



# SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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TRACEY BELTON  
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**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES**

Healthy People in Healthy Communities

**Date:** 8/21/20

**To:** Licensed Health-Care Facilities Administrators & Staff & EMS Providers

**From:** David Ghilarducci, MD, County Public Health Officer

**Subject:** Health Officer Order for Licensed Health Care Facilities in San Benito County to Implement Influenza Vaccination Programs for All Health Care Workers during the 2020-2021 Influenza Season.

## Preface

Influenza vaccination of health care workers (HCWs) protects medically fragile patients and reduces employee absenteeism during influenza season. This is particularly important this year because the prevalence of influenza and COVID-19 in the community threatens to overwhelm our health care capacity. **All HCWs are strongly encouraged to obtain influenza vaccination this year.**

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. This order requires all health care facilities and provider organizations to enact mandatory masking policies for those healthcare workers who decline vaccination. Of course, mandatory mask orders already exist for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Therefore, in order to maintain a higher rate of influenza vaccination among HCWs and to protect patients from morbidity and mortality associated with influenza infection, I am issuing the following Health Officer Order:

## Order

I, as Health Officer of San Benito County, do hereby order all licensed health care facilities (hospitals, clinics, skilled nursing and other long-term care facilities) and EMS agencies in the county to adopt and implement policies and programs to require all HCW and EMS providers to receive the annual flu vaccine or to wear a surgical mask while working in patient care areas during the flu season.

## Definitions

For the purposes of this order, “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 list of facilities licensed by the California Department of Public Health Licensing and Certification Branch can be found at:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/CaHealthFind/pages/home.aspx>

“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.

“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 2020-2021 influenza season.

“Influenza season” is defined as October 1, 2020, through April 30, 2021. If influenza surveillance data suggest that the influenza season may end before or extend beyond April 30, 2021, then this order may be amended to shorten or extend the influenza season.

“Patient care area” shall be defined and determined by the facility, in consultation with the San Benito County Public Health Services.

## Resources

San Benito County is committed to assisting facilities that are subject to this order. Please contact San Benito County Public Health Services at 831-637-5367 for any questions.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

*David Ghilarducci MD*

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David Ghilarducci, MD  
Health Officer

8/21/20

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Date of Issuance of Order