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State Public Health Officer & Director

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
California Department of Public Health



GAVIN NEWSOM  
Governor

March 6, 2020

Dear Health Care Provider,

California regulations require that health care providers report cases of COVID-19 immediately by telephone to the local health officer for the jurisdiction where the patient resides. Per Title 17 California Code of Regulations Section 2500, a novel virus infection with pandemic potential requires immediate reporting. Since COVID-19 is a novel virus infection with pandemic potential, reporting is required. For questions about communicable disease reporting requirements, please contact your local health department.

At this time COVID-19 testing is only available at public health laboratories. However, commercial laboratories will soon begin testing. It is very important that all confirmed cases are reported promptly to local health departments to enable public health monitoring of the scope and severity of COVID-19 in California. Your reports will enable us to provide you with timely data to inform your clinical practice and guide public health interventions.

Thank you,

James Watt, MD, MPH  
Interim State Epidemiologist  
Acting Deputy Director for Center for Infectious Diseases

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