



# AGENCY UPDATE

Public Health - Emergency Medical Services - Behavioral Health - Environmental Health  
Homeless Care & Coordination - HealthPAC - Center for Healthy Schools & Communities

Week of March 13, 2023



*Please share with your networks*

It's National Nutrition Month and the Health Care Services Agency (HCSA) is promoting the importance of good food for wellbeing year-round. Programs like [Nutrition Services](#) and Recipe4Health encourage residents to make food choices that reduce chronic disease and improve long-term health. You'll also find guidance encouraging good food choices and healthy eating on HCSA's [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) sites and we encourage you to share this information .

This month we also mark the 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) on March 23. California was an early adopter and, as a result, more than 160,000 uninsured people in Alameda County gained Medi-Cal coverage. The ACA ensures ongoing access to essential health benefits including preventive and regular care, inpatient and outpatient hospital care, prescription drug coverage, pregnancy and childbirth, mental health services, and more. California continues to be a leader in coverage expansion, and nearly all low-income Californians will be eligible for Medi-Cal by 2024. This expansion and the major reforms underway through the [California Advancing and Innovating through Medi-Cal](#) (CalAIM) initiative provide new opportunities for HCSA to better serve clients. Later this year, Medi-Cal will lift automatic coverage renewal options provided during the COVID-19 emergency and resume annual redetermination and enrollment processes. It's important for all Medi-Cal enrollees to update their information now to keep their coverage. *See Update your Medi-Cal Information below.*

The Agency Update is shifting to monthly newsletter with the next issue coming in April. We have appreciated your readership throughout the pandemic and look forward to bringing more news about HCSA's programs and services that keep Alameda County healthy.

## Update Your Medi-Cal Information to Keep Your Coverage

As COVID-19 becomes less of a threat, California will restart yearly eligibility reviews using available information to decide if current members still qualify for coverage. If you are a Medi-Cal member in Alameda County, make

sure you update your information through the [Alameda County Social Services Agency](#) website or call (888) 999-4772 to report changes to name, address, phone number, or email address. Alameda County SSA will begin mailing packets starting April 1 and current members will receive their mail during the month of their Medi-Cal enrollment.

**Keep your family covered.**



**Update your contact information so Medi-Cal can reach you when it's time to renew.**



ALAMEDA COUNTY HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY

## What to Know About Long COVID



Long COVID is another term for [post-COVID conditions](#) which are new, returning, or lingering symptoms weeks or months after having COVID-19. Many people who test positive for COVID-19 feel better within a few days or weeks, and most will fully recover within 12 weeks. But for some people, the effects of COVID-19 can last months or longer after the infection has gone.

There is no single test for post-COVID conditions. While long COVID is more common in persons who experienced severe COVID-19, some individuals with post-COVID conditions had a mild illness, did not have any symptoms, or did not know they were infected. The best way to prevent long COVID is to avoid getting infected or re-infected. The bivalent booster reduces the likelihood of a severe infection, potentially lowering the risk of developing long COVID. Individuals with ongoing COVID-19 symptoms, or severe limitations in daily activities extending more than four weeks after a COVID-19 infection should contact their health care provider or a clinic specializing in Long COVID recovery and rehabilitation. For more information, visit HCSA's [website](#), the [CA Department of Public Health](#), contact HCSA's Call Center at (510) 268-2101 or email [ncov@acgov.org](mailto:ncov@acgov.org).

## COVID is Still With Us - Follow Precautions to Stay Healthy

- Stay home if you feel sick.
- Talk to your doctor about staying up-to-date on recommended vaccines.
- Take a rapid COVID-19 test prior to gathering with family or elderly people.
- Find a community testing location near you if you don't have kits at home.
- Wear a high-quality, well-fitted mask - any mask is better than nothing.
- Get boosted against COVID-19.
- Wash your hands to protect yourself against respiratory viruses.
- Gather in small groups and outdoors if possible.
- Pay attention to your mental health.



**Recipe4Health: Congresswoman Barbara Lee and Secretary Xavier Becerra Host Roundtable at Wilma Chan Highland Hospital**



From left: Alameda County Supervisor Lena Tam, Alameda Health System Chief Executive Officer James Jackson, Congresswoman Barbara Lee, and Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra

On February 24, Congresswoman Barbara Lee and Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra hosted a roundtable to better understand the work of HCSA's [Recipe4Health](#) program. Recipe4Health is a nationally recognized, award-winning model that integrates food-based interventions into health care settings utilizing “Food as Medicine” to treat, prevent and reverse chronic conditions. The program addresses food and nutrition insecurity and other social determinants of health and improves health and racial equity. Congresswoman Lee directed Health and Human Services to implement a national Food as Medicine pilot modeled after Alameda County's program. A special thanks to Congresswoman Lee and Secretary Becerra for highlighting Recipe4Health, to Alameda Health System CEO James Jackson for hosting the event, to Alameda County District 3 Supervisor Lena Tam, and Alameda County Health Care Services Agency Director Colleen Chawla for joining this important discussion. A recording of the roundtable and more information about Recipe4Health can be found [here](#).

## Updated COVID Dashboard and Isolation Guidance

COVID is still with us and HCSA's Public Health Department will continue to maintain the COVID dashboard. The dashboard will soon include wastewater data as an effective community transmission monitoring tool. Until then, you can find wastewater data [here](#).

### Updated Isolation recommendations effective March 13.

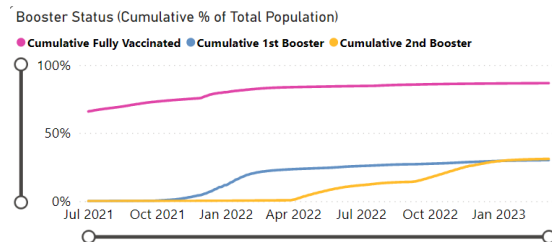
- If you have tested positive for COVID, you should isolate yourself regardless of vaccination status or lack of symptoms.
- Stay home for at least 5 days. Isolation can end after Day 5 if:
  - Symptoms are not present or are mild and improving; and
  - You are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication).
- Wear a mask when around others indoors through Day 10 after leaving isolation.
  - Masks may be removed early with two negative tests at least one day apart.
- These recommendations are for most situations. Some settings, such as health

care and other work environments, may have additional requirements set by [Cal/OSHA](#) or other regulatory bodies.

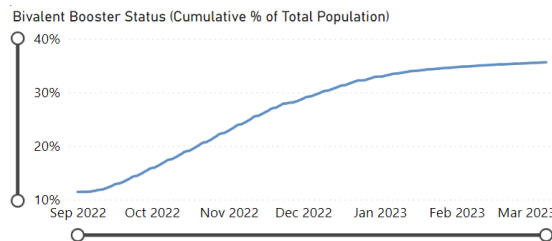
- For more information, please see the updated [isolation flyer](#).

Find more COVID-19 [vaccine](#) and [testing](#) locations on our [website](#). Additional resources are available on our COVID-19 website, including an [interactive ventilation tool](#), guidance for [isolation and quarantine](#), [mask and face coverings](#), [workplace recovery](#), and [community resources](#).

## COVID-19 Epidemic Data Points



As of 3/9/23, 30.2% of the total population have received their first booster, and 31.1% have received their second booster.



As of 3/9/23, 35.6% (35.4) of the total population have received the bivalent booster.

- 7.8 cases per 100,000 for the total population
- 6.5% test positivity in the general population; 6.6% in low-income areas
- 99 hospitalized, 21 in ICU

Please visit our [dashboard](#) for more data on COVID-19.

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Website

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