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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 of Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCFs) in California,

LTCF residents and staff continue to be vulnerable to COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses. Rates of up-to-date vaccination in adults 65 years of age and older, the population with the highest risk for hospitalization or death from COVID-19, are lower than last winter. To protect our most vulnerable population against new viral variants, we need your help to get residents, staff, and their families vaccinated now with updated (bivalent) COVID-19 boosters. The safest facilities have high vaccination rates and easy access to COVID-19 treatments for those residents and staff who do become infected.

To that end, I highly encourage you to:

- **Offer COVID-19 boosters on site at your facilities to increase access.** Medicare-enrolled immunizers may bill directly and receive direct reimbursement from the Medicare program for vaccinating Medicare LTCF residents. This means that vaccinators, such as pharmacies or home health agencies, may be available to help provide onsite vaccinations at LTCFs.
- **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 infection.
- **Reach out to your LTCF pharmacy partner to request vaccination assistance.** For LTCFs without existing partners, find a local pharmacy using the [CDPH LTCF COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit](#).
- **Use this [sample letter](#) to share onsite or offsite vaccination opportunities** with residents and their families.
- **Work closely with your residents' clinical team** to ensure that updated (bivalent) COVID-19 boosters are being strongly recommended to all residents and that residents have a plan in place for COVID-19 treatment, if needed.



- **Encourage staff to stay up to date.** 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 members that they should stay up to date too. Consider asking staff to wear [stickers](#) (PDF) or buttons to show their support for COVID-19 vaccination.
- **Educate residents and their families** about the importance of the updated (bivalent) COVID-19 boosters. You may choose to display this [poster](#) in the lobby, cafeteria, hallways, or other common areas. This poster is also available in [Spanish](#) and [other languages](#). [Additional resources](#) are also available.
- **Monitor current COVID-19 trends [in your community](#)**, so you can alert families and residents about the current impact COVID-19 is having on your community.
- **Make it easy to get treatments** when residents or staff become ill. Follow best practices for [skilled nursing](#) or [other long-term care facilities](#). Make sure that residents, families, and staff have access to information about treatments by posting the [COVID-19 Treatments Questions and Answers](#) when there are any active cases. Long-term care facilities and skilled nursing facilities should communicate with long term care pharmacies to ensure COVID-19 antiviral therapeutics are readily available.

The updated (bivalent) COVID-19 vaccine booster is available for everyone 6 months of age and older. Residents, staff, and their family members can get the updated (bivalent) COVID-19 booster at least two months after completing the primary series or after receiving any prior monovalent COVID-19 booster. Most adults are eligible for the updated (bivalent) COVID-19 booster now.

Thank you in advance for your partnership and assistance in helping protect your vulnerable residents against COVID-19.

With you in health,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tomás Aragón". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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