

PROVIDER ALERT

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New CDPH COVID-19 Testing Guidelines and DMHC Emergency Regulations

On July 14, 2020, Dr. Mark Ghaly, secretary of California Health and Human Services announced new priority “tiers” to focus COVID-19 testing toward certain groups as some communities hit supply constraints.

In addition, emergency regulations are in development by the Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) regarding plan reimbursement for testing.

California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Updated COVID-19 Testing Guidelines

The new CDPH guidelines, located at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Updated-COVID-19-Testing-Guidance.aspx>, were updated to prioritize COVID-19 testing into four tiers. The first tier includes individuals who are hospitalized, tests for investigation and management of outbreaks, and close contacts of confirmed cases. **The second tier includes all other symptomatic individuals, and individuals who are asymptomatic but living in high risk settings, including individuals residing in skilled nursing facilities (SNFs).**

Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) Emergency Regulations

The DMHC regulations, located at <https://wpsso.dmhc.ca.gov/regulations/regs/?key=50>, outline requirements for coverage of COVID-19 testing for essential workers. The regulations require that COVID-19 testing for essential workers be considered medically necessary and covered by the plan, regardless of whether the member has COVID-19 symptoms or has been exposed to COVID-19. **These emergency regulations are not applicable to Medi-Cal.**