

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local health departments, long-term care providers, infectious disease physicians, infection control professionals, hospitals, hospital emergency departments, various provider clinics, urgent care facilities, laboratories

FROM: Medical Services Division, Office of Health Care Regulation, and Communicable Disease Section

DATE: October 21, 2022

SUBJECT: Updated Health Care COVID-19 Requirements

On October 14, 2022, [Illinois Executive Order 2022-21](#) was issued to eliminate the vaccination or testing requirement for Illinois health care workers and to eliminate the Illinois-specific face covering requirement for health care facilities to align with federal guidance.

[Executive Order 2021-12](#) was amended and revised to align with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) healthcare guidance [CDC COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations](#) released on September 23, 2022, and adopted by federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) for nursing homes in [QSO-20-39-NH](#). When the SARS-CoV-2 Community Transmission Level for the area is high, CDC now recommends source control for everyone in health care settings when they are in areas of the health care facility where they could encounter patients. When SARS-CoV-2 [Community Transmission](#)¹ levels are **not** high, health care facilities may choose not to require universal source control. However, even if source control is not universally required, it remains recommended for individuals in health care settings who:

- Have suspected or confirmed SARS-CoV-2 infection or other respiratory infection (e.g., those with runny nose, cough, sneeze).
- Had [close contact](#) (patients and visitors) or a [higher-risk exposure](#) (HCP) with someone with SARS-CoV-2 infection for 10 days after their exposure.
- Reside or work on a unit or area of the facility experiencing a SARS-CoV-2 outbreak. Universal use of source control could be discontinued as a mitigation measure once no new cases have been identified for 14 days.
- Have otherwise had source control recommended by public health authorities.

Regardless of the Community Transmission level, CMS allows residents and their visitors when alone in the resident's room or in a designated visitation area to choose not to wear face coverings or masks.

¹Community Transmission is the metric currently recommended to guide select practices in health care settings to allow for earlier intervention, before there is strain on the health care system, and to better protect the individuals seeking care in these settings. The Community Transmission metric is different from the COVID-19 Community Level metric used for non-health care settings. Community Transmission refers to measures of the presence and spread of SARS-CoV-2. COVID-19 Community Levels place an emphasis on measures of the impact of COVID-19 in terms of hospitalizations and health care system strain, while accounting for transmission in the community.

Non-health care higher risk congregate settings, such as jails, prisons and shelters, should follow the [CDC Guidance on Prevention and Management of Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) in Correctional and Detention Facilities](#) and the [CDC Interim Guidance for Homeless Service Providers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#).

[Executive Order 2021-22](#) (Vaccination and testing requirements) was modified to eliminate Section 2, which previously required health care workers in Illinois to be vaccinated or undergo regularly testing. This change aligned with [CDC COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations](#) released on September 23, 2022, and adopted by federal CMS for nursing homes in [QSO-20-38-NH](#), which were both modified to no longer recommend routine testing of asymptomatic staff. Illinois-mandated vaccination and testing requirements have thus been lifted for health care facilities except for state-owned and state-operated facilities. Health care facilities should still continue to follow any applicable federal law and regulations, including federal regulations from CMS that still require staff at CMS-certified facilities to be vaccinated unless they have an exemption. Sections 5, 7, 8, and 9 of Executive Order 2021-22, as amended by Executive Order 2021-23 and Executive Order 2021-27 were re-issued and extended through November 12, 2022.

The Illinois Department of Public Health's administrative rules governing vaccination and testing requirements, as well as screening testing, are currently being revised to align with the above changes. Additionally, the Interim Guidance for Nursing Homes and Other Licensed Long-Term Care Facilities for COVID-19 is also being updated.

Employers or facilities may choose to implement additional strategies in order to protect staff and residents from COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses.