility. Full PPE (N95 respirator, eye protection, gown, and gloves) should be worn when providing care to persons in care with COVID-19 as specified in PIN 21-12-ASC.
  - Asymptomatic positive facility staff may not care for persons in care who have not tested COVID-19 positive until at least 10 days from the test date.
- If the positive staff member develops symptoms, the staff member should isolate until:
  - At least 1 day (24 hours) has passed since recovery, defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **AND**
  - Resolution in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough and shortness of breath) **AND**
  - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

### **Facility Staff Commuting for Work**

All facility staff, regardless of their COVID-19 status, should take precautions to prevent and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 when commuting for work.

During critical staffing shortages in a residential care facility when there may be *asymptomatic* facility staff who are permitted to reduce their quarantine or isolation period, it is preferable for them not to commute with others. Licensees should encourage facility staff to commute for work by driving themselves, getting a ride from a member of their household, or from a vaccinated individual. If facility staff cannot commute for work without coming into contact with other individuals outside their household or unvaccinated individuals, licensees should exclude them from work until

they are no longer on isolation precautions or quarantine. Exceptions might be made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Community Care Licensing Regional Office and the local health department if there is a staffing crisis.

**Important!** As a reminder, symptomatic facility staff should be excluded from work until their isolation period is complete. The isolation period for symptomatic facility staff should not be reduced to alleviate a staffing shortage.

In all other circumstances, if there are facility staff that take public transportation, ride share, etc. when commuting for work, follow these general principles based on [CDC guidance](#):

- Practice hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
  - Wash your hands before you leave on your commute.
  - Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
  - Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or the inside of your elbow.
  - Throw the tissue away, then wash your hands immediately or use hand sanitizer.
  - Wash your hands upon arrival at work.
- Physically distance.
  - During travel, stay at least six (6) feet away from others who are not in your household. For example, this includes while waiting at a bus station or selecting seats.
- Wear a properly fitted N95 respirator (or facemask if N95 is not available) when outside the home through Day 14 after last exposure, or for the duration of your isolation period, if you are not fully vaccinated and permitted to discontinue quarantine or isolation early as specified above.
  - Wear a tight-fitting face covering when outside the home in all other circumstances.
- Bring supplies.
  - Pack sanitizing wipes and hand sanitizer.
  - Bring extra masks in a resealable bag.
- Avoid touching surfaces.
  - Limit touching frequently touched surfaces such as kiosks, digital interfaces such as touchscreens and fingerprint scanners, ticket machines, turnstiles, handrails, restroom surfaces, elevator buttons, and benches as much as possible.
  - If you must touch these surfaces, as soon as you can, wash your hands or rub your hands with sanitizer.
  - Use touchless payment and no-touch trash cans and doors when available. Exchange cash or credit cards by placing them in a receipt tray or on the counter rather than by hand, if possible.
- Avoid riding with unmasked drivers or passengers.
  - Do not ride in a vehicle if the driver or other passengers who do not live with you are not properly wearing face masks.

- Avoid stopping in multiple places on the way to work.
  - Except for essential activities such as going to work, you should stay home as much as possible. Avoid making multiple stops to run errands on the way to work (e.g., buying groceries, going to the bank, shopping) and use online services instead.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces.
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces on any device (e.g., handlebars, gears, braking handles, locks, cell phones, etc.) or shared equipment before you use it. Use disinfecting wipes, if available.
- Improve ventilation.
  - Ask the driver to improve the ventilation in the vehicle if possible, by opening the windows or setting the air ventilation/air conditioning on non-recirculation mode.

If you have any questions, please contact your local [Adult and Senior Care Regional Office](#).

**Provider Information Notice (PIN) Summary for Persons in Care  
PIN 21-23-ASC Updated Quarantine and Isolation Guidance for Facility Staff  
During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic**

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has prepared this **PIN Summary for Persons in Care** as a companion to **PIN 21-23-ASC** to inform you of guidance we've provided to your care providers concerning your care.

CDSS recommends:

- Fully vaccinated facility staff do not need to be excluded from work if they were exposed to COVID-19.
  - “Exposed” means within six (6) feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
- Facility staff who do not have symptoms, are not fully vaccinated, and were exposed to COVID-19 should quarantine at home and be excluded from work for 14 days.
  - During critical staffing shortages in a residential care facility, direct care staff are allowed to return to work after seven days of quarantine if they get tested after the fifth day of their quarantine and receive a negative test result.
  - If the staff member develops symptoms, they should isolate at home.
- Facility staff who do not have symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19 should be excluded from work and isolate at home, even if they are fully vaccinated.
  - During critical staffing shortages in a residential care facility, facility staff who test positive and do not have symptoms can continue to work, as long as they are **only** caring for persons in care with confirmed COVID-19.
  - If the staff member develops symptoms, they should isolate at home.

***Your care providers, the licensee of your facility, and your local Long-Term Care [Ombudsman](tel:1-800-510-2020) (call 1-800-510-2020) are available to answer your questions.***