



## Amador County Public Health Department

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**DATE:** October 11, 2023

**TO:** Health Care Facility Administrators and Staff within Amador County

**FROM:** Rita Huspen Kerr, M.D., Amador County Health Officer

*Rita H Kerr, M.D.*

**RE: Winter Respiratory Viruses Health Advisory, 2023-24 Season**

In your role as leaders in healthcare and in mine as Health Officer, I know we share common goals: to provide outstanding healthcare to our community, to mitigate spread of communicable respiratory diseases, to keep patients healthy, and to minimize staff absenteeism due to illness.

For prior seasons, I have issued a local health officer order that mandated healthcare workers (HCW) who declined annual influenza vaccination to wear a mask while having direct patient contact or working in patient care areas. During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, HCW were under State Health Officer orders to wear masks at work. Since those orders were rescinded, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) provided [Guidance for Face Coverings as Source Control in Healthcare Settings](#).

I strongly recommend that healthcare facilities review and implement the CDPH source control [guidance](#), and encourage their staff to receive updated seasonal vaccinations to protect themselves, co-workers, families, friends, and patients. The prior Amador County Mandatory Influenza Prevention Program Order, most recently issued September 30, 2022, is rescinded.

In anticipation that influenza, COVID-19, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) will be spreading this fall and winter, it is recommended that all people ages 6 months and older get a yearly flu vaccine in addition to staying up to date with COVID vaccination. Certain individuals may also be eligible for the recently-approved [RSV vaccines](#); those ages 60 years and over are encouraged to discuss RSV with their healthcare provider.

State law requires that acute care hospitals and certain employers offer influenza vaccinations to employees and have the employee sign a declination statement if they choose not to be vaccinated. The California Conference of Local Health Officials have standardized influenza season in California as November 1<sup>st</sup> of one year through April 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year.

Your efforts to protect the healthcare workforce and the residents of Amador County are appreciated. If you have questions, please call or email Amador County Public Health.

**For Further Information:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/index.html>

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Influenza.aspx>

<https://covid19.ca.gov/vaccines/>