



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Michael Hill *Health Agency Director*

Penny Borenstein, MD, MPH *Health Officer/Public Health Director*

SLO County Emergency Medical Services Agency

Memo 2018 - 1

PLEASE POST

September 4, 2018

Mandatory Influenza Vaccination of All EMS Personnel in SLO County

With influenza season approaching, we are forwarding this advisory from the Public Health Department regarding mandatory influenza vaccination of all health care workers, including all first responder EMT's and Paramedics. While we understand that most, if not all, EMS provider agencies have received this advisory, we want to be sure that all EMS personnel read and understand its content.

As EMS providers, we have a duty to protect the people we serve, many of who are among the most vulnerable populations. As outlined in the advisory, the best way to prevent transmission of a disease like influenza is for all providers to be vaccinated. Vaccination also reduces transmission of influenza to your co-workers and family with an added benefit of fewer sick days taken and a reduced risk of mandatory overtime.

Most of our county's EMS personnel have historically received the yearly influenza vaccine, and we expect this will continue. For those who choose not to receive the vaccination, please refer to the third paragraph (in bold) of the advisory requiring non-vaccinated responders to sign a declination statement and are urged to wear a mask while on duty. For purposes of EMS providers, on duty means any time you have contact with a patient, including initial assessment, treatment, during ambulance transport, and while transferring care to hospital and other personnel receiving patients.

If you have any questions please contact Mike Groves, EMS Coordinator at 805 788-2514.

Attachment

Emergency Medical Services

2180 Johnson Avenue | San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 | (P) 805-781-2511 | (F) 805-788-2517

www.slopublichealth.org



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Michael Hill *Health Agency Director*

Penny Borenstein, MD, MPH *Health Officer/Public Health Director*

PROVIDER HEALTH ADVISORY

Date: August 20, 2018

Contact: Christine Gaiger, PHN, Communicable Disease Program Manager
805-781-5577, cgaiger@co.slo.ca.us

Mandatory Influenza Vaccination of All Health Care Workers in San Luis Obispo County

To San Luis Obispo County Pre-Hospital Emergency Medical Care Agencies:

Influenza season will begin in the fall. Flu season is from October 2018 to April 2019. Last year, San Luis Obispo County experienced very high rates of illness and death from influenza, especially among our most vulnerable populations—infants and small children, the elderly, and the immunocompromised. Thousands of young, otherwise healthy people also die from the flu each year in the United States.

Vaccination of health care workers reduces infection and absenteeism in the workforce, may prevent mortality due to reduced transmission to patients, and results in financial savings to sponsoring health institutions. The best way to prevent transmission of a disease like influenza to those persons we serve is to mandate vaccination of health care workers. Two relevant laws in California require health care facilities to make flu vaccine available to all employees (CA Health & Safety Code §1288.7 effective January 1, 2007; Aerosol Transmissible Diseases standard of Cal OSHA (Cal. Code Regulations § 5199), effective September 1, 2010). Employees who refuse vaccination must sign a written declination.

In accordance with the intent of these laws, and consistent with the powers of authority of the County Health Officer, I am urging employers to require of all unvaccinated health care workers, that, in addition to signing an influenza vaccine declination statement, a mask be worn while on duty during influenza season. Influenza vaccine should be received by the health care worker by November 1, 2018; after that time, a health care worker should have either received the vaccine or signed a declination and be wearing a mask.

I am also recommending that health care administrators adopt an easy way to identify the health care workers who have received their influenza vaccine. One example of this type of identification is to place a sticker on the health care worker's badge following vaccination.

Thank you for your hard work in making San Luis Obispo County a healthy community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Penny Borenstein".

Penny Borenstein, MD, MPH
San Luis Obispo County Health Officer

Public Health Department

2191 Johnson Avenue | San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 | (P) 805-781-5500 | (F) 805-781-5543

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