



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & RECOVERY SERVICES

DATE: November 12, 2020

BHRS POLICY: 20-11

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Testing Policy

AUTHORITY: Proclamation on Declaring a National Emergency Concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak (Mar. 13, 2020); Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex M. Azar II, Determination that a Public Health Emergency Exists, (Jan. 31, 2020); California Executive Department, Proclamation of a State of Emergency Due to Novel Coronavirus (March 4, 2020); CDC Interim SARS-CoV-2 Testing Guidelines for Nursing Home Residents and Healthcare Personnel; CDPH COVID-19 Testing Guidance (July 14, 2020); CDPH AFL 20-38.5 Visitor Limitation Guidance (October 28, 2020); Order of the Health Officer C19-1E: Long Term Care Facilities (Revised), County of San Mateo (October 29, 2020).

NEW POLICY: November 12, 2020

EFFECTIVE DATE: This policy is effective as of November 18, 2020.

PURPOSE:

This policy establishes procedures for the testing of Behavioral Health & Recovery Services (BHRS) staff for COVID-19, setting forth when such testing would be required and the circumstances that warrant testing of staff. This policy also establishes the BHRS COVID Surveillance Program.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all County staff (including, but not limited to employees and volunteers) that perform work at a County operated congregate living facility such as Canyon Oaks Youth Center, where COVID-19 testing is required.

BACKGROUND:

The Behavioral Health & Recovery Services Division of San Mateo County Health both operates and places clients in congregate living facilities for the treatment of mental health conditions and substance use disorders. County Public Health Orders and State directives require testing surveillance of congregate living facilities to be able to detect the presence of the Coronavirus and act to contain its spread, and as a prerequisite for visitation programs. As part of a surveillance program, 25% of staff are required to test on a weekly basis so that



100% are tested monthly, and 100% of the residents of a facility are tested monthly. If a positive case is detected, both staff and residents are tested weekly until two consecutive weeks of negative results is achieved. BHRS operates a COVID Surveillance Program for 48 congregate living facilities where clients are placed for treatment, that consists of monthly testing of staff and residents, and all facilities are contracted, except Canyon Oaks Youth Center (COYC), which is operated by BHRS and staffed with County employees.

POLICY:

It is the policy of BHRS that staff participate in testing if assigned to a congregate living facility, such as Canyon Oaks Youth Center. It is the policy of BHRS that a COVID Surveillance Program is hereby established and shall remain in place until a public health emergency no longer exists or as determined by public health officials.

A. Emergency Health and Safety Measure.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a public health emergency. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the State have identified congregate living facilities a hotspot for COVID-19 because there is limited opportunity for social distancing. The County's Public Health Officer, Dr. Scott Morrow, has concluded that COVID-19 testing for congregate living facilities is a critical and necessary step to ensuring the health and safety of the BHRS staff and residents and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

COVID-19 testing of BHRS staff is a reasonable and essential health and safety measure that is job related and consistent with business necessity because individuals with COVID-19 may pose a direct threat to others at a congregate living facility during the COVID-19 pandemic. Without complying with the testing requirement, staff cannot perform their jobs. COVID-19 testing of BHRS staff assigned to COYC, which is a congregate living facility, is mandatory and a condition of employment.

B. Periodic Testing by Vendor.

All COYC Staff will be required to undergo COVID-19 testing on a regular and periodic basis, as determined by Dr. Morrow, BHRS, and other County officials. The COVID-19 testing of COYC Staff will be conducted by a vendor selected by the County and will be done at no cost to COYC Staff. Alternatively, employees may choose to get tested on their own time by a health care provider or testing facility of their choice and will be required to submit documentation of the date of their test and that they received a negative result. Employees who choose to get tested on their own time will still be required to be tested (and provide date-stamped test results) on a regular and periodic basis as determined by Dr. Morrow, BHRS, and other County officials.



C. Missed Tests.

If an employee misses the on-site COVID-19 testing provided by the County because they were not working on the date of the County testing, the County will determine if employee can continue to work at the congregate living facility until such time as the next on-site COVID 19 testing occurs, depending on the circumstances of each case. Alternatively, an employee may obtain testing on their own time through a health care provider or testing facility of their choice. Employees who choose this option must provide documentation from their health care provider indicating the employee was tested for COVID 19, the date of the test and the results. The County will determine if the employee can continue to work at the congregate living facility until such time as they are able to provide the required documentation, depending on the circumstances of each case. Employees may be required to show documentation that they have taken the test through an outside provider and are awaiting results.

D. Test Results and Confidentiality.

The results from COVID-19 testing of BHRS Staff will be reported by the vendor to the County's Occupational Health Coordinator, Risk Manager, Community Contact Tracers, County Contact Tracers, and for any purpose that the County reasonably deems necessary in order to take actions consistent with guidance from the CDC and other public health authorities.

The County will take reasonable measures to maintain the confidentiality of information regarding the COVID-19 status of an employee. Any information that the County stores regarding the COVID-19 status of an employee will be separately from the employee's personnel file, thus limiting access to this confidential information. The results from COVID-19 testing of BHRS Staff will only be used for purposes related to preserving the health and safety of BHRS Staff, COYC facility residents, and the community, and will not be used for any other purpose.

An employee who tests negative for COVID-19 may continue working. An employee who has tested positive for COVID-19 and who believes they were exposed to COVID 19 while working on-site or in the field for the County (1) must contact the County's Workers Compensation Department to make a claim, (2) should contact the County Occupational Health Coordinator to obtain guidance on health and wellness, and (3) contact their supervisor.

I. DISCLOSURE OF RESULTS AND RECEIPT OF INFORMATION

BHRS Staff are required to authorize the testing vendor to disclose test results to the County in accordance with this policy and may be required to acknowledge receipt of testing disclosures from the County or the County's testing vendor.



II. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY

If an individual is unable to comply with the testing requirement based on a qualifying disability or medical restrictions, they may request an ADA accommodation by contacting the County's ADA Manager. Employees who are unable to comply with the testing requirement for any other reason, including but not limited to a religious exemption, should contact their supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

Volunteers who refuse testing will no longer be permitted to volunteer at congregate living facilities. County employees who do not comply with this policy cannot enter any County congregate living facility. If entrance to a County congregate living facility is part of the employee's regular job duties, the employee will be sent home. The employee may use paid time off balances, except sick pay, for all missed work time until such time that they comply with the policy or the policy is revoked by the County.

Approved: Signature on File
Scott Gilman, MA
BHRS Director

Next Review Date: November 2021

Reviewed By: Signature on File
Vanessa de la Cruz, MD
Medical Director

Signature on File
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