

The California Department of Public Health released new guidance yesterday in response to the backlog of COVID-19 testing as a result of demand greatly outstripping supply.

The guidance, which can be found [here](#), provides a prioritization for testing based on four tiers.

Notably, Tier One includes:

- Hospitalized individuals with COVID-19 symptoms.
- Investigation and management of outbreaks, under direction of state and local public health departments (includes contact tracing).
- Close contacts of confirmed cases.

Tier Two includes:

- All other individuals with COVID-19 symptoms.
- Individuals who are asymptomatic (having no symptoms of COVID 19), who fall into one of the following categories:
 - Live in higher risk congregate care facilities including skilled nursing facilities, residential care facilities for the elderly, correctional facilities, or homeless shelters.
 - Work in the health care sector who have frequent interactions with the public or with people who may have COVID-19 or have been exposed to SARS-CoV-2. The health care sector includes hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, long-term care facilities, ambulatory surgery centers, health care providers' offices, health care clinics, pharmacies, blood banks, dialysis centers, hospices, and home health providers.
 - Work in a congregate care facility, including shelters for people experience homelessness and residential care facilities for the elderly.
 - Provide care to an elderly person or a person with a disability in the home, including a person providing care through California's In-Home Supportive Services Program.
 - Work in the emergency services sector who have frequent interactions with the public or with people who may have COVID-19 or have been exposed to SARS-CoV-2. The emergency services sector includes police and public safety departments, fire departments, and emergency service response operations.
 - Work in a correctional facility.
 - Patients requiring pre-operative/pre-hospital admission screening.
 - Patients being discharged from hospitals to lower levels of care.

Tier 3 includes workers in other essential fields such as retail and transportation.

Tier 4 for all others will only be triggered when test turnaround time for the state drops below 48 hours.

Local Public Health departments may modify the above practices based on local conditions.