Health Officer Order for Licensed Health Care Facilities in Monterey County
to Implement Influenza Vaccination Programs for Health Care Workers
During the 2019-2020 Influenza Season

Preface
Vaccination of health care workers (HCW) against influenza virus protects medically
fragile patients and reduces employee absenteeism during influenza season. State law
requires that acute care hospitals and certain employers offer influenza vaccinations to
employees or have the employee sign a declination statement if they choose not to be
vaccinated (California Health & Safety Code §1288.7(a); Title 8 California Code
Regulations §5199 (c)(6)(D) & (h)(10)).

Mandatory vaccination and masking policies in health care facilities have been shown
to increase HCW vaccination rates to above 90%. Prior to 2013, influenza vaccination
rates among health care workers in Monterey County hospitals ranged from 64% to
81%. Beginning in 2013, I have issued a Health Officer Order each year to licensed
health care facilities requiring that facilities implement programs that require their
HCWs to provide evidence of influenza vaccination or to wear a surgical mask while
working in patient care areas during the influenza season. Under the Health Officer
order, HCW influenza vaccination rates have increased and have remained higher than
in years prior to the annual Health Officer order. During the 2017-2018 influenza
season, the most recent influenza season for which influenza vaccination rates among
hospital health care personnel are publicly available, influenza vaccination rates ranged
from 73% to 91% at our local hospitals.

Therefore, to maintain a higher rate of influenza vaccination among HCWs which
protects patients from morbidity and mortality associated with influenza infection, I
am issuing the following Health Officer Order.
Order
I, as Health Officer of Monterey County, hereby order, pursuant to my authority under Section 120175 of the California Health and Safety Code, all licensed health care facilities within the County of Monterey to develop and implement a written influenza vaccination policy and program for the 2019-2020 influenza season under which a health care worker at such facility either provides evidence of vaccination with an influenza vaccine or, if the health care worker is unable to provide such evidence, wears a surgical mask for the duration of the influenza season while working in patient care areas.

Definitions
For the purposes of this order;

“Health care worker” shall be defined as any employed or non-employed individual who provides direct patient care or who works in a patient care area.

“Licensed health care facility” shall be defined as any facility, place, or building licensed by the California Department of Public Health Licensing and Certification Branch that is organized, maintained, and operated for the diagnosis, care, prevention, and treatment of human illness, physical or mental, including convalescence and rehabilitation care and including care during and after pregnancy, or for any one or more of these purposes, for one or more persons. A searchable list of facilities licensed by the California Department of Public Health Licensing and Certification Branch can be found at: https://data.chhs.ca.gov/dataset/healthcare-facility-locations/resource/0a0476ba-442c-40ff-97dc-dc840fa7e907.

“Influenza season” is defined as November 1, 2019 through April 30, 2020. If influenza surveillance data suggest that the influenza season may end before or extend beyond April 30, 2020, then this order may be amended to shorten or extend the influenza season.

“Influenza vaccine” shall be defined as a vaccine approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices for the 2019-2020 influenza season.

“Patient care area” shall be defined and determined by the facility, in consultation with the Monterey County Health Department.
Resources
Monterey County is committed to assisting facilities that are subject to this order. Please contact the Monterey County Health Department’s Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Program Manager at 831-755-4503 with questions.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Edward L. Moreno, MD, MPH
Health Officer and Director of Public Health

Date of Issuance of Order