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State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
**California Department of Public Health**



GAVIN NEWSOM  
Governor

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Dear Directors and Administrators of Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCFs) in California,

LTCF residents and staff continue to be vulnerable to [COVID-19 and other respiratory infections, including influenza, pneumococcal disease and RSV](#). As COVID-19 virus strains change and immunity wanes over time, the updated COVID-19 vaccine is better at targeting the viral strains circulating now and gives the immune system a boost.

As of 12/31/2023, only 36% of California LTCF residents and 10% of staff were reported to be up-to-date on COVID-19 [vaccines](#). To protect our most vulnerable population, we need your help to get residents, staff, and their families vaccinated now with updated COVID-19 vaccines and other recommended vaccines. The safest facilities have high vaccination rates and easy access to COVID-19 treatments for those residents and staff who do become infected.

To protect our LTCF community, I highly encourage you to:

- **Offer updated COVID-19 vaccine on site at your facilities.** Also offer influenza, pneumococcal and RSV vaccines at the same time. Reach out to your LTCF pharmacy partner to request vaccine and/or vaccination assistance. For LTCFs without existing pharmacy partners, find a local pharmacy using the [CDPH LTCF COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit](#).
- **Strongly recommend COVID-19, influenza, pneumococcal and RSV vaccines to all residents.** Reinforce your recommendation by educating residents and their families about the importance of the updated COVID-19 vaccine and [other recommended vaccines](#).

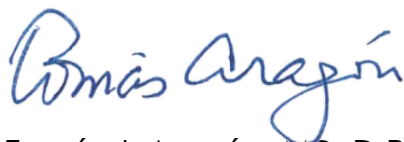
You may choose to display this [poster](#) (also available in [Spanish](#), [Tagalog](#), [Chinese](#), and [other languages](#)) in the lobby, cafeteria, hallways, or other common areas. [Additional resources for LTCFs \(vaccine guidance and education, COVID-19 therapeutics, and policy guidance\)](#) are also available.



- **Encourage staff to stay up to date on [vaccines recommended for healthcare personnel](#).** Staying protected takes a team effort. Ensuring that all staff are protected not only helps protect those around them, but it also sends the message to residents and family that they should stay up to date with vaccines recommended for them too. Consider asking staff to wear [COVID-19](#) and [influenza vaccine stickers](#) (PDF) or buttons to show their support.
- **Provide access to high filtration face masks to residents and staff.** Masks that offer the best [fit and filtration](#) (e.g., N95s, KN95s, KF94s), are highly recommended, and remain a critical component of our multi-layered approach for protection against [COVID-19](#) and other respiratory infections.
- **Track respiratory virus trends [in your community](#)** to alert families and residents about the current impact of respiratory viruses.
- **Encourage and support [appropriate testing](#) of residents, staff and families.** Skilled nursing and long-term care facilities are eligible to [request free at-home tests until February 29, 2024](#)
- **Make it easy to get [COVID-19 prescription medications](#) and have a plan in place for** when residents or staff become ill. Follow best practices for [skilled nursing](#) or [other LTCFs](#). Make sure that residents, families, and staff have access to information about treatments by posting the [Therapeutics Myths and Facts](#) flyer when there are any COVID-19 cases in the facility. LTCFs and skilled nursing facilities should communicate with long-term care pharmacies to ensure that COVID-19 medications are readily available.
- **For updated guidance on viral respiratory infections in Skilled Nursing Facilities**, please see [Recommendations for Prevention and Control of COVID-19, Influenza, and Other Respiratory Viral Infections in California Skilled Nursing Facilities – 2023-2024](#).

Thank you for your partnership in helping protect our vulnerable residents against COVID-19 and other respiratory infections this season.

With you in health,



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