



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. BOX 3378
HONOLULU, HI 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

July 8, 2020
CORRECTED

MEDICAL ADVISORY: UPDATE #13—CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

Dear Healthcare Provider,

With the opening of businesses and activities, Hawaii is currently experiencing community-wide transmission of COVID-19, most prominently on Oahu, but with cases occurring on all islands. Quarantine restrictions for interisland travel have been rescinded, with anticipated allowance of travel from out-of-state without quarantine (if traveler has appropriate COVID-19 testing) in the near future. This will likely mean continued increases in cases.

Therefore, **all healthcare personnel (HCP) must strictly adhere to infection control guidelines**, to avoid disease transmission and spread within facilities. In addition to wearing appropriate [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#) when evaluating and treating patients, you and your staff should:

- **Not come to work when ill**
- **Wear a medical mask at all times** while they are in the healthcare facility, including in breakrooms or other spaces where they might encounter co-workers.
 - Medical masks should only be removed to eat/drink, while adhering to physical distancing.
 - Masks should always cover both your nose and mouth when worn properly.
 - When available, medical masks are preferred rather than cloth face coverings for HCP as medical masks offer both source control and protection for the wearer against exposure to splashes and sprays of infectious material from others.
 - Cloth face coverings should NOT be worn instead of a respirator or medical mask if more than source control is needed.
 - Remove your respirator or medical mask, perform hand hygiene, and put on your cloth face covering when leaving the facility at the end of your shift.
- **Practice physical distancing in non-patient care areas**
 - You have the potential for exposure to SARS-CoV-2 not only by direct patient care interactions, but *especially through unprotected exposure to asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic co-workers in breakrooms* or co-workers or visitors in other common areas.
- **Practice hand hygiene** to prevent the spread of pathogens and infections
 - Use an alcohol-based hand rub with greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol
 - Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds when visibly soiled, before eating, and after using the restroom.
- **Practice physical distancing and avoid high-risk activities outside of work**
 - With community-wide transmission occurring in our state, exercise care in *all* interactions with persons, including friends or extended family, outside of your

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home. Avoid or take additional precautions if attending large social gatherings or participating in high risk activities such as indoor group dining or indoor exercise classes. Carpooling may be necessary but can also pose a risk. Practice appropriate masking and physical distancing and ensure good ventilation at all times.

- Given extensive community transmission on the Mainland, reconsider traveling. If you or your staff must travel, adhere to infection control best practices. Healthcare facilities should consider a 14-day restriction from work for all returning HCP who have traveled to the mainland to ensure the safety of the vulnerable patients in healthcare settings. As an alternative, if a healthcare facility experiences staffing shortages, HCP may be allowed to work in low acuity patient or administrative areas while wearing a medical mask at all times and with daily health screening and a plan to immediately restrict the HCP from the facility should they develop symptoms.

Laboratory testing supply chains remain unstable, especially with increased testing related to both heavy disease activity nationally and broad application of testing in many areas. Therefore, it is critical patients you suspect to have COVID-19 be advised to appropriately quarantine at home for as long as it may take for results to be returned. To assist you, you may refer to this handout: “What to Advise Patients Who are Tested for COVID-19”

https://health.hawaii.gov/coronavirusdisease2019/files/2020/04/What-To-Advise-Patients-who-are-Tested-For-COVID-19_040120.pdf.

This is a rapidly evolving situation. To ensure you are accessing the latest information, please visit HDOH’s COVID-19 webpage at: <https://health.hawaii.gov/coronavirusdisease2019/> or CDC’s COVID-19 website at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

COVID-19 is considered an **URGENT CATEGORY NOTIFIABLE CONDITION**; providers are **required to report any persons suspected to have COVID-19 or any test result positive for COVID-19**. If you have any questions or need to report a patient with suspected/confirmed COVID-19, please contact us at one of the numbers below.

- Oahu (Disease Reporting Line)..... (808) 586-4586
- Maui District Health Office..... (808) 984-8213
- Kauai District Health Office..... (808) 241-3563
- Big Island District Health Office (Hilo)..... (808) 933-0912
- Big Island District Health Office (Kona)..... (808) 322-4877
- After hours on Oahu..... (808) 600-3625
- After hours on neighbor islands.....(800) 360-2575 (toll free)

We appreciate your partnership to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 in our communities.

Sincerely,



Sarah Y. Park, MD, FAAP
State Epidemiologist

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