



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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In reply, please refer to:
File:

May 10, 2023

**MEDICAL ADVISORY: CHANGES TO LABORATORY AND CLINICAL PROVIDER
REPORTING OF COVID-19**

- The federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) for COVID-19 will expire at the end of the day on May 11, 2023.
- Laboratories that have instituted automated reporting are strongly encouraged to continue reporting positive and negative COVID-19 results. Clinical providers will no longer be required to routinely report COVID-19 positive patients to the Hawaii Department of Health (HDOH).
- HDOH will continue to publish data on the HDOH website to maintain situational awareness of COVID-19 trends and impacts in Hawai'i.
- HDOH and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continue to provide COVID-19 guidance and other resources for healthcare providers and the public.

Dear Healthcare Provider:

The federal [Public Health Emergency \(PHE\) for COVID-19](#), declared under Section 319 of the Public Health Service Act, will expire at the end of the day on May 11, 2023. High levels of vaccination, widespread population immunity, and available treatments have significantly reduced the risk of severe COVID-19 disease, hospitalization, and death. As the PHE ends, there will be changes to reporting requirements for laboratories and clinical providers as detailed below, along with a listing of publicly posted COVID-19 data and other resources that will be maintained in Hawaii with the end of the PHE.

REPORTING

For laboratories:

The legal requirement for laboratories to report positive and negative diagnostic test results for COVID-19 to HDOH will end with the expiration of the federal COVID-19 Public Health Emergency declaration at 11:59pm on May 11th. **HDOH strongly encourages laboratory facilities that have instituted automated reporting to continue to send both positive and negative results.** These results will be used for continuing case outreach and linkage to resources, to maintain data streams to provide situational awareness of COVID-19 activity in our community, and for other public health purposes.

Please reach out to the Electronic Laboratory Reporting team at doh.lab.contact@doh.hawaii.gov for all additional queries and support.

For clinical providers:

As of May 12, 2023, under [Hawai'i Revised Statutes §325-2](#) **clinical providers will no longer be routinely required to report COVID-19 positive patients to HDOH**. Physicians and other clinicians should continue to report outbreaks, clusters, or unusual cases that might require public health investigation or intervention, similar to reporting of outbreaks of other non-reportable conditions such as influenza. State and federally funded testing programs must continue to report as per current agreements.

COVID-19 DATA TRACKING AND RESPONSE

While the CDC will discontinue reporting of COVID-19 Community Levels and some other COVID-19 metrics (such as percent positivity), HDOH will continue to report surveillance data to the CDC and publish data on the HDOH website to maintain situational awareness of COVID-19 trends and impacts in Hawai'i. HDOH will continue to investigate outbreak-related cases and interview selected cases for surveillance purposes. Additionally, HDOH will continue to partner with long-term care facilities, other healthcare and congregate settings, schools, and community organizations to provide technical assistance and educate partners and the public on how to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19.

HDOH regularly reviews and revises what data products are published on the HDOH website, with the goal of ensuring that the information that our communities need to make informed decisions about their health and safety is available. Following the end of the PHE, the following will remain on the HDOH website: [Disease Outbreak Control Division | COVID-19 | State of Hawai'i - Department of Health \(hawaii.gov\)](#)

- [COVID-19 hospitalizations](#) (provided by Healthcare Association of Hawaii)
- [COVID-19 Wastewater report](#)
- [Weekly influenza and respiratory surveillance report](#)
- [COVID-19 deaths](#)
- [COVID-19 variant report](#)*
- [COVID-19 case counts, test positivity, and incidence per 100,000 persons](#)*
- [COVID-19 trends by county, age, race/ethnicity](#)*

*Some indicators may become less reliable or less representative over time as fewer tests are performed and reported. HDOH will continue to assess the value of these metrics and may make changes to our dashboards in future if certain metrics are no longer valid or helpful.

GUIDANCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Please monitor the CDC website for changes to guidance on [isolation](#), [quarantine](#), and [masking](#).

Healthcare Settings

CDC guidance for healthcare settings has been updated as of May 8, 2023: [Infection Control: Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 \(SARS-CoV-2\) | CDC](#).

Schools

HDOH is working with schools and other stakeholders to review and update [Guidance for K-12 Schools](#) in anticipation of the 2023-24 school year. Updated guidance will be released in the coming weeks.

Advice for Patients

Vaccination remains the best tool for preventing infection or severe illness from COVID-19. The COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for anyone over 6 months of age. Anyone who has not yet received a bivalent vaccine should get one. Bivalent vaccines provide better coverage for the variants of COVID-19 currently in the community. Detailed vaccine recommendations can be found here: [Clinical Guidance for COVID-19 Vaccination | CDC](#).

While masks are no longer required in public settings in the state of Hawai'i, they are still an excellent tool for preventing COVID-19 and many other respiratory illnesses. Those with high risk of severe disease, such as kupuna and those with chronic medical conditions, as well as those who interact closely with these groups, should also consider wearing a mask in situations where social distancing is not possible. In health care settings, please follow situational or setting specific guidance.

Insurance Eligibility and Enrollment

Providers should be aware that Medicaid eligibility may have changed. Encourage patients to be proactive about maintaining Medicaid coverage. More information can be found here: [MedQUEST Quick Facts and FAQ 2023.pdf \(hawaii.gov\)](#)

Other information about the end of the PHE:

COVID-19 Vaccinations

When the PHE ends, COVID-19 vaccines will remain free for everyone as long as the supply of federally purchased vaccines lasts. Sometime later in 2023, COVID-19 vaccines are anticipated to become commercially available. DOH will provide more information on this transition to providers and the public as it becomes available. DOH remains committed to working with providers and federal agencies to ensure equitable vaccine supply for Hawai'i residents.

COVID-19 Testing and Treatment

The free availability of testing and treatment is likely to change in the coming months and will vary by insurance type. For up-to-date information, consult:

- [CDC - End of Federal COVID-10 Public Health Emergency \(PHE\) Declaration](#)
- [HHS - COVID-19 Public Health Emergency \(PHE\) Transition Roadmap](#)

AlohaSafe

With the end of the PHE on May 11th, 2023, the national servers hosting Exposure Notifications will be shut down until further notice. The national Exposure Notification System and, therefore, the Hawai'i AlohaSafe app will discontinue.

We appreciate your assistance in protecting the health of Hawai'i's residents and visitors.

Sincerely,



Sarah K. Kemble, M.D.
State Epidemiologist